

**A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE TUTOR SYSTEM
AT UNISA**

By

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DECLARATION

This is to declare that the study hereby submitted for Philosophiae Doctor Degree in the field of Education Research and Management in the Faculty of Education, University of Free State, is my own independent work. Where help has been sought it has been acknowledge. I further declare that this work is submitted for the first time for a qualification at this university and that it was never submitted at any other university or at another faculty at this university. I also cede copyright of this work to the University of the Free State.

STANLEY NHLAPO

DATE

DEDICATION

A special appreciation and thanks to my wife, Pinkana Ronel, for her unwavering support and understanding. I won't forget how she kept our home warm and intact during my prolonged absence from home.

My sincere and thanks to my late parents Mabudi Ishmael Nhlapo and Mantombi Sophie Nhlapo who sacrificed so much to give us the opportunity to get education during those hard times of apartheid and who never failed to support and inspire us to take education seriously. To my late son, Nkosana Lucas Zenith Nhlapo, who before he passed on encouraged me to take this study as he reminded me that it was always his Grandparents' wish to have a "Doctor" in the family. To my late sister, Sonto Martha Nhlapo, who loved education so much and who was an inspiration to many of her friends and colleagues.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAU	Association of African Universities
CBTS	Community Based Tutoring System
CCFO	Critical Cross-fields Outcomes
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CER	Critical Emancipatory Research
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DCPT	Distributed Collaboration and Prioritisation Tool
DE	Distance Education
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
HE	Higher Education
HTML	Hyper Text Markup Language
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
FAI	Free Attitude Interview
FET	Further Education and Training
LMS	Learning Management Systems
MPCC	Multi-Purpose Community Centres
MvT	Multi-voting Technique
NAMCOL	Namibian College of Open Learning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGT	Nominal Group Technique
NOUN	National Open University of Nigeria
OUM	Open University of Malaysia
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PDA	Personal Digital Assistants
SAJHE	South African Journal of Higher Education

SAIDE	South African Institute of Distance Education
SAQA	South African Qualification Authority
SI	Supplemental Instruction
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SGB	School Governing Body
SULE	Sustainable Learning Environments
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
TS	Tutor System
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

SUMMARY

The lack of effectively providing tutorial support and other student services to off campus students, especially those who live in remote rural areas, are the main reason for the high dropout and failure rate of off-campus students,. Most of these students do not receive effective tutorial and administrative support from their institution (s) of higher learning resulting in them either failing to achieve their desired qualification or discontinue their study.

Although institutions of higher learning are trying to provide such support, especially tutoring support either face-to-face or on-line, this support seems to be ineffective because of a number of reasons. These reasons include tutors who are incapable to assist students effectively and insufficient resources to assist these students. The perceived top-down approach of providing the tutor system and other student support services to these students seem to frustrate the initiatives from the side of the institution, thus it was critical to use the community based approach to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system. The involvement of the community and other stakeholders, including the students who are the most affected by people in the formulation of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system was important. It became critical to use a research strategy that would motivate and enthuse those affected to change their situation. Participatory action research, conducted within a critical emancipatory theoretical framework, formulates a strategic management framework towards an effective tutor system.

Since participatory action research is not done on people but together with them, a coordinating team was then formed to facilitate the engagement, interactions and participation of the students, parents and other stakeholders. The team formulated a vision, conducted situational analysis through SWOT analysis, set priorities, evaluated legislative imperatives and engendered collaborative planning. Data was collected through the principles of critical emancipatory research which encourages the relationship of trust, respect and hope among the participants as well as the use of their language which opened the communicative space among the participants.

The interactive engagement between the participants helped to generate data that were used in the study. In order to make sense of the volumes of data generated, critical discourse analysis was used. This method allows data from discourse not to be taken at face value but to dig for deeper meaning. In this way knowledge creation becomes possible from what seem everyday conversations. Knowledge created from planning of activities and priorities, their implementation, monitoring, observations and reflections was used to confirm or negate what was learnt from related literature study. Furthermore, this knowledge was used to close the gaps that existed in the frameworks from other countries that were studied. In this way it became possible to formulate a framework that has built-in mechanisms that make it sustainable and thus engender sustainable learning environments.

The active participation of people from diverse backgrounds as equals, as co-researchers and as creators of knowledge helped the study to present a strategic management framework for an effective and sustainable tutor system. The experiences that unfolded during the whole process from inception to actual presentation of the framework, informed the observations, conclusions and recommendation that round off the study in the last chapter.

OPSOMMING

Die gebrek aan die effektiewe voorsiening van tutoriale ondersteuning en ander studentedienste is die hoofrede vir die hoë druipsyfer en staking van studies onder afkampus-studente, veral studente wat in afgeleë gebiede woon. Die meeste van hierdie studente kry nie effektiewe tutoriale en administratiewe ondersteuning van hul hoërondwysinstellings nie en het tot gevolg dat hierdie studente of hul studies staak of nie daarin slaag om 'n kwalifikasie te behaal nie.

Ten spyte daarvan dat hierdie instellings probeer om ondersteuning aan studente te bied in die vorm van aanlyn- of aangesig-tot-aangesig ondersteuning, blyk hierdie ondersteuning nie effektief te wees nie weens verskillende redes. Hierdie redes sluit in tutors wat nie in staat is om studente behoorlik te ondersteun nie, sowel as 'n gebrek aan behoorlike hulpbronne ter ondersteuning van hierdie studente.

Die bo-na-onder-benadering waarmee die tutorstelsel en ander dienste aan hierdie studente gebied word blyk die inisiatiewe aan die kant van die instelling te frustreer. Daarom was dit noodsaaklik om 'n gemeenskapsgebaseerde benadering te volg ten einde die effektiwiteit van die tutorstelsel te bevorder. Die betrokkenheid van die gemeenskap en ander belanghebbendes, sowel as die studente wat die meeste geraak word in die proses om die effektiewe bevordering van die tutorstelsel te formuleer, was uiters belangrik. Dit was dus noodsaaklik om 'n navorsingstrategie te gebruik wat die persone wat hierdeur geraak word, te motiveer om die situasie te verander. Deelnemende aksienavorsing binne 'n raamwerk van krities-bevrydende navorsing is gebruik om 'n bestuurstrategie vir die bevordering van 'n effektiewe tutorstelsel te formuleer.

Aangesien deelnemende aksienavorsing saam met mense gedoen word en nie op mense nie, is 'n koördineringspan saamgestel wat die betrokkenheid, interaksie en deelname van studente, ouers en ander belanghebbendes uit die gemeenskap, moes fasiliteer. Die span het 'n visie geformuleer, 'n SWOT-analise gedoen, prioriteite daargestel, wetgewing geëvalueer en gesamentlike beplanning bevorder. Data is versamel deur die beginsels van krities-bevrydende navorsing wat 'n verhouding gebaseer op vertroue, respek en hoop onder die deelnemers bevorder, sowel as die gebruik van hul eie taal om kommunikasie-kanale te skep.

Die interaktiewe betrokkenheid tussen die deelnemers het data gegenereer wat in die studie gebruik is. Daar is van kritiese diskoersanalise gebruik gemaak om die volume data wat gegenereer is sinvol te verwerk. Hierdie metode laat toe dat die dieper betekenis gesoek word en diskoersdata nie op sigwaarde beoordeel word nie. Op hierdie manier word die skepping van kennis uit wat blyk alledaagse gesprekke te wees, moontlik. Kennis wat geskep word deur die beplanning van aktiwiteite en prioriteite, die implementering daarvan, monitering, waarneming en refleksie is gebruik om die inligting wat versamel is deur die literatuurstudie, te bevestig of te verwerp. Hierdie kennis is vervolgens ook gebruik om gapings wat bestaan in die raamwerke van ander lande wat bestudeer is, te oorbrug. Op hierdie manier was dit moontlik om 'n raamwerk te formuleer wat ingeboude meganismes het om dit volhoubaar te maak en dus kan lei tot volhoubare leeromgewings.

Persone uit verskillende agtergronde wat deelgeneem het as gelykes, mede-navorsers en skeppers van kennis het die studie in staat gestel om 'n strategiese bestuursraamwerk vir 'n effektiewe en volhoubare tutorstelsel daar te stel. Die ervaringe wat van die ontstaan tot die werklike aanbieding van die raamwerk ontvou het, het die waarnemings, gevolgtrekkings en aanbevelings wat die studie afgerond het in die laaste hoofstuk, onderlê.

KEY CONCEPTS

Tutor system

Critical Emancipatory Research

Participatory Action Research

Collaborative Planning

SLEUTELWOORDE

Tutorstelsel

Kritiese Bevrydende Navorsing

Deelnemende Aksienavorsing

Gesamentlike Beplanning

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to formulate a framework for the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches at the distance education institution. The chapter gives an overview of the study by giving detailed layout of the chapters which reflect on the key aspects of the study. It briefly gives the background to the problem at hand and outlines the aim and objectives of the study. Next, the chapter gives an overview of the literature reviewed in respect of definitions and discussion of the operational concepts, relevant literature from which the study draws lessons as well as the theoretical framework that underpins the study. Due consideration is given to the organising principles of this study which are also the objectives. Furthermore, this chapter gives an overview of the research design and methodology adopted by the study. The purpose here is to justify the choice of a participatory research approach for generating data whilst being considerate of the inescapable inherent power realities in the process. The appropriate techniques and tools for generating and analysing data are also considered and discussed briefly. The use of critical discourse analysis and interpretation of data is also given special attention in this chapter, as it constituted another central issue to the study. This analysis is organised according to the study objectives to inform the recommendations and the framework for enhancing an effective tutor system.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

An Open Distance Learning Institution (ODL) in South Africa, the University of South Africa (UNISA), is experiencing challenges in the form of high drop-out rates, high failure rates and throughput rates of around 55,80 % per annum. The impact of the tutor system in improving this situation taken over a period of 15 years tends to be minimal (Subotzky & Prinsloo, 2011:177-193; UNISA, 2010; Woodley, 2004:47-63; Tait, 2004:97-109). There is sufficient evidence in the literature that many of the

University students who live in remote rural areas feel isolated and marginalised, both academically and administratively (Qakisa-2005:44-61). The apparent reasons for this are traceable to one or a combination of the following: lack of tutorial support; lack of student services; late assignment feedback; and late arrival of study material, prescribed textbooks and other administrative support services (Tang & Harrison, 2011:583-604). These are arguably related to denying students in the rural areas equitable access to education, which in turn can be shown to be a perpetuation of the power imbalances of the past (Prilleltensky, 2001:1-32, Fraser, 2009:55-71) and can be perceived as having the capacity to be continued, notwithstanding their undesirability.

Recent studies show an increase in the number of learners who come underprepared for the demands of learning at a higher education institution, which tends to worsen the situation at distance education institutions such as Unisa (Jones, Coetzee, Bailey, & Wickham, 2008:5–6; Scott, Yeld, & Hendry, 2007). Thus, the challenge of underprepared students at the institutions of higher learning raises unique expectations of teaching and learning (Underhill & McDonald, 2010:91-106), which reinforces the need for critical participatory approaches to learning and teaching at institutions of higher learning.

The attempts made at UNISA to create curriculum-related interactive spaces for lecturers, tutors and students include tutorial sessions through videoconferencing and face-to-face discussion sessions. These, however, do not seem to be helpful to learners residing in rural areas as they are inaccessible both geographically and electronically. The reasons are traceable to a plethora of socio-economic factors, which include financial constraints, poverty and misalignment of programmes (Smuts, 2002:225-231; Sonnekus, Louw & Wilson, 2006:44-53; Underhill & McDonald, 2010:91-106). Similarly, the envisaged regular training and development interactions between lecturers and tutors could not be sustained (De Smet, Van Keer & Valcke, 2008:207-223; Jegede, 2003; Tait, 2003; UNISA, 2005, 2008). This contributes adversely to the effectiveness of the tutor system.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The area of this study is marred by a combination of challenges such as those discussed in paragraph 1.2 above. The learners in this study reside in remote rural areas in which they experience difficulties in accessing the tutorial sessions arranged in the regional centres. They also experience frequent challenges with the electronic infrastructure which are traceable to electricity cut-offs, lack of network connections for Internet access, and lack of computers with the necessary programmes. Their problem is exacerbated by their need to strike a balance between competing priorities of pursuing their studies and their daily socio-economic challenges.

In the same vein, learners who registered with UNISA and who resided in the area of this study had challenges of late receipt or distribution of study material and textbooks. For them to register as students they had to incur the costs of either having to travel to the regional centres or face delays of their mail. Even when such were not experienced there would be a subsidiary challenge of having to organise their studies in a manner that would enable them to meet the envisaged deadlines. This required some pre-registration and post-registration orientation as would normally be afforded learners residing closer to the regional centres. In view of this situation the study aims to respond to these realities.

1.3.1 Research Question

Based on the above, the research question anchoring this study therefore is:

How can the effectiveness of the tutor system at a distance education institution be enhanced using community-based approaches?

1.3.2 Aim and Objectives

In response to the abovementioned research question the aim of this study is to develop a framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system at UNISA through community-based approaches. The five objectives of the study to unpack the above aim are: (i) to conduct a situational analysis so as to determine the extent and nature of the challenges facing the UNISA students in remote areas; (ii) to

identify possible solutions to the challenges as potential components of the framework towards enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system; (iii) to understand contexts and circumstances under which the identified possible solutions thrive; (iv) to develop and build in components of the solutions which can counteract and minimise the impact of the inherent risks and threats to the operationalisation of the solution of the framework for the enhancement of the tutor system; and (v) to provide practical evidence of the applicability of the success of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system so as to sustain its effectiveness and relevance.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is presented in detail in chapter 2, and includes discussion of the appropriate theoretical framework underpinning the development of a framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system. This section briefly outlines the framework and theories on which the study is constructed.

1.4.1 Justification of the theoretical framework

The theoretical framework which I find most appropriate for this study is critical emancipatory research (CER) as this enables the researcher to interact with the participants as equals, with the latter being treated with respect in trying to design a framework for effective tutor system (Habermans, 1992:496-501; Mahlomaholo, 2009:13). IN the interpretative phase of CER the researcher discusses together with participants the best practices that are available in other parts of the world with regard to the framework of an effective tutor system. This ensures that the participants are empowered as they take ownership of the framework. The factors that impact on the effectiveness of the tutor system are identified and critically analysed together with the participants so as to be able to collectively change them for the better. Through this study, the communicative spaces are created for the participants to articulate the nature and extent of their education-related problems, to debate and interrogate possible solutions thereto and to operationalise their solution (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:8). The critical emancipatory research allows

the participants, through the interpretive, analytic and educative stages, to be fully engaged in the processes of developing a framework for the enhancement of the effective tutor system from its conception to its operationalisation.

Furthermore, CER is deemed appropriate for this study because of its accommodation of diversity, which is consistent with its different formats, namely critical feminist theory, critical race theory, post-colonial and critical ethnographic theories (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:45). The participants to the study were also representative of the diversity which could be traced to these formats. The fact that CER also advocates for the levelling off of power by the dominant groups over the least powerful groups was considered as another strength in a study dealing with inescapable power differential realities (Tlali, 2013:60). Thus, CER principles are preferred for this study and as such direct its conceptual theorisation.

1.4.1.1 *Conceptualisation: conceptual theories*

One of the critical aspects of this study was the active participation of people from diverse backgrounds. The participants' diverse experiences, knowledge and competencies were conceived as the core for the resourcefulness of the study, therefore it was imperative that the study should *inter alia* focus on building, nurturing and sustaining the inherently good working relations amongst the participants. To this end, the theoretical framework of CER provides a firm base which is consistent with the dynamic character of the study. For instance, through CER the study ably addresses the issues of how to deal with inherent negative impacts of power-related struggles between the participants. CER encourages this by advocating that the researcher, and by extension the potentially dominant groups, should be embedded in the study equitably with other participants. Also, CER is conceived as engendering the observance of values of mutual respect, humility and care amongst the participants (Jason *et al.*, 2004:97). This in turn is conceived as having the capacity of enabling the participants to have due regard for the diverse views, cultural differences and ideological positions of the participants.

In this way, the study uses CER successfully to direct and influence the participatory action research processes as the approach which the study adopted in generating

data (Kemmis, 2008:121; Mash & Meulenberg-Buskens, 2001:141-148; Reardon & Welsh, 1993:69-92). First, the study adopted the principles of Free Attitude Interview (FAI) technique, which according to Mahlomaholo and Netshandama (2012:11) allows the data gathering process to be humane and does not alienate or undermine the research participants. The generation of data is carried out not with structured questionnaires but with broad open-ended questions in order to elicit the participants' views through free expression. These kinds of response assisted in asking more explorative questions designed to gain a deeper understanding and to avoid misinterpretations. Secondly, the study used critical discourse analysis (CDA) to analyse data that was mainly textual. According to Van Dijk (1995:17), CDA is an approach that studies talk, emerging from critical linguistics, critical semiotics and discourse and communication. The main aim of CDA is to interrogate text for the purpose of social action, as it is grounded in a critical constructivist's epistemology and demands methodologically that the researchers pay close attention to the macro-level social context in which certain actors' representation of reality become dominant. It also directs attention to the micro level and to the producers and interpreters of policy (Vavras & Sehers, 77-103). The researcher regarded this determination as central in that it potentially had an effect on the ease and extent to which the participants opened up in providing the necessary support, resources and information. The participants' openness was enhanced through the definitions and discussions of operational concepts.

1.4.2 Operational concepts

The operational concepts are defined mainly to make reading the study easy and understandable. These concepts are discussed in chapter two and include the framework, the tutor and the tutor system. The discussion of the operational concepts is also considerate of the theoretical framework, namely CER.

1.4.3 Related literature

A literature review attends to the objectives that were set in relation to the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system. The best practices were considered

in South Africa, Namibia, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, China, Malaysia and India, including many other countries in which tutor systems have been implemented. The need and components of the strategy to design the framework that will enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system will be discussed, including conditions that are conducive to the implementation of the strategy. The risks and threats that are facing the implementation and design of the framework will be identified from the literature as well as evidence of the applicability of the strategy.

1.4.3.1 The need to formulate a framework that enhances the effectiveness of the tutor system.

In South Africa the lack of access to and participation in higher education (HE) by various sectors of the communities who were previously marginalised were seen to be effectively facilitated and addressed by distance education (DHET, 2012:1-33). It affords access to HE by a large and diverse student population, of both mature students and school-leavers who are unable to access face-to-face residential higher education institutions and whose educational needs would otherwise go unmet (DHET, 2013:1-75). According to the South African Institute of Distance Education (2010), in 2008 there were 310,259 public higher education students studying through distance education in South Africa. The bulk of distance education students (85%) were registered with a South African single mode institution, the University of South Africa (UNISA). According to data supplied by the Department of Higher Education and Training, over the period 2000-2008, distance fulltime equivalent (FTE) enrolment fluctuated from a high of 31% in 2000 to low of 24% in 2005, following the re-organisation of the higher education landscape in 2004. Since then the distance education contribution has risen steadily, according to the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE, 2010), reaching 29% in 2008 and was projected to rise to 30% by 2013.

Although there is a steady increase in the enrolment of students in the distance education sector in South Africa; the majority who stay in remote rural areas are not receiving academic support, thus most are isolated and are finding it difficult to progress in the distance education environment. Even though the South African distance education institutions have tried to decentralise some of their services, such

as registration and tutorial support, face-to-face tutorial support, discussion groups, and study space in the provincial learning centres and satellite centres (Ngengebule, 1998:12), most of those who stay in rural areas do not benefit. Similarly, in Zimbabwe and Nigeria, students who stay in rural areas cannot get the support afforded those in urban areas, particularly where the Universities are situated and regional centres are established (Mapolisa, 2013:278-285; Okwonko, 2011:167-178). Most African countries have a large population living in rural areas in which there are no proper roads, electricity or telecommunications signals. They do not receive sufficient support from their institutions, although most universities are exploring the use of ICT and mobile technologies such as mobile phones and iPads (Aderinoye, Ojokheta and Olojede, 2007:1-3).

There is therefore a need to establish tutorial support centres and systems that would be accessible to remote students. Some of the universities use technologies that are asynchronous and synchronous to reach out to those students and some use face-to-face tutorial programmes in the remote learning centres. In Malaysia and China, universities have established community learning centres in remote rural areas in order to reach such students, more successfully than in most of the African Countries. For instance, the Open University of Malaysia's teaching and learning system is premised on blended pedagogy whereby print-based materials provide ready input alongside face-to-face tutorials and online learning (Othman, Atan & Guan, 2005:3).

1.4.3.2 Components of the formulation the framework for the implementation of an effective tutor system

The establishment of learning centres by Unisa is encouraged by both the new draft policy for distance education and a white paper on post-school education and training (DHET, 2012:1-33; DHET, 2013:1-75). The University initially established regional centres in the major cities around South Africa, excluding the remote rural areas. This was in order to bring administrative support nearer to the student but recently those regional centres which were solely for administrative purposes were recently also used for student-support, which included tutorial support in the form of face-to-face tutorials, satellite broadcasted sessions and student counselling.

Recently, the video-conferencing facilities were also installed in the main regional centres in order to expand the offering, even for subjects which had not previously been offered in face-to-face tutorial sessions in the regional centres. These initiatives were also tried in some countries such as Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and in Asian countries such as Malaysia, India and China. Some students do receive support for attending these tutorial sessions at the regional centres although not so effective. It is also important to note that students who are not staying in the vicinity of the regional centres are left to fend for themselves.

Recently, many institutions opted for teaching and learning inventions driven by information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as the Internet and satellite broadcasts, but these were not the answer to problems experienced by learners residing in remote areas. They lack the important aspects of complete educational experience (Saba, 2012:31), which means that learners and tutors are unable to interact directly and as such the teaching and learning is affected adversely. Saba (2012:33) describes the need for learner-learner and learner-tutor interactions as:

Interaction of learner with learning materials is a type of interactivity in distance education; instructor-learner, and learner-learner interactivity are also necessary to create the optimal conditions of learning while offering the desirable level of transactional distance between the learner and the instructor.

In Malaysia the Open University of Malaysia (OUM) established learning centres around the country and used a blended approach that combines printed learning material as the main resource supplemented by face-to-face interaction at regional centres and online learning through a specially designed Learning Management Systems (LMS), into which an important feature incorporated is the asynchronous forum board, which allows empowerment of a geographically dispersed group of students to participate in a collaborative learning environment with tutors and peers. The dominant dimension of interactivity is an explanatory dimension in student-tutor and tutor-student interaction combinations. This supports the notion that there should be constant interaction between the tutor and student but there is also a need to train tutors so that they become skilful at encouraging students to engage in more

meaningful interaction that promotes enhanced memory retention as well as better understanding. In Malaysia the necessary infrastructure, such as electricity, is in place in most of the rural areas and they have an LMS that differentially responds to the learning state of each individual learner (Saba, 2012:33).

1.4.3.3 Conducive conditions for the strategy to formulate the framework for the effective tutor system

In order to formulate a framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system certain conditions that are conducive must be created. Learners need to have the environment that will allow them to work effectively with other learners, solve their problems and critically and creatively think for themselves. This environment must encourage self-regulated and active learning, and the development of reciprocity and cooperation among learners. The learners must be empowered in this environment to produce and communicate information effectively and demonstrate that they understand the world in which they live so as to be able to solve contextual issues in their environment. The above could be achieved through effective learner support, which according to Nadeosa (1998:32) provides learners:

... with a range of opportunities for real two-way communication through the use of various forms of technology for tutoring at distance, contact tutoring, assignment tutoring, mentoring where appropriate, counselling (both remote and face-to face), and the stimulation of peer support structures. The need of learners for physical facilities and study resources and participation in decision-making is also taken into account.

The above definition of learner support highlights the important aspects that need to be considered in order to design a tutor system, with learners being encouraged to participate in 'communities of learning' and individual learners studying, thinking and solving problems with other learners who are doing the same task. This engagement is facilitated through various learner support mechanisms, such as peer support sessions, tutorials, contact sessions, teaching assignments, support in the workplace (mentoring), email, and Internet communication.

It is important to note from the above that there are various forms of tutoring such as face-to-face, peer, and assignment tutoring, all of which comprise the 'tutor system', which in order to function should employ qualified tutors who have the necessary skills to facilitate learning. Most distance education systems around the world use the services of part-time tutors as a link between learners and the University (Jung, 2005:11; Dzakaria, 2012:2). Tutors serve as part of the student network of any distance education university, with face-to-face tutorial support having been shown to have more impact than an online non-interactive mode of teaching (Wang, 2005:8; Price, Richardson & Jelfs, 2007:1). Tutoring is not only an academic activity but also as a highly valued pastoral activity, but according to Price *et al.* (2007:1), in order to make online tuition successful both the tutors and students need training in how to communicate online in the absence of paralinguistic cues. This was also revealed in 2004 in China, where offline services still dominated the learner support design with institutions providing face-to-face tutorials (Wang, 2005:8). Online learners were also made to compare offline support services with online ones, and it emerged, that they still preferred the conventional classroom-based learning style of interacting with, and receiving knowledge from, their teachers in person, despite alternative online support provisions available to them.

From the above it can be deduced that that one of the important conditions for the tutor system is a good tutor who is knowledgeable and possesses pedagogical competence, which according to Shulman (1986:3-36) is a combination of pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. The tutor should also have the skills to operate the online systems that are used to enhance tutorial support. In other words, the tutor is a common denominator in all tutorial systems and therefore tutor must be well-trained. It is also crucial to have physical facilities and study resources that would make the tutor system effective.

1.4.3.4 Risks and threats facing the implementation of the framework for the tutor system

The tutor system could be threatened by the unavailability of qualified and competent tutors who are capable of handling different forms of tutorial support. If the tutors do not have the necessary facilitation skills they will not be able to encourage learners

to actively engage with the course or programme (Shulman, 1986:3-36), or establish and maintain a supportive relationship with each learner in their group. They will be unable to mediate learning from the course material or to teach by giving constructive feedback (Bixby, Gordon, Gozal-Lee, Ayea & Nippolt, 2011:1-69).

Other risks or threats to the tutor system are selection of inappropriate and inaccessible venues for contact sessions; unsuitable times for contact sessions; distance, and the costs incurred by the students in reaching the venue. Care should be taken to have suitable sites of learning that are close to where learners live or work, whilst if the students, tutors and administrators are not competent in using information and communication technologies (ICTs) the entire learning experience may be compromised (Hentae, Shea & Pennington, 2003:160) .

It is also important that the learning centres are managed appropriately for academic and administrative functions. Learning centres should be permanent structures that are accessible to the broader community and have technological equipment (Wang, 2005:7-8). In South Africa many tutors are not trained to facilitate learning or use the equipment provided to them. Some are not academics and therefore do not have teaching experience, so academic departments are reluctant to support them in subject-related issues. Their generic training is minimal and makes little difference because it is not formalised. In the OUM in Malaysia, tutors are trained thoroughly in facilitation of learning and the use of LMS, and so can log into it like any permanent staff. In South Africa, UNISA has a portal similar to the Malaysia Open University LMS but the tutors do not have access to it, and are not trained to use it for teaching and learning purposes (Jung, 2005:11; Dzakaria, 2012:2).

1.4.3.5 Evidence of applicability of the formulation of the framework for the effective tutor system

The legislation and policies that support equitable access to distance learning are imperative. For example, South Africa developed distance education support policies as recently as 2012 (DHET, 2012:1-33). Establishment of the learning centres by means of collaboration with other institutions and schools throughout the country is highlighted in the policy, thus the possibility of extending the tutor system to remote

areas would be enhanced. Countries such as China, Malaysia and India have invested substantially in installing bandwidth, even to the remotest areas, because their governments are conscious that distance learning could not thrive or be accessible without the use of multimedia resources (Deb, 2012:1-8).

Mobile technology has great potential to reach the vast populations of developing countries as it does not require bandwidth connections. As Deb (2012:1-8) states: "We have to develop distance learning using multimedia through mobile technology. This seems to be the most viable way to reach billions living in rural areas of the developing countries. Hence considerable research efforts must be dedicated to this line".

African countries, particularly South African and Nigerian universities are supposed to be taking advantage of these personal digital assistants (PDAs) because the majority of the population have a mobile telephone, therefore it is important to take advantage of this technology for interactive tutorial support and peer tutoring (Reju, 2007:74-78). In Malaysia and China these technologies are used for tutorial support purposes and for teaching and learning (Wang, 2005:8).

The effective use of technology is important, therefore it is important for tutors and students to be able to use it effectively. Tutors are trained to make use of the multimedia technologies in Malaysia and China (Wang, 2005:8), and there is an attempt to train the lecturers and administrators in South Africa to effectively use such technologies as video-conferencing, desktop conferencing, and Internet video telephones for tutoring purposes. This is amplified by assertions of Hentae, Shea and Pennington (2003:160) that distance education is:

the process of extending learning, or delivering instructional resource-sharing opportunities, to locations away from a classroom, building or site, to another classroom, building or site by using video, audio, computer, multimedia communications, or some combination of these with other traditional delivery methods.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This section examines the research design and methodology.

1.5.1 Design

This study was designed to be community-based, that is, to engage the affected persons in identifying their education-related challenges, to develop possible solutions to the identified problems, and to implement and monitor the extent to which the solution was effective. In view of the need to harness the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the participants it was facilitated by a smaller representative team (Merriam, 1998:8), comprising members of the team who were elected democratically during a public meeting in accordance with a criterion agreed on by all. The study coordinating team comprised the researcher, higher education institutions, community members, distance learning students, the business community, local, provincial and national government departments, particularly the Department of Education (DoE) and other stakeholders who were interested in the implementation of an effective tutor system (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:11; Sewart, 1987:72). The participants included the registered and prospective learners of UNISA, learners, parents and other members of the community with interest in education. The participants resided in the rural and remote areas of three Thabo Mofutsanyane towns, therefore meetings were held at the respective township areas. A number of participants who contributed to the study were approximately 260 people from these remote areas.

The roles and responsibilities of the coordinating team and the participants were profiled during subsequent meetings (see chapter 3 for more details). For instance, the coordinating team arranged and facilitated information sessions and meetings which focused on the challenges that affected the successful tutor system. The information obtained from the literature was mainly used to determine the extent to which there were similarities and possible adaptation of solutions to suit the situation. The issues that were considered included effective teaching and learning, student support services, administrative, operational and implementation issues. The appointment of qualified and competent tutors, recruitment of students, student support services, training of newly tutors, distribution of physical resources and monitoring and evaluation of the systems were also identified and discussed.

The coordinating team also facilitated planning sessions in which priorities were set and an action plan developed. The strategic planning sessions which took place considered situational analysis in which the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) were identified and appropriately dealt with. The action plan was developed in detail to include specific activities in respect of each of the priorities which the team would embark upon in order to formulate the framework envisaged for an effective tutor system. Those activities had champions or people responsible for their organisation and their operationalization was identified as well in the plans. The resources necessary were also identified for each activity as well as the means of acquiring them. The timeframes for the achievement of each of the priorities were stipulated and mechanisms for monitoring progress and corrective processes highlighted in the plan.

The meetings of the coordinating team and Task Teams sometimes took place weekly, fortnightly and monthly, depending on the urgency of the feedback required, and that was in line with the principles of action research in order to evaluate the progress with regards to the effectiveness of the actions taken. Corrective measures were taken to address any minor problems that might affect the progress, where possible, and the meeting were audio-taped and recorded with the consent of the participants for ethical reasons. This process had taken at least 12 months but was still proceeding at the time of the research.

1.5.2 Methodology

This section discusses briefly the research methodology and methods used in this study.

1.5.2.1 Instrumentation

Permission was requested to use the audio-recorder and video-recorder to collect data from the participants. Both were accepted without objection by the participants and used during the meetings with the community. Most of the coordinating team meetings were audio-recorded as the video-recorder was not available in all the meetings. Although I preferred the video-tape, as it reveals non-verbal cues and

expressions, it was not possible to have it all the time, thus the audio-tape was mostly used.

As data were generated it was divided according to the objectives of the study and the tasks that were given to the Task Teams. Sometimes data was generated by writing minutes, especially when held with the outside stakeholders such as the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and municipality personnel. Some of these people were not comfortable being audio-recorded, so records were kept in the form of minutes of the meetings when necessary.

Open-ended questions were asked to ease tension among the participants and the FAI technique was used to probe, explore, find clarity and make participants to express their views as freely as possible. After all the data was collected critical discourse analysis was used to analyse it, especially when text was concerned.

1.5.2.2 Procedure and processes

The study coordinator requested permission to conduct research from the participants and other stakeholders on and off the research site. The request stipulated conditions of participation, including the participants right to withdraw from the study at any time if they wished. Participants were treated with respect during and after the meetings, and were made to feel free at all times and to express their views without any fear of being ridiculed.

1.6 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA THROUGH CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Analysis of data was made through Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of critical discourse analysis. Data was interpreted and made sense of in relation to the aims and objectives of the study in which participants' views were collected through written and spoken words and organised according to the objectives of the study. The findings were as follows.

1.6.1 Challenges facing the formulation of the framework

Students in Asia and the Pacific universities were provided with learning centres that offered a plethora of academic support through the tutor system, but the distance education students who studied with the distance education university on the research site were not supported, hence the failure rate and drop-out rate was high. This issue was highlighted by Subotzky and Prinsloo (2011:177–193), who pointed out that the University is experiencing challenges of high drop-out rates, high failure rates and low throughput, in spite of having introduced the tutor system about 15 years previously. This high failure and drop-out rate at the research site occurred before there was an intervention initiated by local university students, their parents and other concerned citizens. Their consultation with the researcher resulted in the initiative to investigate possible solutions to their problem, which led to the development and implementation of a framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through a community-based approach. During the consultations the students highlighted the need to have a tutor system that was effective in order to provide the necessary academic support, student support services and appropriate and suitable facilities that would enhance teaching and learning in the current tutor system.

1.6.2 Components of the solution to formulate the framework

The above section dealt with identified problems and challenges facing the implementation of the effective tutor system on the research site. Effective partnership with communities, according to Sanders (2003:167) requires shared vision, open communication, structures and processes for joint decision-making, reflective monitoring and evaluation of the effective tutor system. Aref (2010:2) also identifies inability to analyse the socio-cultural dimensions of an educational system and lack of understanding of the process and access to information as the main barriers to participation in community education, especially for the formulation and the establishment of the effective tutor system.

The importance of community participation was highlighted as an important factor in overcoming the barriers to participation in community education and organisations to

effectively impact the tutor system. This helped to avoid hindrance of progress in responding and recognising the priorities of the local community in relation to the implementation of the tutor system. The community realised that it was important to formalise the team that would take a leading role in the formulation of the shared vision, conducting an analysis of the context, setting priorities, drawing up a strategic plan and setting the way to monitor it.

1.6.3 Conditions conducive to the success of the framework

The conditions found to be conducive to the success of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system were those that would contribute to sustainable implementation of through a community-based approach. Those were community participation and the formulation of a common vision that was shared and adopted by the whole community. The democratic election of the coordinating team was crucial in that the team would pursue the mandate given by the community, which also included the scanning of the environment and prioritising and formulation of the strategic plan by which the objectives were to be achieved. In addition, one crucial condition was constant sharing of the findings with the community and other stakeholders in order to build trust.

1.6.4 Analysis of threats to and risks for the implementation of the framework

The risks identified relation to the components and conditions conducive to the successful implementation of the strategy related to the literature on promotion of community participation, democratic election of the coordinating team, sharing of information concerning the findings, joint strategic planning and monitoring of the outcomes (Davies & Murshed, 2006:16; Dube, 2009:22; Morrissey, 2002:59; Munt, 2002:1). Identification of risks assisted the coordinating team to proactively take action to solve or circumvent them before they posed danger to the implementation of the framework.

1.6.5 Effectiveness of the strategies for the tutor system

Community participation and involvement in a project is one of the key elements of action research because it ensures community ownership of the project, suits the local circumstances and increases the sustainability of the project (Munt, 2002:3). On the research site the community members who were mostly affected by the ineffective tutorial support and student services were involved in most of the initial deliberations about the possible formulation and establishment of the effective tutor system. Although maintaining the participation was a challenge, the selection of a coordinating team that consisted of the students who were most affected by the current tutor system galvanised the team to persist with the process at hand. The team was involved in planning, developing action plans, formation of Task Teams and providing feedback so as to evaluate and monitor the project.

1.7 GUIDELINES ON FORMULATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FRAMEWORK

The identification of the coordinating team is a process that has to be followed collectively with the community members who will form an initial committee, with whom it is important to engage as they draw attention to the problems or challenges they are encountering regarding the lack of the effective tutor system in that community (Greenberg, Feinberg, Meyer-Chilenski, Spoth & Redmond, 2007:485-504). In this study they gave the researcher an in-depth overview of the status quo in the community, being parents, community leaders, teachers and prospective or current students. Once the initial committee members had identified themselves the researcher organised a meeting in which they could invite as many people as possible, especially those affected by lack of the effective tutor system on the research site. During that meeting the researcher sought different perspectives about the issue at hand and how most people were affected by lack of an effective tutor system.

The researcher, after gaining a clearer picture of the negative effect of the lack of the effective tutor system, suggested that there should be a greater community meeting in which all the community members who were interested in the establishment of the

envisaged tutor system could meet to discuss it at length. The establishment of the coordinating was discussed, participants were requested to participate in choosing the members of the coordinating team and they decided on the method by which to choose the team members. It is important at this stage that the community should lead the process and own it (Laverack & Labonte, 000:258) because it is in that meeting that the bottom-up approach is encouraged and the top-down approach discouraged.

After the selection of the coordinating team the team members were given an opportunity to ask questions as to what was expected from them by the community that elected them. They unpacked the mandate given to them and considered the magnitude of the work to be accomplished. Once the coordinating had full understanding of what was expected of them, they met again in order to formulate a common vision for the establishment of an effective tutor system. It was emphasised that the exercise was important because the vision serves as the foundation for unified project commitment. Consensus was required and a common goal, reflecting the values of the community that would guide the team during the whole process of formulating and establishing the framework for an effective tutor system (Helling, 2007:335-349).

Driven by what to achieve which would bring about the positive change to the community, the coordinating team at this stage began to analyse the situation in the community by using a SWOT analysis to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the community (Bray & Kwok, 2003:611-620). It provided the team with invaluable information about the whole situation in the community, including the obstacles and other negative elements that might hinder the plan. With this information they would be able to have a shared understanding of trends for effective tutoring, technologies, resources and other crucial aspects in the implementation of the effective tutor system. They determined which items the community had and identified issues that required further investigation and interrogation. Task teams were assigned to deal with all issues that required further study, and were given reasonable time to report back to the whole coordinating team. It is during the feedback period that all the issues were thoroughly discussed and strategies formulated to address them.

Prioritising was important because it led the team to the identification of those inputs and outcomes that were desirable. The coordinating team was advised not to have more than five priorities, the rationale for this recommendation being that more would be difficult to successfully pursue, measure and monitor (UNESCO, 2009:41). The prioritising process was conducted democratically so as to provide consensus on the selected priority issues using a technique deemed appropriate for ranking issues objectively.

Drawing up of a collaborative plan by the coordinating team was crucial because it focussed on its goals. Strategic planning, according to Wates (2000:7), is an effective way to achieve the results from the resources that are at the disposal of the community. It is important to identify the salient strengths in the strategic planning for implementation. These would be ranked in order of importance and in a way that would strategically help in the implementation. The coordinating team need to implement the plan and monitor it continuously so that any adjustments of the framework could be made in steering it to the set and desired goal/s. This depended on the priorities and objectives to be achieved, as set by the coordinating team. In order to ensure that the focus of the goals and objectives of implementation of the envisaged effective tutor system were not lost, devising a monitoring strategy by the coordinating team was important.

1.8 VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

The study is important because it devises a framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system and address the area of learner support. It is also important because the body of knowledge acquired will contribute to the improvement of learner support and effective tutorial strategies through an effective tutor system that could solve many problems in the University and other ODL institutions in Africa and beyond.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The participants, community members and other stakeholders, including the students, were assured that their identity would not be disclosed and that no one

would be coerced to take part in the study. Discussions were held at venues that were convenient to the participants and the time schedules that were agreed upon jointly with them. Their informed consent was also obtained and they were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study if they felt that the initial conditions had changed, without any adverse consequences to them. They were promised that data would be kept confidential and used only for purposes of the study.

1.10 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The thesis is organised as follows. Chapter 1 has dealt with the orientation of the study and given background and purpose of the study. Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical framework so as to provide the paradigm and the research findings on similar and related issues that ground it. The methodology is dealt with in Chapter 3, with detailed explanation of the methodology and design for data gathering. Chapter 4 analyses data through the interpretation of empirical data to verify the literature study. Chapter 5 is a presentation of the framework and thorough discussion of the designed framework for the implementation of the effective tutor system. Lastly, Chapter 6 presents the findings, makes recommendations and lists limitations of the study. This last chapter elaborates on the findings and suggests possible interventions for future research.

1.12 SUMMARY

This chapter has presented the background and context that prompted the researcher to conduct this study on the research site. The need, aims and objectives of the study were discussed at length. The operational concepts, such as the framework, the tutor and the tutor system were defined and briefly discussed in the context of this study. Justification for the choice of critical emancipatory research (CER) as the theoretical framework was briefly discussed.

The following chapter will elaborate at length with the theoretical framework and the reasons why CER was seen to be in line with the aims of this research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEWING LITERATURE TOWARDS THE FORMULATION OF FRAMEWORK FOR THE EFFECTIVE TUTOR SYSTEM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to formulate a framework for the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches at the distance education institution. This chapter thus presents the theoretical framework, namely the critical emancipatory research (CER) that underpins the study in relation to its aim. It reviews literature on learner support, particularly the tutor system and identifies, defines and discusses the operational concepts, such as the framework and effective tutor system. Discussion of these operational concepts is aimed at ensuring that they are understood in the context of their role in the advancement of the framework. The related literature is studied and organised in accordance with the five study objectives so as to explore the best practices from other institutions from Africa and Asia and to formulate an effective tutor system in distance education institution settings in South Africa. The conclusion of this chapter summarises the theoretical and conceptual theories of the tutor system as they relate to the area of this study.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section focuses on CER as an appropriate theoretical framework for this study. It considers and argues for the choice of CER based on the historical background, objectives, adaptation of CER principle as a mechanisms for the formulation and operationalisation of the framework for effective tutor system, the relationship between the researcher and the participants, values, and language used by CER users. The principles of CER are thus used as a lens in this study.

2.2.1 The historical background of critical emancipatory research

Critical emancipatory research evolved from critical theory, the ideas of which first found acceptance in the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, Germany in 1924. The leader of the Frankfurt School was Max Horkheimer (1895 – 1973) (Higgs & Smith, 2006:68), who respected and acknowledged the legacy and contributions of his predecessors (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:143). The lack of continuity, regard and respect for the contributions made by others tended to disunite and demoralise them, a lesson that can be derived from the growth and development of critical theory from which critical emancipatory research evolved (Mahlomaholo, 2012:40-42). In recognition of the contribution of his predecessors, Horkheimer's 'dialectical materialism', a 'new start' directed at 'new tasks' (Kellner, 2000:3), became what is conceived in this study as a vision that impelled the Frankfurt School. It introduced a multidisciplinary programme to raise issues of the interconnections between the economic life of society, the psychic development of the individual and transformations in the realm of culture (Kellner, 2000:3). This is relevant to the design and implementation of the framework for community-based tutor system because of the desire to considerably integrate the community's socio-economic, political and cultural realities that give context to the study (Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:54).

The early critical theorists viewed people as all greatly influenced by the society and context in which they live and work (Higgs & Smith, 2006:68), similarly, in this study learners are influenced by their respective parents/families, communities and the society in which they live and grow up, and in their learning endeavours. In this context, this study develops the means and mechanisms according to which the learners' social contexts can be integrated in their learning and development processes (Ertmer & Newby, 1993:50-70; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:54; Vygostky, 1978:79-91).

The values of mutual trust and respect inculcated in the participants tend to enhance free contribution of views and ideas, as in the Frankfurt School's multidisciplinary programme which generated key tenets of dialectical materialism. The critical issues of relevance in this regard were the significance of meeting the needs and ending suffering of the people whilst enhancing their wellbeing (Kellner, 2000:6).

This corresponds with what a community-based tutor system seeks to achieve for marginalised learners. To this end, CER is the theoretical framework is consistent with the espoused principles of social justice, equity; peace and hope for the design of a tutor system (TS). Critical emancipatory research seeks to enhance the achievement of addressing learning needs by encouraging inclusivity and accommodation of learners' diverse needs and capabilities, of balancing the issues of power emanating from their cultural and political environment in their social relations, and of addressing real life needs and problems in their respective communities.

Habermas elaborated on critical theory in arguing that all knowledge is not only based on things that could be experienced and measured (Higgs & Smith 2006:3). He believed human beings were the custodians of knowledge creation and that the search for "knowledge" should be based on a desire to improve the quality of human life. In this study the desire to improve the quality of human life through a framework for effective tutoring system is co-owned by local community members in the respective research site who are accorded an opportunity and space to develop (communicative space) and implement a tutoring system that addresses their educational needs. It is achievable through critical theory, in which

... every individual is to be granted dignity regardless of his or her location in the web of reality. Thus, the continuation of human suffering by conscious human decision is morally unacceptable behaviour that must be analysed, interpreted and changed (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:140).

In this reality critical theory grapples with issues of power, justice, and moral action and the ways that the economy, matters of race, class, gender, and sexuality, ideology, discourse, religion, education, and other social dynamics interact to construct the social systems that shape consciousness. Issues of power struggle, marginalisation and oppression are also inherent on the research site for developing and implementing an effective tutor system. They would as such need CER and a CER-oriented approach to be tackled.

2.2.2 Objectives of critical emancipatory research

Critical emancipatory research (CER) is founded on anti-oppressive ideology (Ledwith, 2007:599; Biesta, 2010:43-44; Liasidou, 2008:486, Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:141). An emancipatory methodology, emerging from a participatory paradigm, seeks to identify and change the root sources of oppression. It engages with causes, not the symptoms, of oppression, which manifests in different forms or faces, including marginalisation, exploitation, cultural imperialism and violence (Young, 1992:39-65). There is a need to investigate prevalence of oppression in any one or a combination of these faces in order to determine the reasons learners are not provided with support and denied access to higher education. Also, having identified the existence of oppression, the study would have to devise mechanisms through which such would be fought out. CER supports such activities and actions, whilst its theoretical counterpart, phenomenology, can only take the study up to interpretation and recommendations on what needs to be done. The researcher and the participants do not necessarily become involved in addressing the situation in practical terms. In the same way, positivism through its quantitative approaches would focus on formulating generalisations about the problems that confront learners.

Reason (1988:10) defines three important, interrelated aspects of this paradigm shift: “the move to participatory and holistic knowing; to critical subjectivity; and to knowledge in action.” Participatory and holistic knowing is achieved through engagement in the world, whilst critical subjectivity is the synthesis of naive inquiry (a knowing based on feelings, emotions and experience) and scientific inquiry, bridging the subjective – objective divide to provide an approach to human inquiry that is objectively subjective. Knowledge in action is the term used by Reason (1988:10) to denote a transcending of the chasm between intellect and experience in which Western consciousness has placed values on ‘thinkers’ at the expense of ‘doers’, dividing theory from practice. Knowledge in action is, therefore, engaged in the world rather than alienated from it.

Ledwith points out that the practice of a more rigorous research that overtly intends to be liberating is not difficult, but simply calls for a critical gaze that sets current practice within the bigger picture, building theory in action and acting theory. Thus:

The critical insights gained from this enhance understanding of the relationship of local lives with the bigger picture, encouraging beyond the immediate and specific, building networks and alliances that reach towards a movement for change (Ledwith, 2007:605).

In this way, practice moves beyond the ameliorative changes of local action towards the transformative potential of greater collective force for change (Ledwith, 2007:606).

Critical emancipatory research not only seeks to improve the outcomes and the self-understanding of practitioners, but is also a critique of their work and social milieu (Kinsler, 2010:175). For Kemmis (2006), “its goal is to connect the personal, and the political, and transform situations so as to overcome felt alienation, dissatisfaction, ideological distortion, and the injustices of oppression domination”, whilst according to Kinsler (2010:175), emancipatory strategic action arises from a disposition of critical intent, or social consciousness, toward critically assessing the extent to which the social milieu impedes the fostering of the ‘good’. Kemmis (2006:460), delineated five criteria for non-participatory action research which failed to bring about ‘parrahesiastes’, that is, unwelcome and uncomfortable news necessary for advancing social justice. They aimed at improving techniques of teaching or the efficiency of practices rather than their efficacy and effectiveness evaluated in terms of the social, cultural, discursive and material, for example, the economic and/or historical consequences of practices. PAR was used in this study to broaden the aim of this study beyond the scope of which Kemmis (2006) was concerned.

2.2.3 CER’s ontology

Critical emancipatory research encourages participants’ collaboration and cooperation which are geared toward addressing their own problems and needs (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:47; César & Santos, 2006:333-346). In this way CER encourages socially constructed reality by the affected people (Mertens,

2010:18). The people who are confronted with/by a social problem and/or need tend to be better positioned in defining such problems (their reality) from their actual daily experiences. It is for this reason that CER strongly recommends that those who are affected by a social problem should also be participants in efforts and processes geared towards addressing their problems and needs (Biesta, 2012: 39; Mahlomaholo, 2012). Thus, CER accommodates diversity.

This study is premised on the researcher's desire to understand the multiple and variant social constructions of the participants' knowledge regarding access to higher education, simultaneously pursuing collaborative, democratic and participatory actions and efforts which are geared towards finding socially just and equitable solution to the problem (Jonson & Morris, 2010:86; Mertens, 2010:19). The researcher worked with the participants to understand the nature and extent of the problem of being provided with ineffective tutorial support and inefficient student support services, especially to students who reside in remote rural areas.

The main reason for engaging the participants' diverse views, experiences and knowledge is based on the subjective character of reality (Mertens, 2010:18). The view that reality is not objective is also supported by CER, traced from the discrepancies relating to access to and provision of higher education to learners residing in rural areas in relation to those who reside in urban areas. For instance, the learners in rural areas tend to be marginalised and have to pay more for accessing higher education than their urban counterparts. This issue is discussed at length under paragraph 2.3.4.

2.2.4 CER's epistemological stance

It is evident from the CER's ontological stance expounded in paragraph 2.2.3 above that the data generated and interpreted within specific contexts, including the backgrounds and experiences of the affected persons, presupposes that CER knowledge creation is contextual (Mertens, 2010:19; Stevenson, 2010:72). The contexts within which a problem and a need are situated and rooted are central to determining the extent and nature of the problems experienced, and the resultant processes and solutions. For instance, the community-based tutor is most likely to

thrive and be sustained in a rural context when there are many post-school learners. This may be misconstrued as undermining other critical factors in the successful and effective community tutor system, thus, it is from this context-based, context-driven reality that functional and relevant knowledge which addresses and responds to the current needs of the people is created (Johnson & Morrison, 2010:86).

Knowledge is conceived in this study as emancipatory, because it leads to solving real-life problems of people through an inclusive, collaborative, participatory and democratic processes (Liasidou, 2008: 486-487; Rocha-Schmid, 2010:344-345). It is important to note that as the processes towards creating socially relevant and functional knowledge unfold, a new reality (ontology) unfolds simultaneously. Thus, CER's diversity inclusive approaches towards creating knowledge and context-driven reality grounds the principle that the researcher should be embedded in the area of the study (Mertens, 2010:19), as it is the case with formulation of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through a community-based approach.

2.2.5 The role of the researcher, relationships with the participants

The researcher engages in the conceptualisation of the study by engaging in preparatory discussions and negotiations with prospective 'sponsors', education institutions, the students, parents, departments, public institutions and community-based development organisations. The main tasks of the researcher during the preparatory sessions include obtaining consensually the participants' informed consent for their voluntary participation, determining the scope of work of the study through formulation of the research question and its commensurate objectives. With a literature search the researcher gains experience and learns from the people he/she engages in critical discourses, helping to use the knowledge and skills derived from the processes. The sources of knowledge gained include previous experiences regarding people and resources management, leadership, negotiation and related skills. The researcher facilitated the creation of inter-subjective and communicative space by which the participants were enabled to engage their real-life education-related needs and problems. This involved critical analysis of their situation in relation to potentially repressive tendencies and socio-economic, political and cultural issues. The underlying purpose should be to find an implementable

solution to improve their situation. According to CER this engagement of the researcher and participants involves collective reflection and analysis of the context in order to identify the challenges (Crawford-Ferre & Wiest, 2012:11-14; Guthrie & McCracken, 2010:79).

The researcher and participants shared experiences and knowledge that could help them facilitate and enrich the processes towards the attainment of their intentions. The significance here is for the researcher to afford the participants an opportunity to make their thoughts, ideas and knowledge functional by allowing them to share experiences, having lived longer than the researcher on the research site and therefore having community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005:70). The process of making knowledge functional is preceded by critically examining the information provided by the participants and the researcher, and this is expected to facilitate those discussions in an open manner. He/she works tirelessly to engender an environment which is imbued by mutual respect and trust (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:46-62). In contrast, the positivist approach reduces persons to numbers and objects as it mainly seek to quantify in order to generalise. In the same vein, a researcher in the phenomenological terrain is to detach himself/herself from the situation so that “reality” should speak for itself. This assumption of a neutral stance is incomprehensible.

The researcher is expected to be as open to change as the participants are encouraged to be because they are more like co-researchers than like conventional subjects (Rowan, 1981:97). Critical emancipatory theory empowers the subjects and depowers the researcher, therefore the status of the researcher is equal to the researched. In this way the researcher has the opportunity to interpret other people’s interpretation, which requires that they be treated as equals. Thus, CER encourages the avoidance of use of concepts that tend to portray others as ‘super human beings’ whilst others are subordinates. The voices and views of the participants are not to be excluded from the main discourses on the basis of the perceived status and social class (Hickling-Hudson, 2006:2-4; Rocha-Schmid, 2010:343-358). This requires the researcher to be embedded in the situation as part of the mediation and an instrument for change (Kemmis, 2008:128-129). The researcher’s and the participants’ adoption of principles and values of mutual respect, trust and humility is

inescapable (Rocha-Schmid, 2010:343-358). The underlying purpose is to achieve a socially just and equitable provision and delivery of an effective tutoring system to the under privileged and under resourced communities (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:43; Mertens, 2010:238; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:142-143).

2.2.6 The relationship between the researcher and the participants

The participants in the projects from RSA and Namibia depict a situation imbued with issues of diversity and power relations. The diversity can be traced from race, culture, different skills and experiences or knowledge, and variances in socio-economic status (Ajadi, Salawu & Adeoye, 2008:61-70). Embedded in the diversity were inherent power relations struggles (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:141-143; Van Dijk, 2008:88). The sources of power can be traced from the positions that different participants wielded from learners to curriculum specialist, administrators and managers or leaders of the respective faculties (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:44-53). In order to successfully engender team work, the relationship of trust, respect and care should be developed (Rocha-Schmid, 2010:355).

The relationship between the researcher and the participants is built on the understanding and acceptance of the principle of 'power of difference', an acknowledgement that the diverse experiences, knowledge and cultures of people (contexts) make a difference (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:140-141; Stein & Mankowski, 2004:21-35). It lies in their respective contributions of the ideas and resources towards attaining their common goal. In South Africa, as in Malaysia for instance, the power of difference was in the team approach adopted when designing curricula (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:44-53). The involvement of people from local communities is however limited to people who have resources, whilst the learners' motivation levels help management to determine the extent to which the institution achieves its objectives (Ng & Kong, 2009:366-369). The relationship is characterised by openness and willingness to share experiences, views and ideas towards achieving the common goal or aim and objectives of the study. In Malaysia this tends has led to an "open entry" system of student intake for students who are willing to go through a test, providing information about the students' readiness and potential to follow an academic programme (Ng & Kong, 2009:363).

All participants act in the interest of the whole, beginning in everyday realities as a mutual process of discovery by which the researcher and the researched (participants) contribute to the expansion of the other's knowledge (Ledwith 2007:599). To ensure that every stage of the process is true to its claims, validity questions are set in consultation with everyone involved in the research process, as a system of checks and balances. If, for instance, the research claims to equalise power within the research process, what evidence is there that participants consider themselves as co-researchers? The relationship of the researcher and the participants is built on trustworthiness, and is based on common vision, purpose, and actions that aim to improve the status quo (Mahlomaholo & Netshadama, 2012:43; De Beaugrande, 2006:31).

As CER, according to Mahlomahlo and Netshandama (2012:43), is premised on the principles of hope, social justice, freedom, equity and peace, it is on the side of the marginalised and downtrodden. It strives to bring back the dignity of those who have been deprived of it, with social justice, and restores hope through democratisation and transformation of the society (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:142; Liasidou, 2008:483-500).

2.2.7 Rhetoric in critical emancipatory theory

The participants in research which is couched within the CER choose and use the language that respects others as human beings. The language is considerate of the importance of building relationships of mutual trust, humility and care (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:40-45), and so the tendency to carry the connotations of reducing people to objects, subjects, figures, numbers and sub-humans is avoided as far as possible. Critical emancipatory research involves people who participate in the study as participants, as opposed to 'subjects' as is the case in positivism and phenomenology (Reason & Bradbury, 2001:4). The annotation of 'subjects' gives the impression that the researcher wields more power (Mahlomaholo, 2009:225), which in some instances is wielded by the researcher over the subjects (Van Dijk, 2008:88). This may be associated with the institutions and their occupational responsibilities. CER posits that participants are co-researchers who should be

treated with respect. The purpose of equal treatment emanates from the human and humane natures of CER towards people, the speaking beings (Ledwith, 2007:599).

The benefit derived from this type of treatment is that the participants and co-researchers take ownership of their problems and together work towards finding solutions. This also enables them to appreciate the equality and equity (Kellner, 2000:3-6) of their views and social classes on matters pertaining to addressing the need for an effective tutor system (Van Dijk, 2008:88). This tends to dispel the inherent power differential in concepts such as respondents, interviewees and interviewer. This is when the interviewer or tutor appears to wield knowledge and power over the less knowledgeable people or learners. Often the power wielded is used to degrade the value of the knowledge including indigenous knowledge of the affected persons (Biesta, 2010:43; Piper & Piper, 2009:99). Thus, the use of concepts and words that are inconsistent with CER values and principles is avoided.

2.2.8 The value of critical emancipatory research

Critical emancipatory research enables the researcher to interact with the participants as equals with the latter being treated with respect (Mahlomaholo, 2009:13). In the same vein, Steinberg and Kincheloe (2010:140) support this view by indicating that “in the critical theoretical context, every individual is granted dignity regardless of his or her location. Thus, the continuation of human suffering by conscious human decision is morally unacceptable behaviour that must be analysed, interpreted and changed”. They also contend that in this reality critical theory grapples with issues of power, justice, and moral action and the ways that the economy, matters of race, class, gender, and sexuality, ideologies, discourses, religion, education, and other social dynamics interact to construct the social systems that shape the consciousness of the people. Critical emancipatory research demands an engagement with the suffering of the people of the lived world, and with the moral dilemmas that face them in the complexity of everyday life. It should not be arcane or esoteric academic discussion, but rather “It was developed to disrupt, to challenge, and to promote moral action.” (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:149).

Critical emancipatory research is used by those who seek emancipation to gain power to control their lives in solidarity with a justice-oriented community. Here the critics attempt to expose the forces that prevent individuals and groups from shaping the decisions that critically affect their lives (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:149). Ledwith (2007:599) states that an emancipatory methodology that is emerging from a participatory paradigm seeks to identify and change the root sources of oppression, thus it is not preoccupied with symptoms of oppression like other research methodologies. It engages with the causes of oppression, and as Ledwith (2007:599) states, it is founded on anti-oppressive ideology, thus encouraging the people to be involved. It is rooted in dialogue, attempting to work *with*, not *on* people, and it intends that its process should be empowering for all involved.

Education research can make a contribution to a critical educational science when the participants are the researchers and vice versa. This means that the differences in status and stature between the researcher and the participants are not emphasised and that there is closeness between them with open dialogue encouraged, in what Kemmis (2006:472) calls “communicative spaces”. This implies that participants participate voluntarily and are free to decide on their role, whether as speaker, listener or observer, or not to participate in the conversation.

The approach by which the participants are involved in analysing the situation or the circumstances in which they live, in order to jointly try to find a solution that will change their circumstances, was appropriate for this study, with shared ownership of the research projects, community-based analysis of social problems and orientation toward community action (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007:273). Bringing together broad social analyses, organisation and power in a local situation, and action to improve matters, led to CER being employed, with “strong commitment to participation as well as to the social analysis in the critical social science tradition that reveals the disempowerment and injustice created in industrialised societies.”(Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007:273).

According to Mahlomaholo (2009:225), in CER the researcher considers and regards the research “subjects” as human beings and equals, thus the role of the researcher is that of interpreting other people’s interpretations and analysing them. This framework helps researchers to be analytical, to go for deeper meaning and look at

all sides of the story. Kemmis (2006:471) also argues that critical participatory research should explore the constitution of practice in a deep, rich way, and bring to light and encourage communication about the variety of ways in which practices are understood, from a variety of standpoints and perspectives.

2.2.9 The effective tutor system in perspective through community-based approach

This section provides the historical background of the tutorial system and tutoring in order to enhance its conceptual location through a community-based approach. For the purposes of this study the background is entangled with theories of learning which have evolved over time and influenced its evolution as part of instructional design (Jonassen, Davidson, Collins, Campbell & Haag, 2009:7-26). This is conceived as having been begun by Winn's (1975:5-23) organismic view of the learner as one who interacts with the environment and acquires knowledge, skills, and competence from it. This opposed a reactive view of the learner as one who is controlled by instruction. In this process Winn promoted the use of cognitive instructional strategies, less reductionist forms of analysis, and a more holistic approach to learner interactions as a means of achieving that view (Winn, 1990:53-69). Cognitive models and processes of instructional design according to Champagne, Klopfer, and Gistone (1982:31-51) and Wildman and Burton (1981:5-14) have emphasised mental constructs such as information processing; schemata, knowledge structures, other knowledge states and learning strategies (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:26-34). All these models have emphasised the role of mental processing in learning.

The symbolic reasoning paradigm has been challenged by situated learning models (Clancy, 1991:139-168; Derry, 1992:413-418). As cognitive psychology modelled thinking in terms of abstract, symbolic reasoning processes, situated learning theory, on the other hand, emphasises the role of context in learning and questions whether learning is an individualistic or social phenomenon (Clancy, 1991:139-168; Derry, 1992: 413-418; Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25). Symbolic theorists believe that various forms of expert reasoning can be modelled and mapped onto learners' thinking patterns and that the mapping process can be controlled by instructional conditions.

The situated learning paradigm, on the other hand, argues that most learning is context-dependent and that what is learned is indexed by the experience surrounding it which assigns meaning to what is learned (Clancy, 1991:139-168; Derry, 1992:413-418; Jonassen, 2009:1-25). What is learned in the process of solving real-world problems is much richer and better understood because of this indexing. Situated learning and social construction theorists also believe that learning is necessarily a social, dialogical process in which communities of practitioners socially negotiate the meaning of phenomena (Clancy, 1991:139-168; Derry, 1992:413-418; Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25). Classroom lecturers however provide little of such richness because few connections are made:

Learning is conversation, and the thinking and intelligence of a community of performers or learners is distributed throughout the group. Knowledge and intelligence is not the privilege of an individual, but rather is shared by community of practice (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009: 1-25).

On a philosophical level, a symbolic reasoning-situated learning dialectic is discussed in terms of objectivist and constructivist epistemologies (Jonassen, 1991:5-14). The dominant and traditional objectivist paradigm, which provides the foundation for symbolic reasoning, assumes that the world is structured, that structure can be modelled and mapped into the learner, and that the goal of the learner is to “mirror” reality as interpreted by the instructor. Knowledge is thus external to the knower and so can be transferred (communicated) from one person to another, the learner’s role being to remember and reproduce the knowledge that is transmitted by the teacher or professor. These assumptions, according to Jonassen *et al.* (2009:1-25), are most often manifested in what Schank and Jona (1991:1-25) call the “sponge method” of instruction by which the teacher imparts knowledge to learners who are expected to absorb it. During the assessment phase the knowledge that learners should have acquired from the teacher is “wrung out” of them, and “The quality of learning is considered a function of how well the student can reproduce the thinking of the instructor” (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:23).

Constructivism, which provides the psychological/philosophical foundation for situated learning begins with different sets of assumptions about learning. Constructivists believe that our personal world is constructed in our minds and that

these personal constructions define our personal realities (Jonassen, 2009: 18-19). The mind is the instrument of thinking which interprets events, objects, and perspectives rather than seeking to remember and comprehend an objective knowledge. The important epistemological assumption of constructivism is that knowledge is a function of how the individual creates meaning from his or her experiences. It is not a function of what someone else says is true. Each of us conceives of external reality somewhat differently, based upon our unique set of experiences with the world and beliefs about them:

Constructivist educators strive to create environments where learners are required to examine thinking and learning processes; collect, record, and analyze data; formulate and test hypothesis; reflect on previous understandings; and construct their own meaning (Crotty, 1994:31-37).

The constructivist sense of active learning is not listening then mirroring the correct view of reality, but rather participating in and interacting with the surrounding environment in order to create a personal view of the world (Bruner, 1990:2; Crotty, 1994:31-37; Jonassen *et al.* 2009:1-25). Bruner (1990:2) explains that constructivists engage the learners so that the knowledge they construct is not inert, but rather usable in new and different situations. The purpose of this revolution in learning theory is not so much to predict learning outcomes from instructional interventions as “to discover and to describe formally the meanings that human beings create out of their encounters with the world, and then to propose hypotheses about what meaning-making processes were implicated” (Bruner, 1990:2).

Meaning making, according to constructivists, is the goal of learning process, requiring articulation and reflection on what we know. The process of articulation and reflection involves both internal negotiation and social negotiation (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25). Norman (1993:261-277) writes that meaning is the understanding that we derive from the articulation and reflection processes, as a reflective form of knowledge. The application of that meaning in real-world practice is referred to by Norman (1993:261-277) as ‘experiential knowledge’. Thus, experiential and reflective knowledge emerge from interactions with the world, and both are required for performing most real-world tasks. An important emphasis of constructivist beliefs about learning, according to Lave and Wenger (1991:11-131), is the need for

embedding learning in real-world situations in which learners function as a part of a community of practitioners helping to solve real-world problems. Learning can be best facilitated through the design and implementation of constructivist tools and learning environments that foster personal meaning-making and discourse among communities of learners (socially negotiating meaning) rather than instructional interventions that control the sequence and content of instruction or seek to map a particular model of thinking onto the learners (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25). An important inference of this belief, according to Jonassen *et al.* (2009:1-25), is that the role of the designer shifts from creating prescriptive learning situations to developing environments that engage learners and require them to construct the knowledge that is most meaningful to them. The principles by which those learning environments may be built focus on four general systemic attributes: context, construction, collaboration, and conversation:

Constructivist environments engage learners in knowledge construction through collaborative activities that embed learning in a meaningful context and through reflection on what has been learned through conversation with other learners (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25).

Context, according to Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989), includes features of the 'real world' setting in which the task to be learned might naturally be accomplished. These features, which are replicated as faithfully as possible in the learning environment, may include the physical, organisational, cultural, social, political, and power issues related to the application of the knowledge being learned. Attention to context, a central tenet of constructivist learning theories, such as situated cognition and cognitive apprenticeships, prevents learning environments from being sterilised into predetermined instructional sequences.

Construction of knowledge is the result of an active process of articulation and reflection within context, and as Jonassen (1991:5-14) states, the knowledge that is created is a product of the mind and results from the individual's experiences with and interpretations of the context. Those experiences can be encountered in learning environments as well as in the real world. Learning environments are constructivist only if they allow individuals or groups of individuals to make their own meaning out

of what they experience rather than requiring them to learn the teacher's interpretation of that experience or content.

Seaton (1993:49-54) writes that collaboration among learners or performers occurs throughout the learning process, whilst for Jonassen *et al.* (2009:1-25) it aids in developing, testing, and evaluating different beliefs and hypotheses within learning contexts. Through a process of articulating covert processes and strategies, learners are able to build new and modify existing knowledge structures. Collaboration is the focus of constructivist distance learning activities (Seaton, 1993: 49-54), whilst conversation is helped by collaboration, as in this case individuals and groups must negotiate plans for solving situated problems before initiating them. This planning therefore involves reflecting on what is known, what needs to be known, the viability of various plans, and their potential effectiveness: "Conversation is an essential part of the meaning-making process because knowledge, for most of us is language mediated" (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25).

As indicated above, the role of the tutors in this case moves away from creating prescriptive learning situations to developing environments that engage learners in the learning process as learners are required to construct the knowledge that is most meaningful to them. Moore (1990:6-9) states that other pedagogical objectives of tutoring are that the purpose of tutorials is not to instruct or convey information so much as to induce students to consider ways to evaluate evidence and make connections among diverse pieces of evidence. Palfreyman (2001:1-28) advocates that tutoring is the goal of teaching students to think for themselves and to develop skills in self-directed learning. According to Ryan (2001:78-86), when students are repeatedly prompted by their tutors they are encouraged to engage in self-questioning, thus they learn to evaluate evidence independently, question their beliefs, and reformulate their theories. This process is intended to bolster students' confidence in their conclusions and opinions:

Our theory is that tutors, with various levels of awareness, seek to balance their structurally superior roles by placing students in the teacher role. One way they do this is by creating an environment in which tutors and students work together to help students think for themselves. But, this is accomplished

primarily when students assume the teacher role leading to the social arrangement that we have called co-teaching (Beck, 2007:1-26)

A tutor is an instructor who gives private lessons or provides supplementary education (Gordon, 2008:445), and tutors were used for many years to tutor individuals in different fields and skills. Tutoring has become a familiar tool that schools use to reinforce classroom teaching and improve learner achievement (Gordon, Morgan, O'Molloy, Ponticell, 2007:3). Tutoring, according to Gutierrez (2011:1-18), can mean many things, and its effectiveness varies with ratio, dosage and training of tutors, as well as the adherence to clear rules, expectations and measures of success (Cohen, Kulik & Kulik, 1982:237-248).

Most studies have found that tutoring has had a major impact on the academic achievement of students, whether private or public and whether at school or higher education level (Gutierrez, 2011:1-18). Research also indicates that small group tutoring sessions are better than large ones, and that tutoring of all ages can be effective (Cohen, Kulik & Kulik, 1982:237-248; Gutierrez, 2011:1-18). The most notable example of a tutor is Aristotle, who tutored Alexander the Great on a one-to-one basis. A tutor is not to be confused with a teacher who is employed in the education of groups (Beck, 2007:1-26 but rather should encourage active learning (Beck, 2007:1-26). Chickering and Gamson (1987:75-81) contend that learning is not a spectator sport in which students sit in classes listening to a teacher, memorising pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers.

At Brown University in the United States of America (USA), faculty members and students have designed a course on contemporary issues and universal themes in which students help the professors as teaching assistants (Chickering & Gamson, 1999:75-81). Such active learning is encouraged in a learning environment that uses structured exercises, challenging discussions, team projects, and peer critiques (Chickering & Gamson, 1999:75-81). Musal, Taskiran and Kelson (2009:4) also found in their research on tutoring that the best performing tutoring programmes have such qualities as: (1) training of tutors on effective instructional strategies, and (2) close collaboration with the students' classroom teacher to maximise effectiveness.

Although most of the researchers feel that tutoring sessions need to be well-structured, Beck (2007:1-26) advises that such practices might serve to reinforce the structural hierarchy if not used with sensitivity and discretion. It is thus imperative that tutors seek to maintain equality in their relationships in the environment in which they are endowed with power. This can be achieved by, *inter alia*, engaging students in the tutoring role (Beck, 2007:1-26). It is imperative at this juncture to define and discuss the operational concepts in order to enhance common understanding of the deliberations relating to the tutor system.

2.3. DEFINITION AND DISCUSSION OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS

This discussion serves to dispel the inherent notions of multiple meanings assigned to the operational concept of the 'framework for the tutor system that is community-based'. It derives its complexity from the different meanings attached to the individual concepts, namely 'framework', 'tutor' and 'system', which constitute it. Its complexity may also be traceable to the immanent disagreements associated with the theories of learning (Ertmer & Newby, 1993:50-68; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:54) (also see paragraph 2.7). This is relevant to this discussion because a tutor system is more about learning and teaching (tutoring) than it is about the 'tutor' (VanLehn, 2011:1-2), and the concept of an effective tutor system through a community-based approach may be construed. It may be made complex by the plethora of socio-economic, political and cultural processes (Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:54) associated with the study's critical participatory and democratic action (Kemmis, 2008:121-138) of the community.

At the core of effective tutor system, is the development and facilitation of processes and mechanisms geared towards enabling equitable access (DHET, 2012:11) of learning opportunities to the marginalised (Young, 1992:63), post-school, out-of-school, and out-of-campus learners (DHET, 2013:1-75). The scarcity of attention to and the silence on making tutor systems sustainable is rectified by given expression through the design and implementation of the framework for effective TS through a community-based approach. The effective tutor system is conceived as an inter-subjective space (Kemmis, 2008:130; Wicks & Reason, 2009:244-249) for the respective local community's democratic and participatory action and engagement

(Sayed, 2002:38-42). Thus, special attention and focus of the effective tutor system through community-based approaches is on the creation of sustainable tutoring environments, which is an integral part of the sustainable empowering learning environments (SULE) (Mahlomaholo, 2012:11-12).

In the context of sustainable learning empowering environments, the focus of an effective tutor system leans toward the empowerment of the affected learners, their families, the community in which they live and the broader society (Sayed, 2002:35-38). The inclusion and equitable consideration of the views of the affected people at local level, gives context within which the design and implementation of the framework can take place (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:50; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:54). Also, the inclusion of local (micro level) enhances their cooperation and collaboration (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:49-52) with people and structures at macro level, in this case the institution (UNISA), its regional offices/learning centres in South Africa (DHET, 2013:1-75), and the tutoring centres in the case of Namibia (Haufiku, n.d.:1). Furthermore, the inclusion of affected persons in this way fosters democracy and impels the participants' prolonged and continued participation (Sayed, 2002:38-39).

The various interpretations of the concept of learning about which the effective TS/ tutoring is concerned in this study emanate from the paradigm shifts that befell learning theories over time (Ertmer & Newby, 1993:54). According to Ertmer and Newby (1993:66), as one moves along the behaviour-cognitivist-constructivist continuum the focus of instruction shifts from teaching to learning, from the passive transfer of facts and routines to the active application of ideas to problems.

According to Jonassen (1991:5), this transformation started in the late 1950s with psychologists such as Chomsky, Simon and Miller. Furthermore, Jonassen (1991:11) makes us aware through his exposition of situated learning that learning occurs most effectively in context, and context becomes an important part of the knowledge base associated with that learning. So, rather than decontextualizing learning in isolated school environments we should create real-world environments that employ the context in which the learning is relevant. Qakisa-Makoe (2005:54) supports this and relates it to Vygotsky's view that humans are embedded in social context and that human behaviour cannot be understood independently of their contexts. Vygotsky's (1978:63-69) view is explained through this zone of proximal

development (ZPD) approach. This approach emphasises the importance of adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers towards the learners' development.

The above contextual exposition and location of the effective TS in SULE is consistent with the learning in context as explained or postulated by Vygotsky. The focus of the effective TS is learning and learning facilitation processes, activities and resources. For purposes of this study, learning is conceived as being intertwined with the socio-economic, political and cultural processes. Pursuant of facilitating learning/tutoring in context, the values of mutual respect and trust are inculcated in the participants in order to consolidate their sustained participation. The vision and mission address issues of equity, social justice, peace, hope and freedom for the affected community.

Based on the above discussion the operational concept that is identified and discussed in this section is the framework for the effective tutor system. This concept comprises the three other concepts, namely framework, tutor and system, which are briefly described and discussed in the context of this study.

2.3.1 Framework

The *Concise English Oxford Dictionary* (1990) defines 'framework' as a supporting or underlying structure, whilst the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1989) defines it as a set of ideas, rules or beliefs from which something is developed or on which decisions are based. In the same vein, Kabi (2013:1-350) discusses this concept and describes it as a structure that is employed to support or enhance the management of the study's long-term objectives. He further acknowledges Lynne (2004:2), who contends that the "reasonable use of a framework can significantly reduce overall project risks and lead to a better chance of success." A major benefit of a framework is that it leads to improved collaboration, communication and decision-making.

This study is imbued with inherent risks and threats (Lynne, 2004:2) which must be curbed in order to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system. The risks referred to can be addressed by and through the efforts of the affected participants through

their inescapable engagements in this regard. This requires that they work collaboratively and communicate their joint decisions (Labonte & Laverack, 2001:111-127) in a manner that will benefit them and the tutor system as a whole (see chapter 3, regarding the participation of the participants in this study). It is therefore imperative to have for purposes of this study, a framework, which is a set of principles, ideas, structures and processes which support and strengthen the design and implementation of the community-based tutor system.

The framework affords the diverse experiences of the participants an opportunity to be expressed (Biesta, 2010:45; Hertz-Lazarowitz, Zelniker & Azaiza, 2010). The framework should *inter alia* be an inter-subjective space (Wicks & Reason, 2009) in which the participants' views regarding the community-based tutor system find equitable consideration (Van Dijk, 2008:88-89). The mutual respect and trust (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010) with which the participants address each other facilitate their freedom of expression whilst encouraging social responsibility (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012). The social responsibility referred to in this case manifests in the participants' commitment towards designing and implementing a community tutor system on a sustainable basis.

2.3.2 The tutor

The *South African Pocket Oxford Ductionary* (3rd edition), defines tutor as a private teacher who teaches a single pupil or a very small group. Or a University or college teacher responsible for students assigned to him or her. These definitions are in line with the observation that initially a tutor was an instructor who gave private lessons. A tutor is not to be confused with a teacher who is employed in the education of groups. To tutor (as a verb) is to perform the functions of a tutor. The core skills required for effective tutoring are categorised as: (i) supportive, helping learners deal with issues not related to content that may affect their learning; (ii) guiding, helping learners to understand the content that may affect their learning); (iii) enabling, developing and applying appropriate learning process effectively; and (iv) administrative, serving as a link between learners and administrative issues (O'Rourke, 2003:1-18).

Tutors, like teachers, must have sound pedagogical competence (Gutierrez, 2011:1-18), or what Shulman (1986:3-36) describes as the combination of pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. The widespread use of effective pedagogical practices therefore must be at the core of any agenda to promote student success. This, according to Chickering and Gamson (1987: 3-7), and Hutchings (1996:221-234) is described as the value of restructuring a teaching and learning environment to maximise student learning. This is characterised by a shift in emphasis from faculty teaching to student learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995:12-25), with the students expected to take more responsibility for their learning, demonstrating competency through assessment, and validating alternative ways of knowing, using interdisciplinary methods, and engaging in problem-focused learning.

Institutions that adopt educational philosophies that value undergraduate learning also tend to encourage the use of such engaging pedagogies as active and collaborative learning, class-based problem solving, peer teaching, service-learning, and various forms of electronic technologies (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges & Hayek, 2006:1-156). Other promising instructional practices are supplemental instruction, peer tutoring, reciprocal teaching, attribution retraining, concept-knowledge maps, and one-minute papers. According to Bourner (1997:344-348), the greater repertoire of teaching methods the more effective the learning experience, especially when teaching approaches are aligned with student ability and preferred learning styles and aims.

Rendon (1999:195-204) found that “validation” is an enabling, confirming, and supportive process initiated by faculty and other agents of socialisation in and out of the classroom, that fosters success, particularly for historically disadvantaged and underserved students. Validation activities in a teaching and learning context include calling students by name, working one-to-one, praising and providing encouragement and support, encouraging them to see themselves as capable of learning, and providing vehicles for mutual support and praise. These validation actions can induce transformational changes, accompanied by increased interest and confidence in their capacity to learn.

Volkwein, Valle, Parmley, Blose and Zhou (2000:12) reported that the most influential variables in students’ academic achievement and cognitive growth were

items about faculty behaviour, being well prepared for class and designing assignments students considered meaningful. These also appear to be associated with gains in students' cognitive development (Pascarella, 2001:20-27). According to Ngara and Ngwarai (2013:42-54), a tutor as a counsellor should be given moral support. The tutors should be trustworthy, flexible and approachable in order to effectively counsel students. They must also be perceived by students as caring and approachable (Armstrong, 1996)

A teacher is generally employed to work from the school although he/she is expected to display professional conduct, even during non-teaching times, in the community. Tutors tend to be better exposed to conditions where they are enabled to give individualised instruction. The tutoring times may be differentiated from the normal teaching time as it is more flexible and amenable to the demands of the participants, namely the tutor and the learner(s). A tutor appears to wield more power than the learner. He/she is expected to 'give' private lessons to the learners for whom he/she is appointed, and is under pressure to produce better results in a more relaxed working conditions than those of the teacher.

The tutor system is imbued with power relations because of the involvement of the tutor, who should have more knowledge power than the learner (tutee) (Young, 2009:1-395). The abuse of the knowledge wielded by the dominant participant may be detrimental to the tutee and or his/her environment (Biesta, 2012:40)

2.3.3 Tutor system

The concept of 'system' refers to an arrangement or organisation of items, namely activities, resources and processes in such a way that they work together towards producing the anticipated results. A system comprises of more than one component, arranged in a way that complements and supports the other components towards a common goal. The term 'system' presupposes orderliness and/or sequencing of efforts and actions/activities. For instance, the tutor system or tutorial support at Oxford University tends to have a relatively small number of students, with one tutor working with between one and six students, most commonly two (Ashwin, 2005:653). One of the great strengths of the tutorial system at Oxford, according to Shale

(2001:98), is that it enables tutors and students to engage in dialogue that demands more sophisticated levels of understanding and suggests new conceptions of learning.

The tutor system, according to Shale (2001:98), encourages students to make the discovery that higher learning is different from, and more demanding of them than, learning as they may previously have conceived of it. The tutor system or tutorial system is a very important part of learner support (Beck, 2007:445-456) and comprises activities beyond the production and the delivery of course materials that assist in the progress of learners in their studies (Haufiku, n.d.:2) Some of the prospective students are geographically situated in remote areas in which they cannot access academic or administrative support from the respective community learning centres (Larson & Murray, 2008:175-196). There are numerous ways and methods that have been developed to support learners who find themselves in such conditions, ranging from face-to-face, or peer-tutoring, intelligent tutoring system, auto-tutoring, on-line tutoring and simulated tutoring (Putnam, 1987:13; Heron, Villarreal, Yao, Christianson & Heron, 2006:27; Graeser, Wiemer-Hastings, Wiemer-Hastings, Harter and Person, 2000:129-147; Fung and Carr, 2010:35-46).

2.3.4 Framework for effective tutor system through community-based approach

The framework for an effective tutor system through a community-based approach is geared towards learning and development (Williams & Ronan, 2013:1-13). It comprises principles, theories or ideas, processes and structures which are oriented towards a way of working with and supporting the community (Curran, Kerr, Peacock & Wallace, 2004:1). The principles of the framework are social justice, equity, freedom, peace and hope (RSA, 1996a, s9, s10; s15, s16, s24). These principles encourage social inclusion towards increasing the skills, confidence, networks and resources needed to tackle the problems and grasp opportunities (Curran, Kerr, Peacock & Wallace, 2004:1). They require the participants in the development and implementation of a community-based tutor system to have mutual trusts and respect (Williams & Ronan, 2013:1-13) as they interact on a daily basis.

The framework for an effective tutor system through a community-based approach also includes ideas and theories of learning (Ertmer & Newby, 1993:50-72; Jonassen, Davidson, Collins, Campbell & Haag, 2009:7-26, Winn, 1990:53-69) which support understanding of the extent and nature of learning processes. This creates space and opportunity for the promotion and recognition of indigenous knowledge emanating from diverse social and cultural backgrounds of the participants and community members (Bandura, 1986:206). The variant and diverse learning styles that learners bring to the tutor system will be better understood and adapted where possible.

Other aspects of the framework for an effective tutor system are the structures which include the physical facilities and resources (Onguko, 2007:49-57), such as learning spaces, classrooms, community halls, computer laboratories and science laboratories (see chapter 4 paragraph 4.2.3). The use of these facilities requires arrangements to be made for them to be accessed, through negotiations with the affected participants (Aref, 2010:1-4; Lasker, Weiss & Miller, 2001:179-205). This in turn relies on the principles and values espoused above.

In the same vein, the processes of team establishment to facilitate SWOT, collaborative planning, policy determination and monitoring and reflections are imperative. These processes are intended to determine the extent to which the effective tutor system will be sustainable (see chapter 4). The participants' engagement in them may have a bearing on the quality of their contributions, with views, experiences and resources where applicable during these processes. It is as critical that the community-based tutor system be conceptualised appropriately as this will also inform the framework through community-based approaches.

2.4 RELATED LITERATURE

The framework derives lessons from related best practices in distance learning from the RSA's emergent learner support at UNISA (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:4553), and effective learner support services and systems at the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) (Haufiku, n.d.:1-8), Zambia, Nigeria and Malaysia. These best practices and lessons are drawn against the background, clarifications, definitions

and discussions of the operational concepts. The study explores how the best practiced models conceptualised and operationalised the tutorial systems, tutoring, tutor training and learner support systems, and relates the observations made with the principles of CER as explained above (2.2.7). The main reason for this is to identify and develop the constructs for each of the study's objectives and to work out organising principles to guide the formulation of the strategy.

In all the projects from RSA, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Malaysia, the literature confirms the leadership and management of a tutorial system through an establishment of dedicated teams. This issue is clearly spelt out in the RSA project in which Sonnekus *et al.* (2006:47) contend that "courses are designed using a team approach." They further explain the importance of considering diverse skills and competencies as a possible criterion for team establishment. The nature of the work to be done by the team determines to a large extent the types of skills and competencies that may be required. It is for this reason that the team assigned the responsibility to design courses is understood as not being necessarily responsible for all other functions of the project. It is conceived as a partner and participant in achieving the objective of designing courses, whilst another team might be responsible for compiling courses into study material for students to access. Similarly, in Nigeria the National Commission for Open Distance Education served as a team (Fagbamiye, 2002:3-4; Jegede, 2002:1-3; UNESCO, 2002) that worked with student support centres towards meeting the demand for education. The members of the teams also contributed their expertise, skills and power towards addressing a growing demand for higher education (DHET, 2012:1-33; Mapolisa, 2013: 278-285; Okonkwo, 2011:167-178).

It is evident that teams should have objectives and missions which they must accomplish. For instance, in Namibia as in RSA and Nigeria, NAMCOL was established in order "to provide a programme of secondary education for those who cannot or do not wish to attend conventional schools to study" (Haufiku, n.d.: 1). This is conceived as indicative of respect for the learners' rights as well as of the legislative imperative relating to education (DHET, 2012:1-33; 2013:1-75). Sonnekus *et al.* (2006:45) describe part of the vision and mission of UNISA as being to "serve the development needs ...", thus bestowing upon the team and participants with the

prerogative to facilitate the creation of conditions and mechanisms conducive to the development objectives. In seeking to clarify the nature of the problems it impels the team and participants to understand the complexities of situations in which they are enmeshed. This in turn makes them realise the need to formulate plans to resolve the problems or challenges (Zuber-Skerit, 2011:1-239). As in Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Malaysia, the vision for the development and implementation of the tutor system was also to ensure equitable access to education (DHET, 2012a:11). This is in recognition of the need for the (re)distribution of resources, skills and knowledge following the oppressive practices of the previous regimes as well as the subtle continuation thereof (Fraser, 1999:73-75; Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:37; Nkoane & Lavia, 2012:58).

Denying learners and communities access to educational opportunities (Ajadi, Salawu & Adeoye, 2008:63) on the basis of dwindling financial resources and fiscal constraints (Umbe-Uve, 2007:77-83), as in the RSA, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, is equated to structural oppression (Young, 1992:56), thus to the structurally oppressed learners and communities, as well as a team of mediators to their situation, this act of the learners' marginalisation (Young, 1992:63) is socially unjust (Fraser, 1999:72-74). May (1979:414). As Mapolisa (2013:278) states, this leads *inter alia* to extinction of indigenous languages and knowledge.

The team(s) of mediators, namely people who 'empathise' with the marginalised learners (Kellner, 2000:3) facilitate situational analysis processes to gain better understanding of the realities that distract learners' equitable access to education. There should be a clear understanding of the extent to which different modes of delivery of education, such as television, radio, Internet, and provision of the asynchronous and synchronous facilities and the establishment of community learning centres are utilised (Grundling, 1999:1-17; Othman, Atan & Guan, 2005:3; Saba, 2012:33; Safie, 2004:1). The analysis of the situation, monitoring and reflection are intricately connected and are critical for the sustenance of the CBTS and so are an integral part of creating a sustainable community-based tutor system.

In Nigeria and Malaysia the teams that were assigned to establish the tutorial/tutor systems (Baggley & Belawati, 2009:22; Ng & Kong, 2009:92-106, Santos & Okada, 2007:2) analysed their respective situations of their respective remote areas and

came up with priorities and possible solutions. The establishment of learning support centres with basic reference to material, tutorial facilities, Internet, printing and fax facilities, were identified as main themes. The recommendations in the form of timeframes and resources allocated to activities were made for each priority and recorded as strategic plan which encompassed carefully defined and inclusive procedures that provided participants with a clear vision of their directions and intentions (Zuber-Skeritt, 2011:157-166). It enabled the stakeholders to describe a vision and action plan that laid out the tasks and steps required to enact each of the activities. This collaborative planning is necessary to enhance consensus among the people in the community (SAIDE, 2000:11) and empowers the team of mediators and the participants to manage and lead the tutor system efficiently and effectively (Pfukwa & Matipano, 2006:61; Saba, 2012:31).

Training of tutors and learners is another prominent issue in the literature, especially with regard to the effective utilisation of the facilities (Baggley & Belawati, 2009:22; Ndahi, 1999:1-12; Rogers, 1995). According to Ndahi (1999:1-12), in spite of the technological improvements, some instructors or tutors and staff at Universities still resist being trained and being knowledgeable about distance teaching and technology. This is also raised by Thach and Murphy (1995:58-79), for whom much training is required to introduce staff to new techniques, otherwise they rely on their existing knowledge and skills. Bruffee (1993:1-240) found that when tutors underwent training they were given an opportunity to raise and address institutional issues collaboratively, which may impact on or emerge from their tutoring.

The legislation and policies that support the design and implementation of initiatives (Amba-Uva, 2007:73; Ng & Kong, 2009:92-106, Santos & Okada, 2007:2), such as effective TS through community-based approaches, synergise efforts and views of the participants. Such legislation promotes democratic principles of equity, social justice, peace, freedom and hope (Selby & Goldstein, 2000:1-40; Tyler & Smith, 1995:1-7). When the UNESCO declaration of 1995 calls upon signatory states and relevant parties within society to “work to achieve full implementation of the objectives of education for peace, human rights and democracy and to contribute in this way to sustainable development and to a culture of peace” it sums up the goal of

living in peace with the Earth, fostering inner peace, social justice, equity and educating students to reflect on the future (UNESCO, 1995).

There are similarities in this regard in countries such as Malaysia, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Nigeria (Amba-Uva, 2007:73; Ng & Kong, 2009: 92-106, Santos & Okada, 2007:2). In Malaysia, government policies encourage the formation of public and private partnerships that assist in the establishment of regional centres to provide easier access to learning resources and systems (Baggley & Belawati, 2009:22). In RSA the promotion of equity is encouraged (DHET, 2012:11). In recent years, policies have fostered quality in key areas and services, including the tutor system (Jung, 2005:10; Maloney & Tello, 2003:16; Fink, 2002:27; Strauss, 2002:13; Janvier & Ghaoui, 2003:162; Danchak, 2002:2; Soles & Moller, 2001:12). The significance of policy is depicted by Fagbamiye (2002), who notes that lack of clear-cut government policy on distance education was the root of Nigeria's backwardness in distance education.

The legislation and policies that support the establishment of TS do not guarantee the implementation of such policies, necessitating initiatives such as the effective tutor system through community-based approaches to be thoroughly investigated and established.

2.4.1 The need for designing the framework

This section considers possible mechanism(s) for setting up an effective tutor system through community-based approach with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of current practices of the tutor system. This is necessitated mainly by the exclusion and subjugation (Ayers, 2005:527-549; Clancy, 1991:139-168; Derry, 1992:413-418; Jonassen, 2009:1-25) of the interests and views of the affected persons in the main discourses affecting tutoring and tutor system as a whole. This makes difficult the integration of diverse knowledge, experiences, styles of learning, and backgrounds (Mahlomaholo, 2009) of the affected people in the development of a framework for and setting up an effective tutor system (O'Rourke, 2003:18). The limited participation of affected persons in the tutor system is conceived as being accountable for the non-achievement of targeted participation rate (DHET, 2012:11a)

by the concerned institutions as well as the lower throughput rates at programme level (GP, 2012; DHET, 2012a:11; Subotzky & Prinsloo, 2011:1; Underhill & McDonald, 2010: 91-106). The affected persons develop a feeling of desolation and isolation and as a result do not relate to the system or own its practices.

The engagement of affected participants in the setting up of a tutor system is often commercialised for convenience of the institution as opposed to learners' and community interests (Ayers, 2005:527-549; O'Rourke, 2003:18). The other partners tend to be people and organisations that wield power and influence over the learners and other members of the public. They fail to respond positively to the inherent demands of social equality and the recognition of difference (Fraser, 2009:73; Wicks & Reason, 2009:243-262). The effective tutor system through community-based approaches is indispensable in the light of the growing demand for higher education (DHET, 2012a:11), having surpassed the capacity of institutions of higher learning to meet it (DHET, 2012a:11).

The framework seeks to keep pace with current developments, trends and best practices that are informed by current theoretical underpinnings to learning (Jonassen, Davidson, Collins, Campbell & Haag, 2009:7-26). It aims to contribute towards addressing the great pressure from school-leavers who should register at universities and technical, vocational education and training (TVET) colleges, the need to expand distance higher education in which access issues are at the forefront, and the need to turn access into a reasonable chance of success by focussing on quality of provision. Thus, the effective tutor system seeks to contribute towards the achievement of the vision of DHET to increase the number of learners enrolling in TVET colleges, and to address the acute skills shortages of the economy and the learning needs of individual (Green Paper, 2012:27). For these reasons, it clearly articulates the missions, principles and values that enable coherence of purpose of the local participants in relation to a tutor system. In order to achieve this, a team of mediators is required.

2.4.1.1 *A dedicated team*

There is sufficient evidence in the literature and policy documents (Jung, 2005:10; DHET, 2012a:11; DHET, 2012b:30; Maloney & Tello, 2003:16; Maguire, 1987:657-666) that points to the significance of leadership and management of programmes and projects. The significance of these is in influencing social change to determine its direction as well as to develop and maintain appropriate systems for the enhancement of achieving the set goal(s) (Bush, 2007:391-406). The leadership and management tasks of projects and programmes are often performed by dedicated teams, therefore the development of a framework requires a team of mediators who would influence social change with the affected persons in the direction of the excluded and subjugated voices (Derry, 1992:413-418; Rocha-Schmid, 2010:355)

The members of the team contribute their skills, competencies and resources to the respective projects and programmes (Simpson, 2010:3-41; Bringle & Steinberg, 2010:428-441). These diverse and multiple resources are harmonised through agreed upon processes and systems towards a common goal (Reed, 2008:1-8). The interests of the individuals are often subjugated and/or aligned with those of the organisation or project they serve (Jason *et al.*, 2004:1-9; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2010:1-544). In this way they share the vision which subsequently focusses their efforts and resources. In order to achieve this synergy, the members of the dedicated team also share a common set of values and principles.

In RSA, for instance, the Ministry of Higher education facilitated a workshop of concerned specialists to map the way forward regarding the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education (DHET, 2012:30). The workshop was co-sponsored by CHE/HEQC and HESA as well as the Ministry of Communications. The membership of the Task Team should therefore be drawn from the higher education community and from specialist organisations working in the field of open and distance learning. The resulting recommendations should be directed primarily to the higher education community itself, though the MHET will expect to facilitate the work that will need to be done (DHET, 2012:30). The involvement of the participants was mainly to enhance access to resources as they would contribute funds towards the logistical arrangements of the workshop. The specialist organisations would contribute their specialist knowledge and skills. The participants

in turn, derived benefits from the knowledge generated during the workshop. The generated knowledge that comes as recommendations empowers the ministry of higher education and training (MHET) and the higher education and training (HET) sector. This is evident in the facilitation of the work that will need to be done, as per the recommendations.

In the same way, the coordinating team of mediators for the development of a framework for community-based tutor system needs to interrogate and operationalise the Ministry of Education directives (specialists' recommendations). The significance of their mediatory role is *inter alia* in the determination of the extent to which the local communities and learners (subjugated voices) can contribute to realising the directive of the Ministry. The team of mediators is tasked with ensuring that, for instance, the vision is realised in the process, and it is committed to access and equity in the post-school and higher education sector, with focus on the protection of learners and community interests.

The role of the team extends to facilitating the creation of learning environments that will enable learners as individuals or groups “to make their own meaning of what they experience rather than requiring them to learn the teacher’s interpretation of that experience or content” (Jonassen et al., 2009: 1-25). In order for the team members to achieve this they need to encourage open communication and dialogue (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25) amongst the participants who are mainly the learners and the community members. This creates an opportunity for the coordinating team to liaise, network and partner with other relevant social structures in the development of a community-based tutor system. There was however no dedicated team to attend to issues of designing and implementing a framework for a community-based tutor system in the area of this study.

2.4.1.2 *Vision and mission*

The effective tutor system is goal-directed (Wang & Kreysa, 2006:1-25), with participants and coordinating team members working toward a vision that unifies their efforts and clarifies the nature of the problem that brought them together and deepen their understanding of its complexities. This compels the participants to

formulate plans that will correspond to the nature and extent of complexities they found (Zuber-Skerrit, 2011:1-239).

The effective tutor system derives its goal from a plethora of complexities and realities associated with learner support systems, mechanisms, processes and activities. The goal of an effective tutor is traceable to the underlying goals of teaching and learning, which include the principles for good practice in undergraduate education (Chickering & Gamson, 1999:75-81). The coordinating team for the effective tutor system through community-based approaches comprises members from diverse backgrounds (see paragraph 2.5.1.1), so as to enhance achievement of equity and access (DHET, 2012a:11) to teaching and learning opportunities. It recognises and seeks to (re)distribute the participants' multiple skills and competencies for the benefit of the less advantaged learners and communities (DHET, 2012a:30; Fraser, 1999:73). This requires the coordinating team of the effective tutor system (TS) to develop a clear mission, which should articulate and synergise the participants' diverse interests and aspirations toward enhancing achievement of equitable access to education, for the despondent post-school and out-of-school youth and adults in rural areas.

It is thus imperative for the participants to be well versed with the realities that define the context within which the effective tutor system is to be implemented. This will enhance their understanding of the vision, determination and operationalisation of mechanisms that would ensure the achievement thereof. As a result, the context is also critical in the determination of the form that the effective TS will take. The form of the envisaged tutor system can be established from the extent and nature of, for instance, the fields of knowledge covered, dominant modes of support and the dominant processes. For instance, in RSA the regional offices provide administrative and academic learner support to students closer to their homes (Fouche, 2006:2). Tutors are appointed in all these centres to offer tutorial support which is mainly face-to-face, because the majority of the students do not have access to the Internet. It becomes unrealistic for a distance learning institution to offer online tutorial support as a primary source of delivery, thus tutors are appointed to provide it on a part-time basis. There is also often limited or little support from the institution's academic staff, which leaves the tutors isolated and forces them to fend for themselves. The lack of

contact with colleagues tends to increase the feelings of isolation for tutors and the learners.

Hughes (2007:349) indicates that several studies, mainly in the distance education literature, have identified reasons students leave their studies, notably personal resilience, personal identity factors, support networks, and finding the course badly presented, poorly supported or difficult. Our context is such that a combination of well-designed and supported blended learning (Haufiku, n.d.:3) with proactive help and encouragement is desirable. This means that learning opportunities can be provided through combining contact, distance, and/or e-learning to suit different purposes and contexts (Abas, 2009:533; DHET, 2012:5; Richardson, 2009:70; Wang, 2005:9). This in turn requires the involvement of the participants in the determination of the learning required and suggests that face-to-face tutoring and other modes of delivery are needed for increased student retention and throughput rate in the distance learning environment. The involvement of the community in establishing a suitable tutorial support environment is crucial, especially in remote rural areas and resource-poor communities.

Boitshwarelo (2009:15) advises that although blended learning solutions can be appropriate for increasing access to higher education in sub-Saharan Africa, “these solutions, however, need to be pedagogically grounded and their design should take into account not only the target learners and their immediate implementation environment but also systematic constraints and affordances”. This calls for leadership and management capabilities on the part of the participants in the development of an effective community-based tutor system. The vision for the TS was non-existent in the area of this study, so its development requires relevant stakeholders to intensely discuss and critically analyse pertinent contextual issues relating to the exclusion of learners in rural the area(s) from the post-school discourses (Ajadi, Salamwu & Adeoye, 2008:61). The context may include language of instruction as a possible deterrent amidst various ICT resources (Okonkwo, 2011:167-178; Mapolisa, 2013:278-285), unwillingness and/or willingness of potential financiers and prospective partners to (dis)engage in rural areas; prevalent skills and competencies, and the extent to which (public) facilities may be utilised to supplement immanent shortages. The engagement of participants as equals in the

deliberations to develop a vision and/or a mission of the effective tutor system can be achieved through interpretive and analytic processes.

2.4.1.3 *SWOT analysis*

The coordinating team members of the effective TS should facilitate the process of analysing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) confronting the tutor system (Aref, 2010:2-5; Laverack & Labonte, 2000:258; Čiegis and Gineitienė, 2010:113). In this study, the underlying purpose of conducting a SWOT analysis is to enhance the interpretation and understanding of the complexities and numerous factors that could derail or enrich the development and the implementation of the unifying vision and mission of the effective TS (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007:273; Zuber-Skerrit, 2011:23-25). Thus, both internal and external factors of the effective TS are considered. The external factors include policy (Haufiku, n.d.:1; Mapolisa & Tshabalala, 2013:759-776), and the impact of socio-economic and cultural/political realities that may affect the tutor system (Peters, 2004:550-551; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:46; Rocha-Schmid, 2010:354-355), whilst the internal factors include considerations for appropriate learning support strategies and mechanisms, systems and processes for enhancing learning, and support needed for tutors (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25; Lave & Wenger, 1991:11-131).

Through SWOT analysis the participants will match the strengths and opportunities to the weaknesses and threats, so as to minimise the immanent negative impacts of the threats and to plan for the risks and threats which must be addressed. For example, the policy support provision of learning opportunities to all, including the learners in rural areas could be identified as strength, and can be matched with a threat by local political or cultural groups that seek to distract the process (Howell, Williams & Lindsay, 2003:1).

As there was no analysis of the situation conducted in the area of this study the people could not access information about the basic hindrances, or see connections between respective aspects and elements (Čiegis & Gineitienė, 2010:113).

2.4.1.4 Prioritisation and priorities

Prioritisation leads to the identification of desired inputs and outcomes (Curran, Kerr, Peacock & Wallis, 2004:1-42), which once identified are listed and put in the order of importance (Anyaeibunam, Mefalopulos & Moetsabi, 2004:10; Wates, 2000:6-7; DHET, 2012a:15). Prioritisation therefore helps communities to focus on key issues in order to maximise impact and use their resources as effectively as possible. For purposes of efficiency and effectiveness the participants may choose fewer priorities to focus on within one community project. The choice of many priorities was found to be difficult to manage, determine as progress or measure (UNESCO, 2009:41).

Prioritisation requires the participants to agree on criteria (Shipley, 2000:225), that is a set of principles and motivations based on which number can be allocated for a particular priority. The combination of Multi-voting Technique and the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) can be used jointly, to narrow the list and brainstorm ideas respectively. These techniques may be used when democratic processes are followed, affording the participants equal say or voice, regardless of position in the coordinating team (Shipley, 2000:9) For the effective tutor system the priorities may be traced from the definition of the concept in paragraph 2.3, as well as from the discussions under the related literature (see paragraph 2.4). These are dedicated team, vision, appropriate infrastructure and learner support, learning resources, finances, learning and teaching strategies, media, student and tutor recruitment, monitoring and reflection. However, in the area of this study there was no opportunity created for the community to identify their priorities, and this denied them further opportunity for planning their own educational and social development.

2.4.1.5 Collaborative planning

A collaborative plan clearly sets out priorities that must be achieved and provides a systematic approach to achieve them from available resources (Wates, 2000:9). Thus, through the collaborative planning processes for an effective tutor system the participants respond to the question of how to realise the said effective priorities (Lawson, 2010:137). It enhances community participation (Chickering & Gamson, 1999:140; DHET, 2012:17) which requires clear understanding of attitudes in the

community where the TS is to be implemented. The participants' current level of participation in the TS and the expected level of participation to be achieved are critical to the collaborative planning processes (Thomas & Thomas, 2000:92). This is supported by Laverack and Labonte (2000:258), for whom effective TS design "can be more empowering by using participatory planning approaches" that "such approaches allow the involvement of the participants and help resolve conflict that may arise later during implementation and evaluation".

The democratic and participatory nature of the collaborative planning process enhances the ease with which the participants contribute their views and knowledge to the development and implementation of the effective TS. During these processes the participants' decisions are reached through consensus, during which they air views that are subsequently discussed in full. This makes the participants feel they have been adequately heard and develops a sense of having equal power and responsibility (Shipley, 2000:7). The participants are afforded an opportunity to develop activities for the priority areas they have identified and agree upon the possible actions, tasks, resources and time allocations for each. They are also involved by accepting responsibility for the execution of some and identify the corresponding potential risks and threats for those they intend executing (Gordon, 2008:440-445; Howell, Williams & Lindsay, 2003:13; Lawson, 2010:137). The anticipated risks and threats should also be incorporated in the plan to be addressed should the need arise. This contributes towards the sustainability of the effective TS (Cope, 1987:18; Reeve, 2002).

In the area of this study the community was denied an opportunity to develop its own TS, which in turn resulted in the community losing out on the experiences and knowledge they could have obtained during the processes.

2.4.1.6 Policy provisions

The tutor system is insufficiently provided for in the policy frameworks in RSA (DHET, 2012a:7) because as part of distance education in RSA policy provisions tend to focus more on postgraduate level where increasing access to web technologies has already resulted in considerable growth of modes of delivery

alternative to face-to-face. However, for the post-schooling sector below university level there is currently little distance education provision (DHET, 2012b:57).

The post-school sector below university level is identified as not being catered for, a problem that needs to be resolved if equity and access (DHET, 2012a:11; DHET, 2012b: 8; RSA, 1996a: s16) are to be realised, especially by the learners in remote and rural areas. Increased access to higher education through web technologies is still insufficient, such that institutions of higher learning place greater emphasis on the development and use of well-designed learning resources and integrated, structured learning support (DHET, 2012a:33). It is for this reason that the DHET (2012:9) expressed the need for turning access into success:

However, the challenge to access into access requires substantial up-front investment in curriculum design and materials development, including attention to issues of structure, pacing and meaningful formative assessment, as well as considerable investment in decentralized student support (DHET, 2012a:9)

This policy also acknowledges that it is important to support off-campus students and those living far from the universities. The South African policy framework on distance learning encourages the universities to expand their operations by means of collaborative agreements and so reach out to the students in remote areas, especially youths who are unemployed in order to help them to be financially productive and socially invested members of the society.

The framework is an initiative that seeks to contribute towards addressing the challenges of turning access into success, as well as equitable consideration for the underprivileged. The draft policy framework supports this view thus:

Given the demand for higher education, and international evidence that distance education can, under certain conditions, provide high quality educational opportunity more cost-efficiently and cost-effectively ..., it seems logical to expand distance education provision in an orderly manner in which access and quality issues are at the forefront. (DHET, 2012a:9))

This policy favours underprivileged youth who live in under-resourced communities, but the community in the area of this study is deprived of this right (RSA, 1996a:s16) and opportunity because there is no appropriate or effective support. Many countries

in Africa are faced with the challenge of making education accessible to the majority of their citizens, however they either do not have policies or do not operationalise them (Fagbamiye, 2000:1-4; UNESCO, 2002). In Nigeria, distance learning initiatives, such as a tutor system that operated from 1950 up to 1990, failed through lack of government policy (Jegede, 2002:14-29). In South Africa, although distance education has been offered for many years there was no specific policy before the 2012 draft by the Department of Higher Education.

Government policies are important because they give direction on how initiatives such as the framework for effective TS are to be implemented (Chui, Choi, Wang & Kafeza, 2008:92-106; Osuji, 2004:1-4; Willinsky, 2006:1-2). The policy also helps the institutions by allocating resources for the establishment of tutorial support initiatives and provision of efficient student support services, particular those living off campus (DHET, 2013:1-75). Policy fosters harmony and peace, which is important when many people from diverse backgrounds and belief systems are involved. It is geared towards enabling people in the same space to find common ground and resolve inherent conflict (Cernea, 1991:13-17) that arises as people seek to understand their social and material world, or as they attempt to transform through critical analysis and respond to their principled outrage (Botes & Van Rensburg, 2000:41-58; Nel, 2009:46).

2.4.1.7 Tutor training

The roles and responsibilities of tutors are many and complex (Jung, 2005:20; Dzakaria, 2012:2), thus requiring regular and earnest training of tutors. Musal, Taskiran and Kelso (2009:4) regarded training on effective instructional strategies as one quality of best performing tutoring programmes, another quality being 'close' collaboration between tutors and the students' classroom teachers. Beck (2007:1-26) adds that effective instructional strategies enable the achievement of learning outcomes such as developing students' abilities to think for themselves, work independently, develop a sceptical orientation, acquire mental flexibility, demonstrate creativity and imagination, learn to argue, engage in continuous self-assessment, and produce a documented example of original work. This is supported by the SAQA's critical cross-fields outcomes which emphasises the learner's abilities, such

solving problems and thinking critically, working effectively with other learners, organising and managing oneself, using information effectively, thinking systematically, communicating and using science and technology effectively (Mangena & Chabeli, 2005:291-298; SAQA, 2001).

That tutors should help learners to pursue their studies in a way that is appropriate for their circumstances, learning goals and learning style (O'Rourke, 2003:1-166) presupposes the inclusion of themes and topics that would enable tutors to critically analyse and make sense of the social, political and cultural context of the people, as well as to work effectively with them (Nel, 2009:41-55). Other roles and responsibilities of tutors include delivering regular effective tutorial and counselling sessions, providing learner support on the use of ICT where applicable, and facilitating peer group interaction (Beck, 2007:1-26). Important instructor or tutor qualities include preparation and organisation, clarity, availability and helpfulness, and concern for rapport with students. Angelo and Cross (1993:1-6) and Pascarella and Terenzini (2005:425) listed instructor qualities as knowledgeable about the subject matter, enthusiasm, encouragement of students to express their views through discussion, and interaction with them both in and outside the class. Students learn more from courses when they are given timely feedback that is both supportive and corrective (Cross, 1998:5-12). Active and collaborative learning is encouraged, therefore tutors who encourage active and collaborative learning rather than a passive lecture format are sought after. In passive learning the tutor talks and students listen, which is contrary to the principles of an optimal learning environment (Barr & Tagg, 1995:12-25; Tagg, 2003:3-4). Conversely, an active learning approach, according to Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges and Hayek (2006:73), features three elements: involving students; increasing their time on task; and taking advantage of peer influence. Active and collaborative learning is an effective educational practice because students learn more when they are intensely involved in their educational practice and are asked to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings. Collaborating with others on academic work and problem-solving prepares students to deal with messy, unscripted situations they will encounter daily during and after college and substantially increase the time and effort spent learning (Guskin, 1997:4-9).

In the area of this study, there was no effective tutor system or training related to the above principles, so current and prospective learners could not be assisted by developing their abilities through the use of effective instructional strategies.

2.4.1.8 *Learner support*

Learner support, namely guidance, counselling, administrative support, assignment feedback and financial aid are critical components of an effective tutor system (Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Kangai, Rupande & Rugonye, 2011:12-32). The pre-admission or pre-registration counselling is important as it enhances the students' choices of careers, courses and structure of their programme in order to achieve their qualifications in the shortest time. This saves time and money often wasted by registering incorrect or wrong modules, in turn enhancing the chances of staying longer in the institutions and ultimately completing their studies. Guidance and counselling of students in higher education is not a new phenomenon (Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32), as students were and continue to be faced with challenges of dropping out, low completion rates and failing. These problems need to be understood in order for the learners to be assisted where practicable. In Zimbabwe, for instance, there was a need for the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services in the areas of management of assignments, tutorials, distribution of study material, examination, communication and individual counselling (Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32). Training on how to study, manage time and use feedback are also pivotal.

Students in remote areas have to travel long distances to reach regional centres and administrative support, whether on admission procedures, registration, submission of assignments, venues for tutorials, or issuing of schedules. It is costly and time-consuming to travel to regional centres to access the services. In Zimbabwe, some students from remote areas complained about the way they were notified of the tutorial schools, dissemination of information on examinations, assignment management, and the way marked assignments were distributed (Benza *et al.*, 1999:5). Some who lived in rural areas complained about the way regional office staff were disrespectful to them, which according to Moore (1993) is counterproductive as students do not enjoy their studies and so perform less well.

One factor that has caused a tutor system to be ineffective tutors not providing feedback timeously (Ngara & Ngwarai, 2013:42-54; Ng & Kong, 2009:363-379), as students may not know how wide is the gap between what they presently know and the knowledge, skill or understanding they need to have (Black *et al.*, 1998:20, Benza *et al.*, 1999:2). Some students claimed they received little or no guidance on how to interpret and use feedback, therefore they did not know what was required to improve their cognitive skills (Weaver, 2006:1; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006:199-218). In a study by Grundling (2000:1-17), the students complained that tutors were not given the opportunity to mark assignments and so were unable to provide guidance or constructive feedback on issues that needed attention. Katz, Allbritton and Connelly (2003:79-116) referred to constructive feedback as 'post-solution reflection', which as a reflection between the tutor and students facilitates 'caring for learners' by the tutor and so enhances performance.

As noted above there are many issues that need to be taken into consideration for students to stay on and ultimately succeed in their studies. Tinto (1993) attributed student attrition to lack of parental or peer encouragement and support, and limited finances. They concluded that these two dominant perspectives were not mutually exclusive, but rather were complementary. Taken together, the different theoretical perspectives on student success and departure provide a holistic accounting of many key factors that come into play to shape what students are prepared to do when they arrive at the institution of higher learning and influence the meanings they make of their experiences. In the review of the theoretical perspectives on educational attainment and persistence, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005:425) concluded that the theories emphasise:

...a series of academic and social encounters, experiences, and forces... [that] can be portrayed generally as notions of academic or social engagement or the extent to which students become involved in or integrated (Tinto, 1975:89-125) into their institution's academic and social systems.

According to Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges and Hayek (2006:1-156), the foundation of student success is what they do prior to starting postsecondary education, and where and how they attend higher education can make a difference in their chances of obtaining a degree or post-secondary credential. These variables, according to

Kuh *et al.* (2006:22), are pre-college experiences; enrolment choices; academic preparation; aptitude and college readiness; family and peer support; motivation to learn; and demographics such as race, gender and socio-economic status; and financial aid availability.

Student interaction with peers can positively influence overall academic development, knowledge acquisition, analytical and problem-solving skills, and self-esteem (Kuh, 1993:277-304; 1995:123-155). According to Astin (1993:385), peer interactions that foster learning are group discussions, tutoring other students, participating in intramural sports. They are major contributors to experiences with diversity, which can have substantial and positive effects for most students and across a wide range of desirable college outcomes (Orfield, 2001:1-30; Umbach & Kuh, 2006:169-192).

Notwithstanding that there were learners who were registered with institutions of higher learning there was no learner support arranged for them. They were as such not treated fairly or equitably, thus there is a need to bring about equity.

2.4.1.9 Appropriate facilities, infrastructure/resources and media

Student learning is being encouraged and supported through the cultivation of human scale settings and ethos of learning, campus environments and set conditions that affect student learning. In the broadest sense, the campus environment includes a physical component, a social component, an institutional component and an ecological climate dimension derived from the interaction of the other three (Conley, 2003:9-12; Kuh, 2005:85-107). The tutorial systems therefore need and use a combination of appropriate resources, facilities and media (Biggs, 1999:57-75). The infrastructure aims to enhance the effective achievement of the diverse objectives (Wang, 2005:8) that are geared toward shared vision (see paragraph 2.5.1.2). The dominant media in the literature comprise information technologies ranging from older electronic media such as radios and tape recorders to modern computers for e-learning, and cell phones for M-learning (Aderinoye, Ojokheta & Olojede, 2007). These media in turn require energy (electricity) and the Internet requires servers (air waves, gadgets) to deliver or provide. The resources

and infrastructure for provision of airtime and electricity are resident in different service providers. Print media, such as newsletters and newspapers (Uribe, Klein & Sullivan, 2003:5-19), are still in demand.

The critical physical facilities include buildings such as classrooms, in which face-to-face (Price, Richardson & Jelfs, 2007:1-20; Wang, 2005:8) engagements take place, including peer-tutoring, peer-teaching and collaborative learning. In addition these may be delivered through electronic media, for example, video conferencing. If conducted without the aid of electronic media the mode requires tutor and learners to be in the same space (Hierdsfield, Walker, Walsh & Wilss, 2008:109-124; Kushnir, 2009:289-300).

The lack of physical facilities also hinders learning progress for out-of-campus learners and those staying in the remote areas (Mafa, Mpofo & Chimhenga, 2013:11-17). Lack of computers and computer centres is one such issue, with the Zimbabwe Open University being unable to procure or set up hardware suitable for e-learning because of cost (Pfukwa & Matipano, 2006:61). Other facilities include science laboratories, libraries, and workshops (Benza *et al.*, 1999:5). Financial constraints lead to infringement of the affected learners' constitutional rights (RSA, 1996:s16), referred to by Umbe-Uve (2007:77-83) as "narrowing access to education". It is reflective of the prevalence of structural oppression that is observable in the deep injustices that learners in remote and rural areas suffer, and which Young (1992:56) lament, "we cannot eliminate ... by getting rid of the rulers or making some new laws, because oppressions are systematically reproduced in major economic, political and cultural institutions".

In RSA, Botswana and Malaysia there is a lack of access to and participation in higher education by various sectors of the communities, including the prospective learners (Boitshwarelo, 2009:15; Dzakaria, 2012:2; Jung, 2005:11; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:44-61). This is tantamount to their "expulsion from useful participation in social life and thus potentially subjects them to severe material deprivation and even extermination" (Young, 1992:63). This situation cannot be used perpetually as an excuse for denying learners in the area of this study equitable access to (higher) education, particularly academic and student support services. There is a need for the TS to enhance the success of learners in the rural and remote areas by

contributing towards them being economically productive and socially responsible citizens (DHET, 2012:1-33).

2.4.1.10 Monitoring and reflection

Monitoring and reflection are critical for enhancing sustenance of a tutor system as they serve to systematically collect data, provide information, gather feedback, analyse contextual change, and provide early warning of potential challenges to stakeholders and the participants on a continuous basis (Bemberger *et al.*, 1986:6; UNESCO, 2009:10), as they are encouraged to become accountable and to make effective use of resources throughout the process of the implementation of the collaborative plan (See paragraph 2.5.1.5). The use of reflexive critical reflections helps with the development of mechanisms for monitoring the successful implementation of the framework and its effectiveness (Molee, Henry, Sessa, Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:140-141), because thoughts and ideas are freely sought to ensure that whatever measures are suggested by the participants are seriously considered, and jointly analysed, synthesised and assessed for effective monitoring (McKinney-Prupis, 2010:240-243; Bringle & Hatcher, 2009:38-40).

Key success factors (KSFs) around which favourable results are necessary are identified and decided upon, whilst key success indicators (KSIs) are used to assess them. According to Shortell *et al.* (2002:51), reasons for lack of documented achievement in community-based projects include lack of a well-articulated commonly defined vision of what is to be accomplished and underestimation of the difficulty in encouraging diverse groups to work together to achieve a significant impact on relatively intractable problems. This also includes insufficient time to track the interventions and assess their long-run sustainability issues.

There was however no effort made in the area of this study to monitor and reflect on the issues that affect the design and implementation of the tutor system.

2.4.2 The components of the framework

'Components' refer to the actions and activities that constitute a solution to the challenges or needs identified (Tlali, 2013:84). Those of the framework, which turned

out to be community-based, are creating space for the community to engage through processes of situational analysis to pave the way for the participants' development of common understanding of the context of their problems. These should lead to their development of a common goal, commitment to work collaboratively as team(s) to ensure compliance with public and legislative mandates, tutor training and development processes, enhancement of tutor-learners' work through conventional face-to-face engagement and the use of appropriate technologies, provision of support to learners and reflective monitoring and evaluation processes (see paragraph 2.5.1).

2.4.2.1 A dedicated team

It is important to establish a dedicated team to lead, manage and give direction towards the successful formulation and implementation of the effective tutor system through the community-based approach. Leadership, according to Bush (2009:391) influences other people's actions in achieving desirable goals and it shapes the goals, motivation, and actions of others, influencing social change and making it possible for the voices of the excluded be to be heard. Leadership creates a civic or safe space for citizens, business, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and government to effectively work together. Here individuals with diverse perspectives are brought together by leaders to resolve differences and develop strategies to address complex issues facing the establishment of the tutor system (Shiple, 2000:4), with the leadership striving to bring together people to create social consensus (Amin, 2007:612-633). It is critical that a dedicated team be established to build towards the formulation and implementation of the framework, with a conclusive component that should facilitate the development of an impelling vision.

2.4.2.2 A vision

A vision statement is a broad statement of the future that the coordinating team wants to create for itself as their 'ideal', and that inspires people to work towards it (Zuber-Skerrit, 2011:1-239). In this case, the vision clarifies the nature of the problem at hand and unifies, fosters and deepens the coordinating team's

understanding of the challenges and factors that face implementation of the effective tutor system. The vision should be a simple statement that is easy to remember and written in the present tense to encourage positive affirmation and motivation to make it a reality. It should also compel the coordinating team to formulate plans that would make implementation successful in spite of the nature and extent of complexities that exist. It serves as a foundation for a unified project team commitment (Thompson, 2000:6), which when combined with a sense of community can encourage a continuous monitoring and control mechanism to achieve the common goal that is beneficial to all the residents of the community, in particular the youth.

2.4.2.3 *SWOT analysis*

Situational analysis is crucial because it is through this consultative process that participants are asked for their opinions with regards to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Lindsey & McGuinness 1998:1106-1114). In this collaborative process, which enhances the interpretation and understanding of challenges (Aderinoye *et al.*, 2002:1-3; Ambe-Uva, 2007:73-84) it assists in minimising the negative impacts of threats. Therefore, it is important to note that the goal of this analysis, according to Čiagis and Gineitienė (2007:113) is to gather information about the real situation, which could show basic hindrances and negative elements in the present situation of the community as well as the relations between these elements from the point of view of realisation of the direct goal. SWOT analysis is conducted to assess the current status and to predict future trends in relation to this community development project. It is also a management tool as it is used for business and market planning (Sharma & Bhatia, 1996:455). The SWOT analysis is applied to the context as a community development project.

2.4.2.4 *Priorities and prioritisation*

Defining priorities and setting goals is one of the important activities that involve a high degree of participation in a wider development context (Leake, Oculito, Ramones & Caabay, 2010:237-241; Shaerfer, 1994). This activity can also be applied in the education sector (Uemura, 1999:1-36), particularly in the

implementation of the effective tutor system. According to Curran, Kerr, Peacock and Wallis (2004:1-42), prioritisation leads to the identification of desired inputs and outcomes and once issues have been identified and listed in the order of their importance they are prioritised (Anyaeibunam *et al.*, 2004:10; Shipley, 2000:2-218; DHET, 2012a:15). As prioritisation leads to the identification of desired inputs and outcomes it helps communities to focus on key issues in order to maximize impact and use their resources as effectively as possible. It is generally recommended that a community choose no more than three to five priorities to focus on within one community project. Many communities who have chosen more have found it difficult to make progress and measurements (UNESCO, 2009:41).

2.4.2.5 Collaborative planning

Participation of all coordinating team members in the planning process is crucial because planning strategically sets out what is to be achieved and provides a systematic approach to get where the team wants be in relation to formulation and implementation. It is an effective way to achieve results from available resources within and outside the community (Margerum, 2002a:237-253; Shipley, 2000:225). Planning is the ultimate direction the strategy would take (Aref, 2010:1-4) since the coordinating team had thought at length about their strengths (assets), the weaknesses (target of planning efforts), opportunities (favourable conditions or possibilities that they can create through hard work), and threats (forces that are larger to the community, such as state laws, infrastructure such as bandwidth, distance education policy, and socio-economic factors such as unemployment) (Sharma & Bhatia, 1996:453-464).

The current and expected level of participation by the coordinating team members in the planning process are critical because decisions will be made jointly, and it empowers the participants to resolve conflicts that may arise (Laverack & Labonte, 2000:92). Since the collaborative planning process is democratic and participatory, the participants' contribution of views and knowledge is encouraged (Wates, 2000:7). A collaborative approach to planning equitably involves all partners and the coordinating team in the process and recognises the unique strengths that each brings. The aim is therefore to combine knowledge and actions of all participants for

social change to improve community access to educational opportunities and to eliminate educational disparities (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2010:4).

2.4.2.6 *Supporting policy*

Having policy that supports an effective tutor system that is community-based is crucial because it gives the coordinating team a foundation (Ali, 1999:1-6), guidelines and direction for implementation (Latif *et al.*, 2009:1-6). It is through government policies that direction is provided on how initiatives could be conceptualised and implemented (Chui, Choi, Wang & Kafeza, 2008:92-106; Osuji, 2004:1-2; Willinsky, 2006:1-4). Many countries, including developing countries such as RSA, Nigeria, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Malaysia and Bangladesh, have policies that give guidelines regarding the extension of educational opportunities to all their citizens, including those in remote areas that in most cases are also under-resourced (Adekunle, 2006:1; Ambe-Uva, 2007:73-84; Deb, 2012:1-8; Haufiku, n.d.:1; Nekongo-Nielsen, 2006; Ng & Kong, 2009:92-106; Islam *et al.*, 2006:1-7).

It is through the supporting provisions of the policy that the framework could be formulated and implemented successfully because it acknowledges the importance of universities supporting students who are off-campus and expanding their operations (DHET, 2012:1-33 Fagbamiye, 2002; Latif *et al.* 2009:1-6; UNESCO, 2001). The coordinating team is therefore indirectly given the mandate to establish an effective tutor system on the research site. The understanding of government policy by the community and its involvement in operationalising it for their benefit is critical for the successful and sustainable implementation of the project.

2.4.2.7 *Tutor training*

For the TS to succeed, training of tutors in effective instructional strategies is important. As Musal, Taskiran and Kelso (2009:4) found, the best performing tutors are trained, and collaborate closely with the subject lecturers. This is supported by Underhill and Jared (2010:91-106), who argued that without incorporating tutor development into mainstream disciplines, peer tutors will not be able to effectively act as facilitators of subject content and discourse. They propose that academic

development practice be integrated within subject-specific curricula via trained tutors, who should have pedagogical competence, defined by Shulman (1986:3-36) as the ability to know how and what to teach. Tutors with such competencies would use various teaching strategies that encourage active and collaborative learning. They would understand that “problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978:86) fosters development more than individual problem-solving and the activities focused on collaborative learning. Shneiderman (1994:n.p.) states that “students are not strongly motivated by the goals of acquiring facts, accessing information, drill and practice...[but] rather ...prefer to create, communicate, plan, explore, build, discover, participate, initiate and collaborate”. The tutor who is trained would thus design project work and problem-solving activities so that learners would arrange additional meetings outside of official tutorials to exchange ideas, negotiate solutions, and prepare joint presentations of their work (Hampel & Hauck, 2004:66-82).

Following Vygotsky (1978:118), tutors can make the student’s learning relevant to life by choosing topics that are not only integrated into the course but are also potentially meaningful to students. This would give them the opportunity draw on prior knowledge, be it from the course or from their own experience, and to build on it, thus following the constructivist approach, which sees knowledge as something learners must construct and less something that can be transferred (Rüschoff & Ritter, 2001:223). The aim would be to make learning “an active, creative, and socially interactive process” (Rüschoff & Ritter, 2001:223).

Effective instructional strategies that engage students effectively, according to Beck (2007:1-26) and Underhill and Jared (2010:91-106), involve creating and managing meaningful learning experiences and stimulating students thinking through relative, real-world problems. Tutors are encouraged to create a foundation for good discussion with a view of making tutorial spaces in which diversity and open-mindedness could be embraced. Another effective facilitation strategy is role-play because it enables students to experience, feel, or observe a likely situation by assigning different roles from different students (Underhill & Jared, 2010:91-106). In the effective TS environment tutors and learners are encouraged to initiate continuing contact between themselves, which sustains them in many ways, notably

containment, to support and nourishment. Consistent contact or regular effective tutorial and counselling sessions, according to O'Rourke (2003:55) and Beck (2007:1-26) help learners feel they are in a safe learning environment in which they can ask question, reveal their uncertainties, and explore new dimensions of their studies. Rahman (2009:260-272) believes that the implementation of collaborative learning at community level improves the knowledge capacity at the grassroots for empowerment.

2.4.2.8 Learners support

One important means of ensuring the effectiveness of instruction in distance and face-to-face settings is through provision of learner support. Increasingly, as learners utilise the Internet for collaborative learning, support systems contribute to the processes of learning and assist the learner in developing competencies and confidence in self-regulated learning and social interaction. Educators, according to McLoughlin (2002:149-162) are the first to admit that not all learners are willing to execute the tasks and activities that lead to successful learning, and that learners need support and structured learning experiences (Laurillard, 2002). The recognition that teaching has a supportive dimension has long been recognised (Biggs, 1999:57), thus scaffolding is a term widely used to describe effective learning support. According to Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976:89-100), the term 'scaffolding' is a metaphor to describe effective intervention by a peer, adult or competent person in the learning of another person. The term can be traced to Vygotsky's concept of the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD), which refers to a learner's optimal developmental potential, if assistance that is timely and approximate is provided by another person (Vygotsky, 1978:7). An appeal of the concept of scaffolding is that it directs attention to the need for support in the learning process, in a way that emphasises that good teaching is necessarily responsive to the state of understanding achieved by particular learners.

Garrison and Baynton (1987:3-15) propose that the learner support system, with reference to distance education, includes the resources which learners can access in order to engage in the learning process (learning materials, library, teacher/facilitator), and resources, which relate to the mediation of the

communication process (media and technology). In order for learners to feel treated fairly and equally the institution of higher learning should provide learner support, which includes guidance, counselling, administrative support and assignment feedback, irrespective of the geographical area in which the students live. Few students who live in rural areas are not provided with these services (Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:44-61; Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Kangai, Rupande & Rugonye, 2011:12-32), therefore they feel isolated and helpless. This is discriminatory, especially because the majority of learners who stay in these remote rural areas are previously underprivileged and black (Reddy, 2000:1-264). According to Walters (2005:35), “there are wide disparities in the graduation rates of black and white, and the average graduation rates of white students are double those of black students”.

It is critical to establish the TS that would bring learner support to where the students live in order to alleviate the student with the burden or challenge of studying, which includes guidance and counselling, resulting in an increase in the drop-out rate (Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:1-61; Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32) . The tutor system also regards administrative support, which includes admission procedures, registration processes, and submission of assignments, registration enquiries, venues for tutorials and issuing schedules for tutorial sessions, as important because this could alleviate the burden of students in remote areas having to travel long distances to the regional centres (Benza *et al.*, 1999:5; Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32). This travelling and related costs could be reduced drastically if the administrative support, guidance, pre- and post-registration orientations, access to the institution’s LMS (website), video and teleconferencing facilities and other electronic communications could be provided in the vicinity learners’ homes (Garrison, 1989:66).

Giving feedback on time is also an important component of learner support, and delays should be addressed by a good support service (Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:44-61; Grundling, 2000:1-17). Constructive feedback, according to Katz, Allbritton and Connelly (2003:79-116) is a post-solution reflection between the tutor and the learner facilitates caring for learners, and enhances student performance. Thorpe (2001:84) comments that the quality of the interaction between a learner and his or her peers, a learner and his or her teacher, and a learner and his or her counsellor may enhance and even influence reactions to study: “Students can feel immediate

identification with others in their group and so lose feelings of isolation and over-anxiety” (Thorpe, 2001:84).

2.4.2.9 *Monitoring and reflection for effective tutor system*

It is through monitoring and reflection that a framework for effective tutor system could be sustained because it serves as a systematic collection of data (Curran *et al.*, 2004:1-44), provides the required information about the problems and needs identified in relation to the tutor system to the participants (Molee, Henry, Sessa & McKinney-Prupis, 2010:239-257; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:140-141), and helps in gathering necessary feedback from other stakeholders. According to Bemberger *et al.* (1986:6), monitoring and reflection help in analysing the changes that occur in the tutor system and highlight potential challenges to stakeholders and the participants on a continuous basis (Bemberger *et al.*, 1986:6; UNESCO, 2009:10). The participants and stakeholders are encouraged to become accountable and to make effective use of resources throughout the process of implementation.

That the processes need to be sustainable (Curran *et al.*, 2004:1-44) is consistent with the aim of the study as well as the context of SULE within which it is located (see paragraph 2.3). Thus, the information about the extent to which the objectives of the study are achieved becomes indispensable. This information should inevitably be gathered throughout the study, from its conceptual stages, through planning to implementation. The processes of monitoring and reflection offer an opportunity to achieve this purpose (McKinney-Prupis, 2010:240-243), geared towards tracking progress of the processes of design and implementation. Monitoring and reflection form an integral part of the processes of formulation of the framework of the effective TS (UNESCO, 2009:10).

The context of the tutor system that is community-based is dynamic, diverse and complex (see paragraph 2.2.9). The understanding of the context of effective TS which is based on the critical analysis of the changes taking place in it is imperative. The analysis of the context of effective TS involves the systematic collection of relevant data, information and feedback emanating therefrom (Bemberger *et al.*, 1986:6).

2.4.3 Conditions conducive to the effective tutor system

This section considers the conditions conducive to the formulation of the framework for the tutor system that is community-based. These conditions depict *inter alia* the favourable contexts, and how these conditions permeate the components to alert designers and implementers to the possible areas that might impact the aim and objectives of the study. This, in turn, enhances the processes of monitoring and reflection.

2.4.3.1 Dedicated team

A team approach facilitates processes of sharing of labour among the affected people, as was the case in of RSA when the curriculum design was by teams of specialists, whilst other teams are responsible for editorial work and translations (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:47). The main functions of the dedicated team are to coordinate the activities of the participants, and compile them into reports for ease of feedback (Tang & Harrison, 2011:583-584), based on which reflection and monitoring are facilitated. For instance, in Nigeria, the UWSA Board of Regents recommended aspects and priorities on which student support services were assessed (Ng & Kong, 2009:364-366). These emerged from the Board's monitoring and reflection report, therefore a dedicated team has responsibilities for and influence on the direction which the respective programme should take.

The dedicated team of democratically elected members from the community of like-minded participants facilitates processes of inclusion and due consideration of diverse views about the design and implementation of their respective programme (Derry, 1992:413-418; Rocha-Schmid, 2010:355). This is akin to Harbermas' introduction of the multidisciplinary programme that steered the 'new start' geared towards 'new tasks' (Kellner, 2000:3) (see paragraph 2.2.1). The team members in this study mediate (Kellner, 2000:9; Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012) between the learners/participants and the authorised institutions of learning. In this manner, the voices of the marginalised (Young, 1992:63-64) learners and their respective communities find expression.

The dedicated team also provide leadership and management (Nye & Schramm, 1999:1-76) of the participants and the process of formulation of the framework. Providing leadership is one way of giving the effective tutor system direction, planning (Bush, 2007:391-405), management, and development of the mission and vision. It generates data and information about the community's assets and opportunities, thus developing clear understanding of residents' concerns and priorities, in order to develop the vision and define the mission for the effective tutor system (Nye & Schrumm, 1999:1-76, Zuber-Skerrit, 2011:1-239).

2.4.3.2 *Unifying vision and mission for effective tutor system*

The coordinating team has to facilitate the processes that would lead to the development of a vision and mission, which should be consistent with and clarify the nature of the learners' problems in a specific community. The vision and mission should also be consistent with the national policy and legal imperatives (DHET, 2012:5-11), the underlying purpose of which is to influence the participants to cooperate in an effort to deepen their understanding of the context and nature of their problem. A unifying vision and mission for NOUN in Nigeria is regarded as: "providing highly accessible and enhanced quality education anchored by social justice, equity, equality and national cohesion through a comprehensive reach that transcends all barriers" (Ajadi *et al.*, 2008:63). This vision is understood as reflecting accessibility and quality education as key challenges that need to be addressed. The principles that the vision tends to embrace are social justice (Fraser, 1999:25-52), equity and national cohesion, understood as having an anticipation of threats and barriers which must be transcended by the participants through a comprehensive reach, in this study interpreted as a comprehensive plan referred to in this study as a collaborative plan (See paragraphs 2.5.1.5 and 2.5.2.5).

It is evident for the discussion above that a unifying vision is critical as a condition under which the design and implementation of the framework can thrive. It is, however, imperative that the context be analysed for the enhancement of understanding of the problem and needs.

2.4.3.3 *SWOT analysis for understanding the context*

Analysis of the context and situation of the learners is critical (Bray & Kwok, 2003:611-620; Ng & Kong, 2009:364) in enhancing an understanding of the problems and engendering development of mechanisms and plans for addressing the challenges embedded therein. Qakisa-Makoe (2005:46-49), in the RSA context, illustrates the significance of this aspect: “prior to the development [design] of a course, it is important to determine who the learners are and what they are required to achieve on completion of the course”. The analytic process should also consider the anticipated goal(s) of the courses and learners. This presupposes the need to establish the extent to which the course is relevant to the learners and their communities. In Malaysia, analysis of the demographics and motivation of learners is carried out in order to reduce the barriers to success, hinging on finding solutions to the identified priorities and policies on resources and fees. The identified solutions from which the study can draw lessons include reprints at no cost, free resources and toll-free contacts with the academic staff (Ng & Kong, 2009:364-365).

It is evident that the process of SWOT analysis requires the engagement of many stakeholders and participants, which makes it amenable to the impacts of a plethora of power relation struggles imbedded in the process. Thus, the SWOT analysis focusses on the vision and the participants should treat each other with respect and humility (Gordon *et al.*, 2007:842; Jason *et al.*, 2004:4). The intention should be to enhance open discussion among the participants so they can freely contribute their views. This makes SWOT a condition which is conducive to prioritisation of the aspects analysed.

2.4.3.4 *Prioritisation of priorities*

This section illustrates the conditions conducive to prioritisation to be conducted. It is important to manage the resources related to the formulation of the framework for effective TS through prioritisation process and to avoid confusion and chaos that may occur. The participants in the prioritisation process need to have knowledge about the project and other stakeholders involved (Israel, Schultz, Parker & Becker, 1998:173-302). This was evident in the Malaysian project, in which the Board of

Regents recommended curriculum and instruction, evaluation and assessment, library and learning resources, student services and facilities and finances (Ng & Kong, 2009:364-365). In addition, NAMCOL in Namibia prioritised professional and vocational programmes in order to address the diverse needs of the learners (Haufiku, n.d.:1). In RSA, Qakisa-Makoe (2005:46), the educators' and curriculum developers' understanding of how learners learn, was pivotal, which makes the educators' and tutors' responsiveness to the learners' needs critical.

The issues cited in the preceding paragraph also confront the area of this study. These and other aspects to be unearthed are to be prioritised in order to optimise their achievement. The prioritisation process engenders a sense of serving in the participants and is an integral part of planning when resource identification and their allocation to specific activities are done. Prioritisation processes are also considerate of the learners' contexts, thus addressing inherent contrasts and conflict by giving them appropriate context before erupting into disruptive actions. The prioritisation serves as a necessary condition for the design and implementation of the framework. The prioritisation of public mandates and legislative imperatives are also indispensable, but to be effective consensus must be reached on criteria (Shipley, 2000:224; Wates, 2000:9).

2.4.3.5 *Collaborative planning*

Consensus-building and other forms of collaborative planning are increasingly used for dealing with social and political fragmentations, shared power, and conflicting values (Innes & Booher, 1999a:412-423). The success could be effectively realised if the participants who are involved are committed and know the benefits of such an exercise. The establishment of the tutor system contributes towards democratising teaching and learning in that teaching and learning of individuals and groups take place in their communities, using a range of formal and informal methods. A common defining feature is that programmes and activities are developed in dialogue with communities and participants (Curran *et al.*, 2004:1-42). The community-based tutors system's teaching and learning activities is based on a commitment to the principles of empowerment, participation, building capacity, inclusion, anti-discrimination, self-determination and partnership. Through the effective tutor system

learners are increasingly enabled to influence issues that affect their circumstances, learning goals, and learning styles. Also, community members and learners take part in decision-making, which promotes equality of opportunity by recognizing local skill and indigenous knowledge and competencies. This knowledge is then distributed and shared in order to address and provide additional support needed to overcome the barriers confronting learners and the community. The support given is obtainable from many agencies that are willing to contribute to ensure resources are used effectively (Beck, 2007:1-26; Nel, 2009:41-55; O'Rourke, 2003:18).

In Namibia, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Malaysia and China, for instance, the abovementioned principles of participation, empowerment and partnership were highlighted when expansion of educational opportunities was created (Amba-Uve, 2007:73; Haufiku, n.d.:1; Ng & Kong, 2009:92-106; Okonkwo, 2011:167-178 & Santos & Okada, 2007:2). It is imperative that the tutor system be conducive so that the prioritisation and the development of the action plan can be successfully accomplished.

2.4.3.6 Supporting policy for community-based tutor system

Policies serve to give effect to the legislative imperatives which determine the direction of institutions. The legislation in turn represents the will of the public, especially in a democratic country. The cornerstone of community-based development initiatives is the active involvement of the members of a defined community in at least some aspects of project design and implementation. Although participation can occur at many levels, according to Mansuri and Rao (2004:6) a key objective is the incorporation of local knowledge into the project decision-making process. Haufiku (n.d.:1) makes an observation that illustrates the importance and use of policies in that institutions around the world have been challenged to transform their policies and procedures to accommodate the ever-growing number of learners. To cater for this rapid demand, programmes must design and apply effective learner support services and systems.

In RSA (RSA, 1996:s16; DHET, 2012:5-11), as in Nigeria (Ajadi, Salawu & Adeoye, 2008:63), the principles of social justice and equity inform policy and the legislation.

The mission statement of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) includes flexibility, life-long learning and quality education, while the objectives add access, equality, reduction of cost, inconveniences and challenges of education and delivery as indicators of commitment to learning. In this way, policies also foster orderliness and peace. In other words, in the event of disagreements and contestations, policies serve to curb them.

In order for the CBTS to thrive there must be willingness of the people to learn (academic progression), support, and work together. This is crucial because TS should be a community-based strategy that is bottom-up as opposed to top-down. If the effective TS is established by the community and led by the team that comprise of the members of the community, especially the affected people with the same interest to learning and development, it will thrive. The shared purpose of the community is highlighted.

The establishment of TS is a contribution towards the advancement of equity and access to teaching and learning opportunities, which are policy and legislative imperatives (DHET, 2012a:11). Nigeria advanced equity and access to teaching and learning through the formation of the National Commission for Open Distance Education (Fagbamiye, 2002:1-7). This also thrived because there was a high demand to access to education at all levels when the formal system could not meet it. According to Haufiku (n.d.:1), the expansion of educational opportunities occurred in many institutions around the world including Namibia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Malaysia, China and South Africa. These countries transformed their policies to accommodate for the ever-growing number of learners (Amba-Uva, 2007:73; Ng & Kong, 2009:92-106; Santos & Okada, 2007:2). This makes legislation and policy a conducive condition for community-based tutor system.

It is imperative to involve the community in articulating the policy for the TS because by doing so the potential beneficiaries are enabled and empowered to make project decisions and participation becomes self-initiated action. This has become to be known as the exercise of voice and choice or empowerment. Participation by local people, including the most effected, is expected to lead to better designed policy, better targeted benefits, more cost-effective and timely delivery of project inputs, and

more equitably distributed project benefits with less corruption and rent-seeking activity (Mansuri & Rao, 2004:1-40)

2.4.3.7 Tutor training for effective tutor system

The effective tutor system will thrive if the tutors are well-trained in new technological modes and strategies for teaching and learning. If the tutors are not well-versed with new strategies and modern technologies utilised to enhance teaching and learning, the tutor system will not be as effective as it is supposed be, with the dynamic character of reality and knowledge creation as explained in (see 2.2.3 and 2.2.4). This implies that the tutors should be dynamic in facilitating teaching learning as knowledge is active, not passive (Schwandt, 2000:189-214). This will be achieved by training tutors, and as Schultz and Mueller (2007:11) purport, an initial and continuous training of tutors is critical to the success of a tutorial programme. They add that tutors also need consistent feedback as part of their professional development so that tutors should not be irrelevant and prone to demotivate learners. Successful tutoring programmes, according to Moss, Swartz, Obeidallah, Stewart and Green (2001:1), offer training prior to and during the course of tutoring, and the training topics should be shaped by the changing needs of the students and the evolving skills of the tutors who work with them. Tutor training, in general, has a beneficial effect on tutoring outcomes (Barron & Foot, 2006:174-185).

One of the other ways that can be used for the training of tutors is mentoring. A growing body of research-based literature in business management, education, and social work, according to Ewing, Freeman, Barrie, Bell, O'Connor, Waugh and Sykes (2008:294-310), supports the use of formal mentoring and coaching methods in the workplace. One of the most important benefits to be gained from the mentoring process, according to Barnett (1995:45-49) is the facilitation of reflective practice by mentor and mentee. Ehrich, Hansford and Tennent (2004:518-540) purport that mentoring and individual coaching can also enhance the ability of high performing academic staff and tutors and enable them to achieve their teaching and research goals.

In order for the tutor system to thrive, the availability of trained tutors is critical in that they will be able to facilitate teaching and learning by utilising current and modern facilitation strategies and the plethora of technologies that can be used to enhance learning, either synchronous or asynchronous. Besides knowing which technology will be effective for teaching and learning in various learning situations, the tutor must be able to use such technology effectively (Hentae, Shea & Pennington, 2003:160). There are numerous new learning technologies that are rapidly developing and utilised for teaching and learning in developing countries such as Malaysia, India, Pakistan Thailand, Indonesia, and South Africa that are currently not used in North America and Europe. Besides these sophisticated software techniques being pioneered in developing countries which promise cost savings for distance education institutions internationally, training of tutors in facilitation strategies and particularly in how to use learning technologies is regarded as critical for the success of a tutoring programme (Chitiyo & Harmon, 2009:807-830). Effective use of tools and technologies is important, thus instructors who are using online delivery methods such as videoconferencing and other synchronous tools and technologies for auditory learners must be trained to use them effectively (Maloney & Tello, 2003:16; Fink, 2002:27; Strauss, 2002:13; Janvier & Ghaoui, 2003:162; Danchak, 2002:2; Uribe et al., 2003:5; Soles & Moller, 2001:12).

Acknowledging that information technology is an instrument, not a goal, and calling for capacity building in higher education institutions in Africa, Nwuke writes that without training, the implementation of new technologies could result in reductions in efficiency:

Higher education may be worse off if resources that would have been used to purchase new books for university libraries or new chemicals for laboratories are expended on information technology that has minimal impact on access and quality because of the lack of complementary labour (Nwuke, 2003:38).

Many countries in Africa, however, are losing skilled people, especially those who are experienced in the use of technology for teaching and learning to other countries, especially Western and European countries. This phenomenon is articulated by Machacha (2004:1), who states that inadequate external and internal training programmes for critical skills to manage and support ICT functions in Zimbabwe, for

instance, are compounded by organisational inability to retain skilled ICT staff and faculty due to poor remuneration and job satisfaction. Another issue is that ICT is a continuously changing field which needs continuous training, but unfortunately this is expensive and companies and organisations in Africa have not adequately invested in this constant retraining and upgrading of ICT professionals. For instance, in a study of the availability of experts in ICT, Zinyeka (2005:8) found out that there were no ICT experts for teaching and learning at three universities established in Zimbabwe in the previous 15 years and only one expert per 100 professionals at the oldest and largest. It is critical to have tutors who are well trained in facilitation strategies and use appropriate learning technologies for teaching and learning purposes in order to make the tutor system effective and to produce outcomes that benefit the students and community in which the envisaged tutorial programme is to be conducted.

2.4.3 8 Supporting learners

The need for student support is great in view of the drop-out and failure rate at tertiary institution in South Africa and other states in Africa. The South African Department of Higher Education plans to expand the post-school and training system by projecting the University headcount enrolment of 1,500,000 by 2030, with 4,000,000 at colleges. The success rate of the students will depend on student support therefore strengthening learner support for college and university students is critical (DHET, 2012:1-83) is critical. These services must include academic support, social support, vocation and career guidance, workplace placement for practical experience and job placements on the conclusion of the study. This implies that for the community-based tutor system to thrive there should be support for learners in the environment in which they live in the form of a network of distance education providers supported by a network of learning centres. According to the DHET (2012:1-83) these could serve as sites for the support or provision of open and distance learning programmes that provide administrative and logistical support, as well as access to computers and online materials, including library online services.

The importance of ICT and connectivity are critical according to Chitiyo and Harmon (2009:807-830) in supporting learners who are also living in remote areas in most of

the African countries. Although the cost of making this infrastructure available to the people in Africa is so high according to (Machacha, 2004; Zinyeka, 2005), the benefits are numerous both socially, politically and economically. Machacha (2004) suggests that more affordable access by countries such as South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana and so forth could be achieved by controlling costs and improving access through the state opening up the telecommunications market, joining forces with other countries to negotiate better connectivity deals and by encouraging local Internet service providers to set up national or regional Internet exchange points for routing traffic rather than relying on Europe and North America.

The DHET (2012:1-83) emphasised the critical role that ICT could play in improving access to and the use of appropriate technology, and acknowledged that access was grossly uneven in South Africa, which makes it impossible for distance education and other providers to fully harness the potential:

Recent increase in the availability of bandwidth in South Africa and the increasing affordability of digital devices will require the DHET to develop plans to ensure that, within the foreseeable future, all post schooling students have meaningful access to appropriate technologies and broadband (DHET, 2012:1-83)

This highlights the importance of student support and the possible mechanisms that governments in Africa should embark on by facilitating collaboratively the shared establishment and management of ICT-enabled, networked learning centres and community-based tutor system in remote and rural areas. Student support is one of the critical conducive conditions for the establishment of a successful community-based tutor system.

Other issues that need consideration, according to Van Heerden (1997), are the socio-cultural, economic and political environments in which learners grew up because they contribute to their approach and performance in their academic arena. For Qakisa-Makoe (2005:44-61), research on understanding students' learning should therefore include the social and cultural context in which such learning occurs. It is through the understanding of social cultural context that learners can be supported as they go through their formal education experiences: "Cognitive processes and factors in the cultural and social environment are not independent

because one cannot separate the individual from the context” (Bempechat & Abrahams, 1999, 841-859).

It is important to acknowledge that learners need to be supported as they enter higher education institutions because it is a major transition. Learners can only be supported if educators understand their background (Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:44-61), thus the establishment of the TS through community-based approaches is crucial. It promotes community participation which integrates actions of social actors in their community in addressing common problems, including access to educational opportunities. Accessibility of educational opportunities is seen as the means by which socio-economic challenges of the communities could be addressed. Literature also shows a positive link between social networking (with neighbours in our case) and participation in solving common problems (Hatos, 2006:79-90). Awareness of problems and the identification of possible solutions take place during the informal discussions, which may lead to revealing common problems and the identification of possible contributions all members of the network could make, thus promoting participation and empowerment.

People learn better using their first language, with Japanese, Finns, Swedes, Germans, Swiss and Norwegians among many developed peoples who have benefited from indigenising their media of instruction in their education system (Mapolisa, 2013:278-285). Conversely, the use of foreign language as a medium of instruction by universities at the expense indigenous language is a barrier, as it is also in schools, where: “especially ..., the activity of the teacher is consciously directed at suppressing certain language activities in favour of others” (Mey, 1979:412-434).

The issue of using foreign languages for teaching and learning could be addressed by the effective tutor system in that it would encourage use of local language in facilitation and explanation of difficult concepts. As Mapolisa (2013:278-285) concluded in the study in Zimbabwe, the use of indigenous languages in teaching of university courses is a “gateway to mastery learning”. It also recommends revisiting existing language policies to tailor them to local needs. Lave and Wenger (1991:11-131) emphasise the need for embedding learning in real-world situations in which learners function as a part of a community of practitioners helping to solve real-world

problems. The environments that foster personal meaning-making and discourse among communities of learners (socially negotiating meaning) are created through the TS rather than instructional interventions that control the sequence and content of instruction. They seek to map a particular model of thinking onto the learners (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25). An important inference of this belief, according to Jonassen *et al.* (2009:1-25), is that the role of the tutor in the effective TS shifts from creating prescriptive learning situations to developing environments that engage learners and require them to construct the knowledge that is most meaningful to them. The principles by which those learning environments may be built focus on four general system attributes: context, construction, collaboration, and conversation:

Constructivist environments engage learners in knowledge construction through collaborative activities that embed learning in a meaningful context and through reflection on what has been learned through conversation with other learners (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25).

It is important to note that conversation is one of attributes by which the learning environment is created, thus the issues of language as an important aspect of culture is taken into cognisance by the effective TS. Learner support and socio-cultural, economic and political environments are also critical conditions for the establishment of a successful and effective tutor system.

2.4.3.9 Facilities, infrastructure/resources and media

The community-based tutor system would be successful if there were appropriate and suitable facilities, infrastructure, resources, and media that facilitate access to educational opportunities in areas where it is not provided. The equitable access of education resources, according to Mahlomaholo and Netshandama (2012), is an indispensable public mandate that solicits social change for social justice and hope for downtrodden learners. Many countries in Africa do not have adequate facilities, infrastructure or media to extend the provision of educational opportunities to citizens, particularly those living in remote areas (Chitiyo & Harmon, 2009:807-830). A challenge for African countries in the area of infrastructure is to set up a system that is both reliable and efficient, seen by Nwuke (2003:17-42) as including access to

technologies and expertise, improved network connectivity and interoperability, within not only individual countries but also across the region.

The Association of African Universities (AAU, 2000:9) found universities in Africa are already addressing some of these issues, but will need to assess the present state of ICTs, especially regarding the existing capacity, the short-term and long-term needs, and the nature of the enabling environment in which integration can take place. Critical to this study, the AAU (2000:9) points out that integration of technology into learning, research and management is still at its infancy at most of the African universities, then calls for research into the adequacy of the ICT infrastructure for the enhancement of teaching, curricula reform and improvement of learning. Whilst acknowledging that ICT experiences of African universities are limited and varied, and that many remain at various stages of planning and infrastructural development, some universities have achieved Internet connectivity, although none have access to adequate bandwidth. It is pointed out that the development cycle from conceptualization, through funding, installation, and operation, has taken different turns in the institutions and with varied success. Specifically addressing the issue of technology integration, the AAU (2000:11) points out: "If (expensive) ICT tools are to improve the Higher Education's (HE) effectiveness and efficiency, it is obvious that their application in support of teaching and learning should be seriously considered."

An analysis of the integration of instructional technology notes the absence of systematised skills for integrating technology into teaching and learning, then calls for research to be conducted on whether these ICTs exist, or their availability, quality, and extent of use by students and faculty. The executive summary of the African Tertiary Institution Connectivity Survey Report (Steiner *et al.*, 2004:12) points out: "The state of Internet connectivity in tertiary institutions in Africa can be summarised by three characteristics - too little, too expensive and poorly managed" (p.iii). The report explains that the average African university has bandwidth capacity equivalent to a broadband residential connection available in Europe, pays 50 times more for it than their educational counterparts elsewhere and fails to manage and monitor the existing bandwidth. Lubbe *et al.* (1997:124) write that there is a dearth of telephone infrastructure in rural areas, and even though a

variety of technologies are available to South Africa tertiary institutions, for example the installation and maintenance of sophisticated equipment required for using modern information technologies is a problem in rural areas where the rough terrain and poor roads limit access.

While wireless telephony has begun to ameliorate this problem, the current limited bandwidth available for wireless has led to a small resurgence of interest in fixed line use. Discussing Internet traffic congestion due to limited bandwidth, Machacha (2004:4) found bandwidth in Zimbabwe to be expensive and the amount available to organisations inadequate.

The problem of cost and financing of ICT at universities in Zimbabwe and most of Africa becomes apparent in reviewing the available literature. Presenting the obstacles faced by the Zimbabwean ICT sector, Machacha (2004:2) highlights the "Inadequate and irregular funding of ICT initiatives and prohibitive importation costs of ICT equipment, often compounded by high national import tariff levels". In a study of the application of ICT in higher education in Zimbabwe, Zinyeka (2005:1) found cost to be the main constraint, resulting in lack of resources and undesirable institutional environments. Arguing that cost has an adverse effect on the context in which IT integration is supposed to take place, Zinyeka (2005:1-2) believes the impact of high costs and limited financing are reflected in the slow speed of the Internet, intermittent power supply, foreign currency denominated licensing fees and high telephone costs. Nwuke (2003:37) writes that while donors are currently playing an active role in enabling access to ICT in most institutions of higher education in Africa, and at some time, "these institutions must assume funding and maintenance of the networks".

It is important therefore to note that the availability of facilities, infrastructure, resources and media is critical for the success of the effective tutor system, especially in remote rural areas where there is a lack of electricity, bandwidth and telephone lines. There should be a concerted effort by the state, various departments and other stakeholders to collaborate in order to increase access and facilitate increased bandwidth and reduce costs for expanding access of educational opportunities to the citizens of the country (DHET, 2012:1-83).

2.4.3.10 *Monitoring and reflection*

Monitoring implementation of the framework focuses on the effectiveness of the coordinating team, the vision of the tutor system, situational analysis, prioritisation and an action plan. Monitoring and reflection are conceived as necessary conditions for the enhancement of the effectiveness tutor system through community-based approach. They should take place at every critical step, providing valuable information regarding unearthing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that might be used to fortify the effectiveness of the TS. It is as such imperative to create conducive conditions.

In this study the concept of reflection is understood to be indicative of mechanisms or methods and/or processes that are used in order to establish the extent to which the tutor system is made effective. Reflection is as such part of learning and learning facilitation processes (Molee *et al.*, 2010:240-241), and the reflective processes and mechanisms or methods tend to be imbued with power relations. The development and implementation of effective TS as an aspect of and contribution to education and therefore learning cannot be divorced from politics (Osman & Attwood, 2007:17-18). For Agger, the method of reflection, for example, “is not simply a technical apparatus but a rhetorical means for concealing metaphysically and politically freighted arguments in the densely technical discourse/practice of quantitative analysis and figural gesture” (Agger, 1991:119). This suggests that reflective practices and/or processes should also be subjected to critical scrutiny as they may influence the quality and extent of attainment of the outcomes (Molee *et al.*, 2010:241).

Liasidou (2008:487) supports this view by contending that during ‘critical’ reflective processes:

in particular the analyst should focus primarily on a social problem which might be rooted either in the activities of a social practice, in the social practice *per se*, or in the representation of social practice. Not being restricted to text but extending to the interrogation and dismantling of the subjectivities construed in the text.

Evidently, the reflective process involves the active participation of those who were targeted to learn (learners) as well as the ones who were to facilitate that such

learning should take place (teachers, lecturers, tutors). The process extends beyond the people involved by including their social contexts, namely social problems, social practices, and interrogation of subjectivities embedded in the texts. The engagement in such rigorous reflective praxis is “key to strengthening the power of service learning [as it provides] rich sources for documenting students’ descriptions about what they are learning in a course, the depth of their learning, and how critically they are thinking about it” (Molee *et al.*, 2010:241). Thus, reflective practices are imperative and inevitable (Tlali, 2013:74) in contexts and situations such as the one in which an effective tutor system is to be developed and implemented.

2.4.4 Risks and threats facing implementation

This section discusses how the envisaged risks or threats with respect to the establishment of the team, the vision, the situational analysis, collaborative planning, policy imperatives and monitoring and reflection. It is important to identify and decisively deal with risks and threat because they would affect the achievement of the objectives and goals.

2.4.4.1 Absence of the established coordinating team

The establishment of the coordinating teams to facilitate the formulation and implementation of the frameworks has been carried out by most of the countries considered in this study. The team consists mainly of the different representatives from different stakeholders including the communities, universities and other community-based organisations operating in and outside of the respective community or country. In this case, the effective tutor system can be threatened by lack of dedicated team that is supposed to lead, mediate and bring people with diverse views to work together in order to reach a consensus about implementation. The absence of the dedicated team means that there will be no leadership or management of the project and therefore nobody to influence change or determine the direction the project should take. The dedicated team provides leadership, which according to Cuban (1988:453-477) influences other people’s actions towards change, while management performs maintenance activities. Here, leadership is

understood to be influencing others' actions in achieving desirable ends. Leaders shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Frequently they initiate change to reach existing and new goals. Leadership takes ingenuity, energy and skill.

It is therefore against this background that it would be risky not to have a dedicated team that steers this initiative of formulation and establishing an effective tutor system to its determined goals and objectives. The project could be seriously threatened if there were no dedicated team of people with different skills, competences and resources assigned to manage the projects (Maguire, 1987:657-666). Management function of the dedicated team is to efficiently and effectively maintain the current organisational programmes of the effective tutor system. Bush (2009:391–406) supports this notion:

While managing well often exhibits leadership skills, the overall function is toward maintenance rather than change. I prize both managing and leading and attach no special value to either since different settings and times call for varied responses.

The important function of bringing together people with diverse views within the community in order to implement the effective TS cannot be accomplished if the dedicated team is not put in place, therefore there would be no consensus reached. The people who are mostly affected by the absence of the TS are not going to be consulted with regards to the development and implementation of the appropriate and relevant framework for the effective tutor system. This could be the greatest risk because the exclusion of such people would render the project aimless (Selenger, 1997:3). According to SAIDE (2000:11), there are various issues that need to be considered in an attempt to establish community structure. Besides establishing community structures from scratch being a time-consuming and lengthy process, some of the issues are the following are:

The community-oriented process work according to principles of consensus and not of democracy and therefore there is no point in establishing new community structures until everyone relevant is involved in the process. This applies from the outset, starting with the process of needs analysis. (SAIDE, 2000:11)

The relevant sectors of the community must therefore participate in identifying the needs and possible solutions to the problems identified. The effective tutor system could be threatened by not having the support of the relevant people in the community, especially the students most affected by lack of academic support. The dedicated team mediates and influence social change with those affected, and is sympathetic to the voices of the excluded and subjugated (Derry, 1992:413-418; Rocha-Schmid, 2010:355).

2.4.4.2 *Lack of vision*

The framework could be at risk if the vision is not clear, shared or in line with that of the country. Lack of vision in the coordinating team and participants threatens the implementation of an effective tutor system that is supposed to provide necessary support to students who have a right to it from the institution with which they have registered. As the function of the dedicated team is to formulate a unifying vision (Zuber-Skeritt, 2011:157-166), which clarifies the nature of the problem and inculcates the habit of working as a team, it would therefore be risky not to have a compelling vision that is shared and owned by all the people who are implementing the community-based tutors system (Wang & Kreysa, 2006:1-25). This teamwork deepens and fosters the participants' understanding of the challenges and numerous factors that face implementation and motivate the participants to devise plans by which they could be addressed. The absence of vision therefore negatively affects the deepening of the understanding of the problem, thus it would render the implementation of the TS unachievable.

The overarching vision of the effective tutor system is seen to be the enhancement of achieving equity, access and the necessary support that the students need (Ajadi *et al.*, 2008:61-70; Baggaley & Belawati, 2009:2-25; DHET, 2012a:11). This therefore means that the effective tutor system addresses the issues of redistribution of educational resources, skills and competences to less advantaged learners who live in under-resourced communities.

2.4.4.3 *Absence of situational analysis*

In order to understand the current status and to predict future trends, a SWOT analysis must be conducted (Aref, 2010:2-5; Laverack & Labonte, 2000:258), important before planning, formulation and implementation of the framework. Without one the participants and coordinating team would be unable to interpret or understand of challenges (Čiegis & Gineitienė, 2010:113), or devise appropriate strategies that are shaped and jointly agreed upon by all community planning partners (Aref, 2010:2-5; Laverack & Labonte, 2000:258). The outcomes of such analysis should influence and reflect the community plan and related strategies, highlighting how and where they link with other strategic plans, and setting out the framework for operational planning and demonstrating substantial community involvement (Curran *et al.*, 2004:1-33).

If countries such as Zimbabwe, Namibia, Nigeria, Malaysia and India do not conduct the situational analysis by matching the strengths against the weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007:273; Zuber-Skerrit, 2011:157-166) they would not be able to understand the challenges to the implementation of their respective plans and strategies to extend access to educational opportunities to all citizens, particularly those students who desperately need support in remote rural areas,

2.4.4.4 *Absence of prioritisation and priorities*

The framework could be threatened by the absence of prioritisation because there would be no identification of desired inputs or outcomes and prioritisation of the listed inputs in their order of importance (Anyaegebunam *et al.*, 2004:10; Shipley, 2000:226; DHET, 2012a:15). If the important issues are not identified and prioritised the focus on them will not be possible, nor the management, determination and measurement of progress (UNESCO, 2009:41). If the criteria for prioritisation is not agreed upon by the participants there would be no brainstorming or listing of priorities from which consensus could be reached (Wates, 2000:9). The community would therefore be denied the opportunity of planning for their own education and

social development, restoration of community and social cohesion of society, particularly on the local level (Van Der Veen, 2003:580-596).

2.4.4.5 *Lack of collaborative planning*

The absence of collaborative planning is risky for the implementation of the framework because there would be no provision of systematic approach through which the set priorities could be achieved (Lawson, 2010:137; Wates, 2000:10), or participation of the community (Chickering & Gamson, 1987:140; DHET, 2012:17). In a collaborative process people are requested to voice their opinions and work together on a project that they have designed and initiated (Lindsey & McGuiness, 1998:1106-1114). Collegiality is important, according to Cornwall and Jewkes (1995:1667-1676), because it allows local people to work as colleagues with different skills. Mutual learning, which is also community learning and development, describes a way of working with and supporting communities, seen by Curran *et al.* (2004:1-33) as central to 'social capital', a way of working with communities to increase the skills, confidence, networks and resources they need to tackle problems and grasp opportunities:

We want community learning and development to bring together the best of what has been done under the banners of 'community education' and 'community development' to help individuals and communities tackle real issues in their lives through community action and community-based learning (Curran *et al.*, 2004:1-33)

The level of participation by participants in the tutor system is critical to the collaborative planning process (Thomas & Thomas, 2000:92) and can be empowering (Laverack & Labonte, 2000:258) if enhanced and encouraged.

2.4.4.6 *Lack of policy provisions*

The lack of policy directive from the government could threaten implementation of the framework because government can give direction (Chui *et al.*, 2008; Osuji, 2004; Willinsky, 2006:1-245). It is through policy that harmony among people could be fostered (Nel, 2009:46). The importance of policy could be seen in RSA,

Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Namibia and Malaysia (DHET, 2012a:9, Ajadi et al., 2008:61-70; Haufiku, n.d.; Jegede, 2002:14-29; Ng & Kong, 2009:363-379) where the issues of access and equity were stressed or emphasized in order to support the students who are off campus, especially those in remote and rural areas. The policy framework in South Africa, for instance, encourages universities to expand their operations by collaborating with other institutions in order to reach out to the students in remote areas. The same could be said about NOUN, whose vision talks of the equity, access, social justice and national cohesion (Ajadi *et al.*, 2008:61-70).

2.4.4.7 *Lack of tutor training for effective tutor system*

The framework for an effective tutor system could also be threatened by the unavailability of qualified and competent tutors who are capable of handling different forms of tutorial support and student support services (Jung, 2005:20; Dzakaria, 2012:2). If the tutors do not have pedagogical competencies and effective facilitation skills they will not be able to encourage learners to actively engage with the course or programme (Musal, Taskiran & Kelso, 2009:4), work effectively with other learners or solve problems with critical thinking skills (SAQA, 2001). They will not be able to establish and maintain a supportive relationship with each learner in their group, nor mediate learning from the course material or teach by giving constructive feedback to the student.

A growing body of research, according to Barron and Darling-Hammond (2008:1-4), has shown that students learn more deeply when they can apply classroom-gathered knowledge to real-world problems, and when they take part in projects that require sustained engagement and collaboration. The authors add that students are most successful when they are taught how to learn as well as what to learn:

Decades of research illustrates the benefits of inquiry-based and cooperative learning to help students develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful in a rapidly changing world (Barron & Darling-Hammond, 2008:1-4)

None of these may be achieved if tutors who are appointed as facilitators in the envisaged effective tutor system programme are not trained in different facilitation strategies, such as small-group learning, collaborative learning, cooperative learning,

problem-based learning. Johnson and Johnson (1999:67-73), based on extensive researched into cooperative learning, identified five basic elements of cooperation that have emerged as important across multiple models, namely, positive interdependence, individual accountability, structures that promote face-to-face interaction, social skills, and group processing.

In a study conducted by Katz *et al.* (2003:79-116), it was discovered that reflection questions such as those asked by the tutors lead to better conceptual understanding and problem-solving ability and that post-solution discussions facilitate caring for learners: "Perhaps the main way that post-solution reflection can support tutors' efforts to care for learners is by enhancing student performance" (Katz *et al.*, 2003:79-116).

According to Fouche (2006:1-11), lack of staff development may leave lecturers and tutors isolated in their work, and unaware of new methods, technologies or applications. Some felt isolated from their academic staff and since they lacked teaching experience would work in close collaboration with the academic departments. Academic staff or subject lecturers are reluctant to support these tutors in subject-related issues (Underhill & McDonald, 2010: 91-106). Also found by Fouche (2006:1-11), tutors agreed that training is vital to remain 'fuelled' and motivated when working somewhere in 'orbit'. Weeks (1994:1-41) asserted that in-service training was only one form of professional support and not usually enough. However, even modest gestures can go a long way to help tutors feel part of the system, such as replying to letters, returning telephone calls, sending supplies on time, 'putting themselves in others' shoes' and understanding their problems, and being contactable and sympathetic. These cost little, except time (Weeks, 1994:1-41)

In the OUM in Malaysia, tutors are trained thoroughly in facilitation of learning and use of the LMS, which they can log onto as can any permanent staff (Jung, 2005:11; Dzakaria, 2012:2). The OUM LMS (MyLMS) is the home-grown LMS that allows the integration of various features such as instructor tools, instructional features, students' tools, technical support, administrative tools and other administrative features (Othmam, Atan & Guan, 2005:3-10). In South Africa, Unisa has a similar portal but the tutors, particularly the face-to-face tutors do not have access to it, let

alone being trained to use it for teaching and learning (Jung, 2005:11; Dzakaria, 2012:2; Benza *et al.* 1999:1-7). This is because they are regarded as part-time staff members, and it is considered risky because they do not have first-hand information about the weaknesses or strengths of the students. If tutors knew the weaknesses of learners they would be able to take corrective measures on time and give remedial work to those students who needed such intervention.

2.4.4.8 *Lack of learner support*

The absence of learner support which includes effective facilitation strategies, active learning, guidance, counselling, administrative support assignment feedback can be risky for the implementation of the tutor system framework (Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32) that is why in Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Malaysia, and RSA according (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:44-53; Ajadi *et al.*, 2008: 61-70; Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32; Ngara & Ngwarai, 2013:42-54). It is important to have pre-admission or pre-registration counselling because it is during this period that students are assisted and advised on how to choose the modules or courses they need to register. This is critical because the students who make correct choices at this period save time and money. Choosing the right modules and correct structuring of the study programme is critical to students' persistence, because they would know what they were doing and what goals to achieve.

Students who stay far from the regional service centres do not get guidance or counselling unless they travel long distances to the regional centres. Some have to travel to these regional centres for administrative support, such as admission procedures, registration process, and submission of assignments, student accounts, tutorial schedules and tutorials (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:44-53). In Zimbabwe, some of the students complained about how information on examination dates and time was poorly disseminated to them and that marked assignments were returned late (Benza *et al.*, 1999:5, Ngara & Ngwarai, 2013:42-54).

Some students also complained that they received little or no guidance from the feedback in their assignments (Weaver, 2006:1; Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006:199-218), while others reported that tutors were not allowed to mark their assignments

and therefore could not give constructive feedback (Grundling, 2000:1-17). The risk of not giving this post-solution reflection (feedback) is that the students miss the opportunity of improving their performance and the feeling of being cared for by their instructors. Students who do not get this support tend to be discouraged

2.4.4.9 Lack of appropriate facilities, infrastructure, resources and media

Another risk or threat to the tutor system is selection of inappropriate and inaccessible venues for contact sessions, workshops, training sessions and counselling sessions (Mafa, Mpofu & Chimhenga, 2013:11-17), especially for the off-campus students. The unsuitable time for contact sessions, distances and the cost incurred by the students to reach the tutorial venue threaten the effectiveness of the TS. Care should be taken to have suitable sites for teaching and learning that are close to where learners live or work.

Another issue is when the students, tutors and administrators are not competent in using communication technologies and electronic media such as video or computer conferencing technologies. That incompetence and lack of knowhow pose a threat to the whole learning experience of the students (Wang, 2005:8). It is therefore important to acquire technologies and resources that are appropriate and user-friendly for students, tutors and administrators. The learning centres should be managed appropriately for academic and administrative functions, have permanent structures that are accessible to the broader community and have technological equipment such as those of the Open University Malaysia, NAMCOL, and Zimbabwe Open University (Jung, 2005:10; Dzakaria, 2012:3).

2.4.4.10 Lack of monitoring and reflection for the effective tutor system

The absence of monitoring will threaten the implementation of the framework for effective TS because there will be no systematic collection of data, provision of important information, or gathering of feedback and analysis of contextual changes which are critical to the sustenance of the TS (Bemberger *et al.*, 1986:6; UNESCO, 2009:10). Monitoring helps with the development of mechanisms by which the

implementation of the framework for TS can be successful and effective (Molee *et al.*, 2010:140-141).

Without the identification of the key success factors and indicators which are the results of the monitoring and reflection process, the implementation of effective TS will not be successful or benefit the students.

2.4.5 Evidence for applicability of the framework

The evidence for the applicability of the framework is considered in this section and includes the extent to which each of the components has been achieved. This section therefore documents processes followed in the evidence as well as the outcomes of the demonstration of strategies through establishment of the team, formulation of vision, situational analysis, collaborative planning, policy formulation as well as monitoring and reflection. These are considered in line with the priorities of the tutor system that are found to be prominent in the literature. The priorities referred to include, counselling, guidance, administrative and academic support.

According to Munt (2002:3), community participation and its involvement in the project are critical, mainly because the ownership of the project by the community is ensured. It is therefore important that the members of the community mostly affected by the absence of the TS be involved in the initial stages of the project and during the selection of the coordinating team (Hyman, 2010:196-202; Wadsworth, 1997).

2.4.5.1 Evidence for the establishment and building of dedicated team

Leadership that is capable and trusted is a critical component of community organisation because the expression of the needs of the community can be clearly articulated (Hyman, 2010:196-202). The extent to which the coordinating team mediated between marginalised learners and the institutions responsible for providing a teaching and learning opportunity is evidence that the establishment and building of the dedicated team for effective TS is critical. This facilitates the learners' attainment of equitable access to education and student support for their benefit and that of the community and environment in which they live (Labonte & Laverack, 2001:111-127). The mediation role tends to create tension between the team

members and their privileged counterparts, namely the bureaucrats who may not relinquish resources for learning support for one reason or another. In Zimbabwe, Amba-Uva (2007:988) noted fiscal constraints and financial constraints as some of the reasons. It would thus be imperative to determine the mechanisms used in levelling off the power differential issues that existed. Values of mutual respect and trust, as well as the principles of social justice, peace, equity and hope, have been advanced in this study (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:45; Young, 2009:63-79; Fraser, 2009)

2.4.5.2 *Evidence for formulation of vision*

According to Zuber-Skerrit (2011:157-166) the vision unifies the participants' effort towards one agreed upon direction and clarifies the nature of the problem at hand, providing a sense of meaning to its members (James & Lahti, 2011:108-120). According to Garcia, Llorens-Montes and Verdu-Jover (2006:518-536), it is perceived as giving direction to the organisation on values and standards that are required and it holds together different units and activities within it (Katz, 1999:133-146). One of the important aspects of vision is that it motivates the members of the organisation (Yoeli & Berkovich, 2010:451-467) and is futuristic. This, according to Nanus (1992:1-20), galvanises the organisation to excel and succeed in attaining its long-term goal(s). For instance, in Nigeria there was a need to make education accessible to the masses of the people who otherwise could not have had the opportunity to further their studies at a tertiary institution. The establishment of NOUN was a result of the federal government's vision and effort to provide highly accessible quality education anchored by social justice, equity, equality and national cohesion (Ajadi *et al.* 2008:61-70). This shows that the participation of the community or the selected coordinating team members who discuss issues that affect the community because of the absence of the effective TS would result in the formulation of a unifying vision toward which the whole coordinating team members would direct efforts. It is important to have a unifying vision that is agreed upon by all members of the team.

2.4.5.3 *Evidence for SWOT analysis*

The analysis of the situation is critical in Nigeria, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Malaysia and South Africa, where situational analysis was performed before any intervention in the provision of educational opportunities and support to the masses of the people was performed. A SWOT analysis enhanced the interpretation and understanding of challenges and factors that could make the realisation of each country's vision (Aref, 2010:2-5; Laverack & Labonte, 2000:258; Čiegis and Gineitienė, 2010:113). It is during the situational analysis that both the external and internal factors are taken into consideration before any plan can be implemented (Mapolisa, 2013:278; Haufiku, n.d.:1). The socio-economic and political realities that may affect the implementation of the framework for effective TS or any other project must be considered. (Peters 2004:550-551; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:46; Rocha-Schmid, 2010:354-355). It is evident that in order to implement the effective TS, situational analysis must be conducted in the area where it needs to be established. The people should access information about the possible challenges or hindrances in order to develop a strategy of how to circumvent such challenges (Čiegis & Gineitienė, 2010:113).

2.4.5.4 *Evidence for prioritisation*

According to Curran *et al.* (2004:1-42), prioritisation led the identification of desired inputs and outcomes in Namibia before the implementation of NAMCOL. For Haufiku (n.d.:1), the identification of possible centres in which the project to be launched was conducted. Prioritisation helps the coordinating team to focus on key issues in the order of their importance so as to maximise impact of utilisation of the available resources within the community. This process according to Curran *et al.* (2004:1-42) was for engaging with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and enable them to gain a voice, influence and place in society. The building of community capacity and influence by enabling individuals, groups and communities to develop the confidence; understanding and skills are required to influence decision-making and service delivery. This could include enabling communities to provide and manage services to meet community needs. The national priorities for the effective tutor system should apply equally to urban

and rural areas and should focus on the needs of disadvantaged individuals, particularly students and resource-poor communities (Wates, 2000:9; DHET, 2012a:15; UNESCO, 2009:41).

2.4.5.5 Evidence for collaborative planning

Planning needs to be done collaboratively in order to set out priorities that must be achieved systematically. According to Labonte and Laverack (2001:111-127) and Wates (2000:8), collaborative planning is an effective way to achieve results from available resources. Its importance is also evident in RSA, where the DHET organised a meeting with different departments, specialists and other stakeholders to plan the provision of support for distance education students (DHET, 2012:17). In this kind of gathering the participants' decisions are reached through consensus and each view respected. The collaborative planning makes participants feel accepted and heard, in turn developing a sense of having equal power and responsibility (Wates, 2000:7).

2.4.5.6 Evidence of policy

It is evident from the literature review and discussion on distance learning from different countries that in order for the tutor system to be successfully implemented the government must support it through policies and development of the infrastructure that enhances and enables its implementation. In South Africa there was no policy for distance education until in 2012, when it was drafted (DHET, 2012:9, 2012a:1-33). Establishment of learning centres throughout the country made it possible to extend the tutor system to remote areas (DHET, 2012:9). Countries such as China, Malaysia and India have invested in installing bandwidth to the remotest areas because they are conscious of the need of distance learning and community learning centres to use multimedia (Deb, 2012:3). Even developing countries such as RSA, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Namibia are trying hard to improve their provision of educational opportunities through information technology (IT) although they still face budgetary constraints (Deb, 2012:3; Jegede; 2002; Ajadi *et al.*, 2008: 61-70).

2.4.5.7 Evidence for tutor training

Fouche (2006:1-11), Ribchester and Edwards (1998:281-294) and Musai *et al.* (2009:4) found training of tutors in effective instructional strategies to be one quality of best performing tutoring programmes, along with close collaboration between tutors and subject lecturers. The effective use of technology requires training in learning management systems, video and computer conferencing and desktop conferencing for tutoring purposes (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:44-53; De Smet, Van Keer & Valcke, 2008:207-223). According to Hentae *et al.* (2003:160), distance education is:

the process of extending learning, or delivering instructional resource-sharing opportunities, to locations away from a classroom, building or site, to another classroom, building or site by using video, audio, computer, multimedia communications, or some combination of these with other traditional delivery methods

Mayer (2001:9) declares that learning from text-only books results in poor retention and transfer performance, whereas from books that include both text and illustrations, and from computer-based environments that include on-screen text, illustrations, animations and narrations, better performance is achieved. According to Vavoula (2005:4), as with e-learning; mobile technologies can also be interfaced with many other media, such as audio, video and the Internet. Mobile learning is more interactive and involves more contact, communication and collaboration with people.

The Teacher-Facilitator-Students triad is important; hence the role of the teacher or lecturer in distance education needs to be outlined. As a common thread throughout the distance learning process the lecturers or teachers must be certified for appropriate grade level, have in-depth knowledge of the subject taught and be trained in effective distance education strategies. Other responsibilities preparing lesson plans and producing an instructional module or course, selecting support materials, delivering the instruction effectively, determining the degree of student interaction and selecting the form of distance evaluation or assessment (Sherry, 1995:337-365). According to Schlosser and Anderson (1994:40), the teacher is

required to receive training regarding effective practices which enhance learning by telecommunications. Currently, few teachers have had sufficient training or field experience to enable them either to be effective distant teachers or to use technology successfully in their classrooms (Sherry, 1995:337-365), therefore it is important to train them in new methods of teaching and advanced preparation, student interaction, visual materials, activities for independent study and follow-up activities (US Congress, 1989:11).

Sherry (1995:337-365) asserts that purchasing and maintaining equipment, and training teachers and facilitators to use it effectively are necessary conditions, but not sufficient in themselves to ensure an excellent tutor system programme. Training in the skills to work with technology support for experimentation and innovation, and sufficient time for learning and practice are important, but so is use of it to the advantage of teaching and learning (Keegan, 2003:2). Interactivity has been highlighted as the essential in the effective learning therefore the use of collaborative learning, instant feedback, project-based learning and small group learning are critical to the effective tutorial system (SAIDE, 2011:3). The qualified teachers, tutors with extensive knowledge of distance education, subject content, facilitation skills and how to use the equipment at hand is important, as is planning, implementing and constantly reviewing it in order to know whether it is effective (Sherry, 1995:337-365).

2.4.5.8 *Evidence for learner support*

Guidance, counselling, administrative support and assignment feedback are critical components for learner support, hence countries such as Zimbabwe and Nigeria (Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32) sought improvement in their quality and effectiveness of guidance in areas of student advising, subject choice, distribution of study material, assignment management, study skills, examination and individual counselling. It is also important to bring such services to where the students were staying because of long distances to the regional centres (Benza *et al.*, 1999:2). In South Africa students complained that they could not get constructive feedback because tutors were not allowed to mark assignments, whereas in Malaysia the tutors were allowed to do so and were even allowed using the LMS for

technical, administrative and teaching and learning functions. The importance of allowing tutors to use technologies such as the LMS and other multimedia learning systems is alluded to by Low *et al.* (2003:25-40):

The incorporation of multimedia learning system and management operation was found not only to increase efficiency but also empower geographically and temporally dispersed groups of educators, administrators and students to participate in a dynamic learning organisation, and thus enhance learning through engaging activities.

The tutor as an extension of the lecturer, according to O'Rourke (2003:1-33), has the responsibility for motivating and encouraging the remote site students, keeping up their enthusiasm, and maintaining discipline in the classroom. He or she is also responsible for smooth running of equipment; helping students with interaction; handing out, collecting and grading papers; guiding collaborative groups who are working with manipulatives; answering questions when necessary; and assisting the teacher when asked to do so. He or she also carries out assessment procedure defined by the lecturer or teacher via print, portfolios, on-line communication and other means such as faxes (Sherry, 1995:337-365).

Frequent teacher-student interaction enables the teachers to get to know the students better than if their only contact were via a televised image from a distant classroom. Sherry adds that students need guidance in putting together information, reaching their tutors, and completing and submitting assignments. They also need tools to help the monitoring of their progress and obtaining timely feedback on their activities. The use of mobile devices, Internet and computers makes all these activities easier for the students and tutors.

The Bangladesh Open University (BOU) uses the mobile technology of SMS along with perceived live telecast to create a classroom situation for distance learning through the Question Based Participation (QBP) technique (Alam & Islam, 2008:2). All the above underline the importance of student support in making the tutor system effective and beneficial to the students, especially those off-campus and living in remote areas.

2.4.5.9 Evidence for appropriate facilities, infrastructure, resources and media

The success of the tutor system depends on appropriate facilities, infrastructure and media because it is through the availability such resources that the diverse objectives of the effective TS can be effectively achieved. As the effective tutor system is conducted in most cases to reach out to students who stay far from the University regional centres, IT is the dominant means to do so. Technologies range from the old electronic media of radio, television and tape recorder to modern electronic media of computers for e-learning, cell phones, iPads and iPods for Mobile learning (Aderinoye *et al.*, 2007:5; Deb, 2012:97-104). These require infrastructure such as electricity for energy and bandwidth for Internet and signal coverage for the cell phones and other personal digital assistants (PDAs). Developing countries such as RSA, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Namibia and Malaysia have large populations in remote rural areas where infrastructure such as electricity and bandwidth are non-existent or unreliable. Mobile technology, according to Deb (2012:97-104), offers a hopeful way to reach such vast populations as it does not require bandwidth connections:

We have to develop distance learning using multimedia through mobile technology. This seems to be the most viable way to reach billions living in rural areas of the developing countries. Hence considerable research efforts must be dedicated to this line.

Instructions could be sent through emails to mobile telephones of distance learners and website addresses could be transmitted by their emails so they could visit those sites of distance learning (Deb, 2012:97-104).

Universities in RSA, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Nigeria are taking advantage of these PDAs because the majority of the population has a mobile phone (Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32; SAIDE, 2000:3). In Malaysia China and Bangladesh these technologies are used for tutorial support purposes and for teaching and learning. In a study conducted by Alam and Islam (2008:2) in the BOU, the use of interactive technologies was found to be more effective than the non-interactive technologies such as television or video programmes and interactive virtual classrooms significantly performed better in teaching than video programmes (non-interactive), which are still used at present in most developing countries. Deb

(2012:97-104) therefore suggests that mobile technology is a viable and affordable media through which distance learning could be imparted to billions of people in an efficient way. There are some examples of achievements in this field where the use of telephone, photography, audio, Internet and animations deliver effective distance education in developing countries. In the developed countries, meanwhile, according to Deb (2012:97-104) and Rodrigo (2011:2), the majority of students already use mobile devices to interact with and learn from the world around them, and a global classroom is created:

They engage their current situation with texts, tweets, and Facebook updates to their friends. They yelp out for help finding a place to eat dinner and report back their findings. Some Google to find information about their surroundings from a picture. And they already do this in our class rooms (Rodrigo, 2011:2).

African countries could benefit greatly from mobile learning, as argued by Brown (2003:1), for whom wireless and mobile technologies make it possible to provide learning opportunities to learners either without infrastructure for access (e.g., rural or remote learners) or continually on the move (e.g., business professionals):

The relevance of m-learning for Africa lies in the fact that the majority of learners in Africa are without infrastructure for access. Interesting to note is that the adoption rate of mobile technologies in Africa's developing countries is among the highest rates globally. Forecast estimate almost 100 million mobile users in Africa by 2005 (Brown, 2003:1)

In the study by Brown (2003:11), Mobile learning has already started to play a role in e-learning in Africa, therefore it should be noted that it has brought e-learning to the rural communities and will continue to grow in form, stature and importance, to "become the learning environment of choice". As an educationalist, Brown (2003:11) asserts that "Mobile learning also fulfils the growing demands for life-long learning opportunities that enable you to learn while you earn on-the-go", and believes people should embrace the rich learning enhancing possibilities that m-learning already provides and will continue to do. Mobile learning environments are ideal for contemporary social constructivist approaches using interaction and communication between lecturers and learners, among learners and members of community of practice (COPs).

Keegan (2003:1), in the book entitled “*The future of learning: From eLearning to M-Learning*” wrote: “The challenge for distance systems at the dawn of the third millennium is to develop didactic environments for mobile phones and mobile computers as the availability of mobile devices spreads to a billion users.” The mobile telephone is becoming a trusted, personal device with Internet access, smart card usage, and a range of possibilities for keeping the distance student in touch with the institution’s student support services, in contact with learning materials and fellow students, while at home, or at work, or travelling (Keegan, 2003:1).

From the above it is important to note that the ubiquity of mobile devices such as mobile phones in Africa makes it possible for learning to take place in the most rural or remote areas and therefore the tutor system could be enhanced by means of these devices. Study groups could be formed in which collaborative learning could take place. Students and tutors could interact easily and the students engage in the learning process among themselves, thus curbing the feeling of isolation. Interactivity is the key in distance learning, and as Sherry (1995:337-365) notes there are many ways of facilitating tutor support, such as audio-video teleconferences or interactive chats with mentors and other students, as two real-time alternatives to site visitation, office hours or telephone calls.

Adoption of technology is also one of the important aspects to be considered seriously in distance education. According to SAIDE (2000:11), educational intervention should be planned, implemented and reviewed on its own merits, rather than forced into simplistic dichotomous categories, such as ‘distance education’ or ‘face-to-face education’, which set arbitrary and unhelpful constraints. Technologies can be applied in a range of ways to support an almost limitless combination of teaching and learning strategies, and it is essential to keep options open. This flexibility should form the cornerstone of all educational planning processes (SAIDE, 2000:3).

The tutor system is applicable if the technologies that have emerged are taken in to cognisance as the tools to enhance teaching and learning. The ubiquitous mobile technologies that reach to the most rural or remote areas must be taken advantage of, mainly because they do not need such expensive infrastructure. All these advances would be more effective if based on collaboration with the communities in

which the effective tutor system is going to be implemented. If the effected people, particularly the distance education students in the remote areas and other stakeholders in the community could be involved in the whole project of implementing the tutor system, it would be easier to collectively get inputs, solutions and identification of essential issues.

2.4.5.10 Evidence for monitoring and reflection

In order to make sure that the project is successfully implemented and sustained, there should be a constant monitoring, evaluation and reflection process and procedure conducted by all those who are involved. According to Curran *et al.* (2004:1-44), all should have an interest in ensuring that the service they provide is consistently of high quality, with quality assurance and improvement depending on rigorous self-evaluation of the quality of service provided and the outcomes achieved (McKinney-Prupis, 2010:240-243). Effective self-evaluation by the coordinating team, the stakeholders and other partners should be a continuous process. The information collected from this process provides a context for the coordinating team and partnership planning aimed at improving quality (Molee, Henry, Sessa, Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:140-141). The team should use the evidence collected through self-evaluation to report to the community and other stakeholders regularly on progress made towards achieving targets and improving the quality of services provided.

The planning and evaluation framework to be developed by the coordinating team will go a long way in helping the team to plan for achieving and assessing desired outcomes and they may want to use it as a way of planning and monitoring progress on the local tutor system programme locally and even nationally (McKinney-Prupis, 2010:240-243; Bringle & Hatcher, 2009:38:40). The key success factors and indicators make it possible for the project to be inspected internally by the coordinating team and externally by other stakeholders (Shortell *et al.*, 2002:51).

Curran *et al.*, (2004:1-44) advise that the regular inspection of the effective TS must be conducted in order to evaluate the quality of the services provided and report the findings for improvement purposes. The main purpose of inspections is to promote

quality through external evaluation, give an account of the quality of services in the area inspected, and identify and share good practice (Bemberger *et al.*, 1986:6).

2.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has reviewed literature on the usefulness of critical emancipatory research (CER), among other research paradigms such as phenomenology and positivism, in the transformation of the status quo of the researched by allowing them to have the power to identify their problems and seek solutions to solve those jointly identified problems. It presented the objectives of the study as well as the definition and discussion of the operational concepts. Through the theoretical framework, I was able to analyse the best practices in terms of the formulation and implementation of framework for the effective tutorial support system across various countries in Africa and beyond. I discussed challenges that necessitate the formulation of a framework, the possible solutions for those identified challenges. The conditions conducive to implementation were explored, including the risks and threats. I finally analysed the best practice as indicators of successful implementation of the framework.

The next chapter will discuss the methodology and research design to collect empirical data towards the formulation of a framework for an effective tutor system.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to formulate a framework for the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches at a distance education institution. This chapter discusses the research methodology, the participants, instrumentation, data collection and data analysis. The research design that is chosen and followed in this study is participatory action research (PAR), as a means of operationalising the critical emancipatory research (CER) discussed in chapter two. It also discusses how the researcher became involved in the project, how participants identified their problems and how the structure and coordinating team was chosen in order to come up with the intervention strategy that was executed, implemented and monitored. It discusses the discourses and the plan of action carried out by the chosen coordinating team in order to identify the need and components of the framework and determine conducive conditions. The threats were identified with the aim of circumventing or work through them where possible. The mandate and the role given to the coordinating team by the community will also be discussed. Lastly, it discusses data analysis processed by means of critical discourse analysis (CDA), on the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context (Van Dijk, 1983:352).

3.2 PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH AS OPERATIONALISATION OF CRITICAL EMANCIPATORY RESEARCH

3.2.1 The theoretical origins of PAR

The origins of PAR can be traced to the work of Kurt Lewin, considered the founder of action research (Gillis & Jackson, 2002:264) who embodied the philosophy “that people would be more motivated about their work if they were involved in the

decision-making about how the workplace was run” (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006:36). The term was used to describe a form of research that could marry the experiential approach of social science with programmes of social action in response to major social problems of the day (Kemmis, 1980:1-22). For Stringer (2004:1-234) and McIntyre, (2002:1-79) it addresses problems of segregation, discrimination, and assimilation and assists people in resolving issues and initiating change while studying its impact. By extension, PAR is traceable to Paulo Freire who believed that critical reflection was crucial for personal and social change, empowering the poor and marginalised members of society about issues pertaining to literacy, land reform analysis and the community (McIntyre, 2002:1-79). Freire, as an adult educator and the author of critical works of pedagogy, challenged social relationships in traditional education that were based on dominance and power and emphasised the significance of critical consciousness to social change (MacDonald, 2012:34-50). It is thus understandable that PAR emerged from movements that shared a vision of society free of dominance within the fields of international development, the social sciences communities and adult education (Maguire, 1987:60-69).

PAR is defined in a variety of ways by researchers in disparate fields of inquiry, such as education, sociology, social psychology, philosophy, anthropology, feminist and community-based research. It has been used in agriculture, industry, education, social work, and health (Gill & Jackson, 2002:1-752; Koch, Selim & Kralik, 2002:109-117). As McTaggart (1997) asserts, due to the multiplicity of fields in which it has developed, it can have different meanings and at times be contradictory, developed as a means for improving and informing social, economic, and cultural practice whereby individuals with differing power, status, and influence, collaborate in relation to a thematic concern. For instance, Vollman, Anderson and McFarlane (2004:129) define PAR as “a philosophical approach to research that recognises the need for persons being studied to participate in the design and conduct of all phases (e.g. design, execution, and dissemination) of any research that affects them”. It seeks to foster capacity, community development, empowerment, access, social justice and participation. Wadsworth (1998:322-323) incorporates reflection of historical, political, economic, and geographic contexts in order to make sense of issues and experiences requiring action for changing or improving a situation: “PAR is not only

research that is followed by action; it is action that is researched, changed, and researched within the research process by the participants”.

In the same vein, Whyte (1991:20) maintained that individuals in a community or organisation actively participate in collaboration with the professional researcher throughout the research process, from the initial design to the presentation of results and the discussion of action implications. Thus, the participants are not passive as they would be in other conventional models of research but actively engaged in the quest for information and ideas to guide their future actions. Maguire (1987:29) defined PAR from a feminist perspective and combined the activities of social investigation, education, and action in a collective process: “a method of social investigation of problems, involving the participation of oppressed and ordinary people in a problem posing and solving”. Accordingly, it was also perceived as an educational process for the participants and researcher, by analysing structural causes of identified problems through collective discussions and interactions. Maguire emphasised that action activity of PAR was a way for researchers and oppressed people to join in solidarity to take collective action, both in the short and long term, for radical social change. It involves three types of change, namely the development of critical consciousness of the researcher and the participants, improvement in the lives of those participating in the research process, and transformation of societal structures and relationships.

3.2.2 Participatory Action Research versus conventional research

PAR is an approach from the social research paradigm which was developed as part of a shift from traditional, positivist, science towards recognising and addressing complex human and social issues (Seymour-Rolls & Hughes, 2000). It grew out of social and educational research and exists today to embrace and advance research principles of participation and reflection, empowerment and emancipation of groups seeking to improve their social situation (Seymour-Rolls & Hughes, 2000). According to Braum, MacDougall and Smith (2006:854-857) it differs from conventional research in that, firstly, it focuses on research whose purpose is to enable action whereby participants collect and analyse data, then determine what action should follow. Secondly, it pays careful attention to power relationships,

recommending power be deliberately shared between the researcher and participants. The line between the researcher and participants is blurred and the researched cease to be objects, becoming partners in the whole research process, including selecting the research topic, data collection and analysis and deciding what action should happen as a result of the research findings. Thirdly, "PAR contrasts with less dynamic approaches that remove data and information from the contexts". It suggests that those being researched be involved in the process actively.

The above is supported by Wadsworth (1998:322), who sees PAR as an expression of "new paradigm science" that differs significantly from the old paradigm or positivist science. The hallmark of positivists' science is that it sees the world as having a single reality that can be independently observed and measured by objective scientists, preferably under laboratory conditions in which all variables can be controlled and manipulated to determine causal connections (Wadsworth, 1998:322; Braum *et al.*, 2006:854-857). By contrast, new paradigm science and PAR posits that the observer has an impact on the phenomena being observed and brings to their inquiry a set of values that will exert influence on the study. According to Walters, Stately, Evans-Campbell, Simoni, Duran, Schultz, Stanley, Charles and Guerrero (2009:146-173), PAR has a double objective, to produce knowledge and action directly useful to a group of people through research, adult education or socio-political action, and to empower people at a second and deeper level through the process of constructing and using their own knowledge.

Braum *et al.* (2006) and MacDougall and Smith (2006:854) point out that PAR seeks to understand and improve the world by changing it. It is collective, self-reflective inquiry that researchers and participants undertake in order to understand and improve upon the practices in which they participate and their situations. Pant (2007:91-103) asserts that people are engaged in the research to do things simultaneously, to enhance their understanding and knowledge of a particular situation and take action to change it to their benefit. Knowledge for the sake of knowing is de-emphasised, instead linked to a concrete action (Pant, 2007:91-103). Participation has been seen according to Baum (2002:256) and Oakley (1991:1-261) as a means to overcome professional dominance, to improve strategies (whether they are for practice or research), and to show a commitment to democratic

principles. Baum, MacDougall and Smith (2006:854-857) indicate that in the 1970s debate on development emphasised that it should no longer be a top-down process but rather emphasise participation of those whose development was being attempted.

PAR according Oakley (1991:1-261) came to be used in many development projects “as a mechanism through which to put the rhetoric of participation into action”. Gottlieb, 2009:317-357; Schulz, Parker, Israel, Becker, Maciak and Hollies, 1998, 10-24) define it as:

Systematic investigation, with the collaboration of those affected by the issue being studied for the purposes of education and taking action or affecting social change. The research centres on community strengths and issues and explicitly engages those who live in the community in the research process.

Cornwal and Jewkes (1995:1667-1676) point out that what makes PAR distinctive is not the methods employed, which may be quantitative or qualitative, but the active involvement of the people whose lives are affected by the issue under study in every phase of the process. Central to PAR approaches, according to Gottlieb (2009:317-357), Friere (1982), and Wallerstein (1999:39-53) is their shared commitment to consciously blurring the lines between researcher and researched “through processes that accent the wealth of assets that community members bring to the process of knowing and creating knowledge and acting on that knowledge to bring about change”.

PAR, according to Israel, Schultz and Parker (1998:173-202) is:

...participatory, cooperative, engaging community members and researchers in a joint process in which both contribute equally; a co-learning process for researchers and community members; a method for systems development and local community building; an empowering process through which participants can increase control over their lives by nurturing community strengths and problem-solving abilities; and a way to balance research and action.

Having shown how PAR differs from conventional research paradigms, the following are its objectives, aims, formats and challenges.

3.2.3 Objectives, aims, formats and challenges of PAR

MacDonald (2012:34-50) asserts that although the development and definitions of PAR are varied, there are some common principles and characteristics. For Zuber-Skerrit (2011:1-239) it is democratic, in that it enables the participation of all people; equitable, as it acknowledges equity of people's worth; liberating, in that it provides freedom from oppressive, debilitating conditions; and life-enhancing, which enables the expression of people's full human potential. McTaggart (1989:1-283) outlined 16 tenets of PAR, including its being an active approach to improving social practice through change; congruence on authentic participation; collaboration; establishing self-critical communities; and involving people in theorising about their practices:

In addition, PAR requires that people put practices, ideas, and assumptions about institutions to the test, involves record-keeping, requires participants to objectify their own experiences, involves making critical analysis, and is a political process (MacDonald, 2012:34-50).

McTaggart (1989:1-7) articulated that PAR starts with small cycles and groups, and allows participants to build records while allowing and requiring participants to give a reasoned justification of their social (educational) work to others.

Seven components were identified by Selener (1997:1-35). The *first* acknowledges that the problem originates in the community itself and is defined, analysed and solved by the community. *Secondly*, the ultimate goal of PAR research is the radical transformation of social reality and improvement in the lives of the individuals involved; thus, community members are the primary beneficiaries of the research. *Thirdly*, PAR involves the full and active participation of the community at all levels of the entire research process. The *fourth* encompasses a range of powerless groups of individuals; the exploited, the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalised. The *fifth* is the ability to create a greater awareness in individuals' own resources that can mobilise them for self-reliant development. "PAR is more than a scientific method, in that community participation in the research process facilitates a more accurate and authentic analysis of social reality". *Lastly*, PAR allows the researcher to be a committed participant, facilitator, and learner in the research process, which fosters militancy, rather than detachment (MacDonald, 2012:34-50).

3.2.3.1 *Empowerment of communities*

The ultimate aim of PAR, according to McTaggart (1997:1-283), is the empowerment of oppressed individuals to partner in social change, which encourages capacity development and capacity building of all who participate. Power is a critical underpinning of PAR; therefore it aims to achieve empowerment of those involved (Baum *et al.*, 2006:854-857). Labonte and Laverack (2001:111-127) conceptualise empowerment as a shifting or dynamic quality of power relations between two or more people, such that the relationship tends towards equity by reducing inequalities and power differences in access to resources. Baum *et al.* (2006:854-857) emphasise the relevance of Foucault's position in relation to PAR as as power that results from the interactions between people, from the practices of institutions, and from the exercise of different forms of knowledge. His work on discipline and control shows that disciplinary power functions through surveillance and internal discipline of people to achieve their subjugations and 'docility':

The PAR movement challenges the system of surveillance and knowledge control established through mainstream research. When communities seek control of research agendas, and seek to be active in research, they are establishing themselves as more powerful agents (Foucault, 1977).

According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2007:271-329), PAR opens communicative space between participants:

The process of participatory action research is one of mutual inquiry aimed at reaching intersubjective agreement, mutual understanding of a situation, enforced consensus about what to do, and a sense that what people achieve together will be legitimate not only for themselves but also for every reasonable person.

Other aims are to create circumstances in which people can search collaboratively for more comprehensible, true, authentic, and morally right and appropriate ways of understanding and acting in the world. It aims to create circumstances in which collaborative social action in history is not justified by appeal to authority, still less to coercive force, but rather, as Habermas put it, it is justified by the force of better argument (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007:271-329).

The collaboration of individuals with diverse knowledge, skills, and expertise fosters the sharing of knowledge development. Individuals also learn by doing, which according to Maguire (1987:657-666) strengthens their belief in their abilities and resources, as well as developing their skills in collecting, analysing, and utilising information. The PAR process is potentially empowering, liberating, and consciousness-raising for individuals, as it provides critical understanding and reflection of social issues (Greenwood, Whyte & Harkavy, 1993:175-192; McTaggart, 1997:1-283, Kemmis, 2008:121).

PAR is opposed to the conventional research methods which are not consistent with the principles of adult education. It is rooted in a “specially strong concern for social justice and equality” (Pant & Odame, 2009:160-172). Other researchers who are familiar with PAR may challenge those employing PAR methodology to legitimise their research, as “PAR focuses on voice and everyday experiences”, not hard data (Young, 2006:501). Ideally, it is a community group, in collaboration with the researcher, which determines the existing social issues, and which one(s) they want to eliminate or change. The process of PAR helps rebuild individuals’ capacity “to be creative actors of the world” while being active participants in meaningful decision-making (Maguire, 1987:30). In PAR, collective inquiry builds ownership of information, and therefore the research process becomes demystified, creating space for trust to be developed (Maguire, 1987:46; 2000:60; McTaggart, 1991:168-187).

3.2.3.2 *Community participation*

Community participation is an important component of PAR, which according to McTaggart (1991:168-187) recognises and values people as social beings, within political, economic, and social contexts. It is thus important for those on the research site to come together to confront the issues that affects their development. According to Reason and Bradbury (2006:343), PAR “is strongly value orientated, seeking to address issues of significance concerning the flourishing of human persons, their communities, and the wider ecology in which we participate”. Consequently, participants are not subjects of research, but rather are active contributors to

research who participate in all phases of the research process (Chandler & Torbet, 2003:133-152; Kelly, 2005:65-73). According to (Reid, 2000:2):

Many people are involved in community activities, it is not only the elite that run the business but it is the work of everyone. They are open to involvement by all groups, and responsibilities are divided up so that the special talents and interests of contributing organizations are engaged. Participating communities conduct their business openly and publicize widely, and all ideas are treated with respect and welcomed as a source of inspirations with potential value for the entire community. They encourage citizens to offer their best for the common good. They do not discriminate. All persons are actively welcomed, regardless of colour, age, race, and prior community involvement, level of education, occupation, personal reputation, handicap or religion. Leaders are not ego-driven but focused on operating a high-quality, open decision-making process.

At this stage, participants identify their problem on the research site in relation to the effective tutor system that will support them academically as they feel ineffectively supported or even 'isolated' from the whole academic learner support of the institution. According to Baum *et al.* (2006:854), the reflective process is directly linked to action, influenced by understanding of history, culture, and local context and embedded in social relationships.

On the research site the people of the community, led by the affected students, in this case the local distance education students, jointly identified lack of effective student support as a critical issue that needed immediate attention. They thereafter started to organise the meeting with me, the study coordinator, to discuss that issue of ineffective learner support provided to them by the institution. Some, in particular the parents, were also concerned about lack of a variety of educational opportunities provided for the youth of the community and research site.

A statement by Mies (1993:125) set the stage for consideration: "participation in social actions and struggles, and integration of research onto these processes, further implies that the change of the status quo becomes the starting point for a scientific quest". In short, good research here has an emancipatory or empowering effect that benefits the excluded, impoverished, marginalised and oppressed, by, for

example, increasing their self-esteem, participation in institutional decision-making and access to political influence or economic resources. It is during this stage that PAR plays an important role because after the affected community members of the research site identified the problem of lack of effective tutor system, they took the decision to confront the problem by jointly summoning the researcher to a meeting whereby the problem was openly voiced.

The community members participated in determining the components that would make the framework a success. The action taken by the community members is called 'community participatory action research', an orientation to research that recognises community members as experts on the phenomena of interest and allows the meaning and usefulness of research to be informed by their everyday experiences and understanding. According to Jensen, Kaiwai, Greenaway and Conway (2005:5), PAR focuses concurrently on creating action (or change) and research (or understanding) and includes an action research cycle of planning, action, observation and reflection: "In a community the human differences instead of being ignored, denied, hidden or changed; they are celebrated as gifts" (Peck, 1998:59).

The most important aspect on the research site is that the individual members of the community, irrespective of their status and social standing, identified the problem and took the step to solve this problem by seeking information from different stakeholders which ultimately resulted in my involvement as a co-researcher. I understood that the community has taken ownership of the problem which is a crucial element of the principles of PAR. Baum *et al.*,(2006:854) state that the process should be empowering and lead to people having increased control over their lives. It is therefore imperative to notice that the PAR approach requires active research participation and ownership by people in communities who are motivated to identify and address issues that concern them. This therefore means that the research is constructed and informed at all stages by the identified community for that community, in this case, the research site. This process, according to Eruera (2010:1), is a departure from research being conducted by experts who extract information from a community and use it for purposes which may not directly benefit them. PAR uses the action reflection cycle of experiential learning and therefore is

not the research which is completed with the “hope that action will follow but it is action which is researched, changed and re-researched in progressive cycles” (Wadsworth, 1998:322). With this in mind; I understood that I should not appear as an expert in this community but I should have equal status to the community members and encourage them to take their rightful place because they knew their situation more than I did as I was an outsider. Pant (2007:91-103) writes that outsiders are facilitators and should adopt the position of facilitators, catalysts or change agents rather than taking a position of dominance. Thus, PAR, according to Argyris and Schön (1989:612-623) is a form of action that involves practitioners as both subjects and co-researchers:

It is based on the Lewinian proposition that causal inferences about the behaviour of the human beings are more likely to be valid and enactable when the human beings in question participate in building and testing them. Hence it aims at creating an environment in which participants give and get valid information, make free and informed choices (including the choice to participate), and generate internal commitment to the results of their inquiry.

3.2.3.3 *Co-learning process for researchers and community members*

Reason and Bradbury (2006:1-343) define PAR methodology as a participatory, democratic process that seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, and in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people in their communities. This therefore means it is a learning process that focuses on learning by planning, doing, observing and reflecting and a good approach to assisting in the process of raising economic development and capacity building on a group level.

The researchers and the community members therefore learn from each other in PAR, while the traditional researcher is an external observer who proposes theories. In PAR the “objects of research”, or the community, are integral as they generate their own living theory of practice (Valesco, 2013:1-7). It is said that PAR is a methodology that researches *with*, rather than *on* people, therefore it provides an opportunity for full community involvement in the development of projects by which

learning takes place. It does this by allowing for clarification and reflection that might improve the researcher's understanding of situations and problems to shape their strategies rather than prematurely introducing external ideas. This principle is strengthened by the opinion of Cooke and Tilbury (2004:4) who argue that:

Active participation helps to take the learning process of the program beyond reflection and towards capacity-building, which builds the knowledge and skills for participants to act in their community as leaders or agents for creating change.

PAR draws on the paradigms of critical theory and constructivism and may use a range of qualitative and quantitative methods (Baum *et al.*, 2006:854). To illustrate this he makes an example of a situation in which a participatory needs assessment would include extensive engagement with local communities and may also include a survey of residents who are less centrally engaged in the participatory process.

Kemmis (2006:471) on the other hand emphasises being critical of PAR by pointing out that the quality of practitioner research is not just a matter of the technical excellence of practitioner research as 'research'. It is a matter of addressing important problems in thought and action, in theory and practice, problems worth addressing in and for the times, in and for communities, in and for a shared world. It is a matter of addressing important problems for education, for the good of each person and for the good of societies. This is what it means to be 'critical'.

Baum *et al.* (2006:855) add that the continuous PAR process of reflection and action, which incorporates participant observation, informal discussions, in-depth interviews, and a "feedback box", is viewed by participants as contributing to their self-reported increased sense of self-awareness, self-confidence, and hope for the future. Accordingly Smith (2006:7), states:

participatory action research, Kaupapa Māori research, oral histories, critical race theory and testimony are just some examples of methodologies that have been created as research tools that work with marginalised communities, that facilitate the expression of marginalised voices and that attempt to re-present the experience of marginalisation in genuine and authentic ways.

From the discussions above one can conclude that the principles of PAR include participation, power/empowerment, lived experience, critical reflection and critical reflection on professional practice:

Through praxis, critical consciousness develops, leading to further action through which people cease to see their situation as dense, enveloping reality or a blind alley and instead as an historical reality susceptible of transformation (Baum *et al.*, 2006:856).

This transformative power is central to PAR (Baum *et al.*, 2006:856), where the community is beginning to think that the reality they face could be changed, therefore some of the necessary steps to be taken could be the formulation of a structure that would deal with their challenges.

The actual process of putting in place a structure that will deal with the intervention activities such as needs assessment, planning, mobilising, training, implementing, monitoring and evaluation will then follow: “The myth that affected population is too shocked and helpless to take responsibility for their own survival is superseded by the reality that on the contrary, many find new strength during an emergency” (Goyet, 1999:12). The people of this community would therefore take the process further as discussed in the following section.

3.2.3.4 *Community Development and Transformation*

It is important to note that action learning that takes places among community members and the researcher results in capacity building which in essence spurs community development. According to Valesco (2013:1-7), co-learning shows that the creation of social enterprises is not alone the solution to alleviating poverty, but rather the participatory methods helps development in local communities through capacity-building as an empowering process. This leads participants to increase control over their lives by nurturing community strength and problem-solving abilities.

In terms of community development, findings from capacity-building and community networks for self-resilience show that, in order to get people in the community interested in public participation, individual knowledge management needs to be achieved. This is an important element for creating a good collective awareness.

Chataway (1997:747) say that community members should be the ones who determine the nature and operation of the things that affect their lives; as the decision-making process has to do with greater sense of community and clarity about their cultural identity. It is therefore suggested by Chataway (1997:747) that the role of the researcher and externals is to join community voices and allow them to be heard more clearly than in the past (Valesco, 2013:1-7). This has been stressed by Santelli, Singer, Divernere, Ginsberg, and Power (1998:211-236) who pointed out that the ultimate aim of PAR is the empowerment of oppressed individuals who work together in social change which encourages capacity development and capacity building of all who participate.

3.2.3.5 *Critical reflection and evaluation*

According to Kelly (2005:65-73) and MacDonald (2012:34-50), PAR projects constitute scholarly work because they include reflection and dissemination to a variety of audiences, particularly the community and provider partners, who are crucial because after the research team has collected data it can assess the intervention's impact and sustainability. The collected data will also be used as necessary to make adjustments to the intervention as it is implemented (Dulin, Tapp, Smith, de Hernandez & Furuseth, 2011:1-10). In addition to the sustainability of the intervention(s), according to Dulin *et al.* (2011:1-10), this process seeks to ensure the sustainability of the community and stakeholders that are the core of successful efforts to solve the problems or challenges encountered by that particular community. Thus it is important to share findings from the study with the partners and stakeholders and the broader community, possible in a number of ways not discussed at this stage.

3.2.3.6 *The challenges of participatory action research*

The discussion above indicated the strengths of PAR, however, there are also challenges, one which, according to MacDonald (2012:34-50), is ambiguity and interchangeable use of terms such as 'action research', 'PAR', and 'participatory research'. She indicates that this may be confusing for novice researchers and

others who are learning this type of approach. Another challenge, according to Gillis and Jackson (2002:1-752), is its inclusion of community members in the research team who may not be able to maintain their commitment to the project over time. Young (2006:501) asserts that PAR requires time, knowledge of the community, and sensitivity on the part of the researcher to participants' agendas, divergence of perspectives, values and abilities. There might also be difficulty in getting consensus among the community members for the determination of social issues that require attention and the anticipated timeframe for the change (Gillis & Jackson, 2002:1-752; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006:1-192).

According to Gillis and Jackson (2002:1-752) and Brydon-Miller (2010:657-666), it is important to address the issues of power imbalances and the establishment of egalitarian relationships prior to initiating PAR research. This is important in that all participants must feel accepted, in spite of their different social standing in the community so as to get inputs from different perspectives which will harness their sense of ownership of the project. Wadsworth (1998:324) adds that there may be misunderstandings regarding the participants' perceptions and social issues to be addressed, as well as conflict about interpretations and analysis of the research. There can be uncertainty or lack of agreement regarding the direction and overall purpose of the inquiry, which can lead to the wrong questions being asked, or the wrong direction taken, resulting in irrelevant data.

All members of the research team must be sensitive and responsive to different forms of leadership required at different times in the research project, and participants must be informed that PAR is time-consuming and requires the commitment of the research team. Timeframes must be set during the planning phase in order to enable full community participation, for all the cyclical processes as intended (Gillis & Jackson, 2002:1-752).

Lastly, one of the most serious challenges to PAR is the belief held by many researchers that it is less rigorous than that conducted by researchers alone. Researchers who work on PAR teams may find that their professional colleagues give less value to their work and that the work of the team is less likely to be accepted for publication in peer-reviewed journals or presentation at national conferences than that done solely by researchers: "Until PAR becomes more widely

accepted and valued, researchers may be hesitant to risk their own professional careers by participating on PAR teams” (MacDonald, 2012:34-50). The researcher may have to prove legitimacy to other, more conventional, researchers who are not used to working with open-ended research design. Young (2006:501) asserts that PAR is frequently criticised from a scientific perspective as a ‘soft’ method of research; therefore, those who employ its methodology may be challenged by other researchers unfamiliar with it to legitimise their research, as it focuses on voice and everyday experiences, not hard data.

3.3 INTERVENTION, STRUCTURE AND DATA GENERATION

Reid (2000:2) notes that active community participation is a key to building an empowered community. Studies have shown, that communities with high rates of participation apply for and receive more funding than ones with less participation and participating communities achieve greater citizen satisfaction with their community. In PAR a community action cycle is developed whereby problems are identified and prioritised (Reid, 2002:2). The plan is made together with participants or coordinating team and implemented and evaluated or monitored together with the team in a participatory way. The process was followed by the community under study and this will be detailed during the discussion about how PAR was used in the intervention, gaining entry to the research site, the initial meetings with the community, the establishment of a coordinating team, the formulation of a vision, the situational analysis, the action plan that was drawn up in collaboration with the participants, and the monitoring and reflection process.

Stringer (2007:30-48) asserts the essential elements of PAR, namely collaboration, participation, and reflection, take place during cycles of planning, acting and review. In planning phases, extensive, formal and documented discussion takes place with participants about their perceptions of the problem at hand and the actions necessary to achieve desired changes. In acting phases, the researcher and participants implement programmes and assure that planned activities occur. In the review phase, goals are reassessed and researchers work with participants on the validity and interpretation of the collected data (Kelly, 2005:65-73). It is however important that the initial steps of PAR be followed, including a community

assessment as the basis of action, finding a community partner (stakeholders), considering existing resources that are available for implementation of a PAR programme, and ethical approval which ensures that research subjects are not abused or harmed as a result of their participation. In this case the University in which this study was performed had issued the coordinator of the research an ethical clearance certificate that authenticated all ethical aspects to be adhered to by the researcher.

3.3.1 Gaining entry to the research site

Gaining entry into on the research site, with which I was not familiar, could have been difficult were I not approached by the distance education students who were staying there, regarding problems they were encountering with ineffective learner support in their areas, especially the tutorial support system. The key informants in this community were the ones who initiated a relationship that made it possible for me to gain access to it. As Vollman, Anderson and McFarlane (2004:129) assert, key informants in a community have much to offer a research team, and their insights can be helpful in providing information that could not be captured by other methods (Barnes, 1992:115-124; Lather, 1986:257-277; McTaggart, 1991:168-187; Sample, 1996:317-3;32). The advantage of PAR is that it increases relevance of research to the concerned members of community who were concerned, enhancing empowerment of the researchers, the students and the community or other stakeholders in that those concerned individuals are given an opportunity to voice their concerns, in this case the distance education students on the research site.

The students indicated that they were unable to attend tutorial sessions that were mostly organised by the distance education university in the Regional Learning Centre, mainly because the centre was far from them and it was financially difficult to raise the funds to travel to the regional centre. They therefore wanted to find out from me whether it was possible for the institution to provide the comprehensive and effective tutorial support system in their area as well. Their main concern was that they were unable to succeed with their studies because of lack of learner support, leading most to drop out and others fail the examination.

It was during this interaction with the registered distance education students that the decision was taken to organise a larger meeting in which all the students and other community members would be invited to discuss this issue at length. It was also important for me to make an assessment of the community in order to have an initial impression about it and the pertinent problems they were facing. I thought that it would give me a better understanding of the community and provide an opportunity to gather basic statistical information that documents the prevalence of problems and their contributing factors (MacDonald, 2005:34-50). The above data and information, according to Kelly (2005:65-73), is also useful when writing the background section of funding proposals and research reports, and during preparation of baseline description for evaluation reports.

3.3.1.1 Brief profile and assessment of the research site

The research site is a small rural town situated in the centre of Free State province, with three High Schools which produce learners who successfully complete secondary education every year. However, the majority of those matriculated learners cannot further or pursue their studies, mainly because of lack of funds and academic support. The majority of the people in this town were unemployed and therefore parents could not afford to pay for their children to go to tertiary institutions, especially the residential institutions far from their hometown. Parents and community members realised that these young people resorted to crime, which with alcoholism and unplanned pregnancies reflected the poverty, lack of employment opportunities, lack of opportunities to further their studies, neglect, and desperation. Those young people who were fortunate enough to study through distance learning were also frustrated because there was no significant or effective support given to them by the distance education institution, hence there was such a high drop-out rate and failure rate among them. At the time of the assessment of the research site there were about 50 registered distance education students on the research site and many out-of-school youth who had completed matric but who could not further their studies for the reasons mentioned above.

3.3.1.2 *Conditions prior to inception of the project*

As indicated above there were a number students who registered with the distance education institution on the research site who were frustrated because they could not receive academic support. Since these were young people from grade 12, it was difficult for them to cope with the demands of distance education. They were faced with a challenge of studying on their own with no effective or efficient tutorial and student support services. NO student recruitment activities were brought to their town, which according to Braxton and McClendon (2002:57-71) has an influence on the persistence of enrolled students. There were no orientations which are the first interaction between newly admitted students and the institution (House & Kuchynka, 1997:540-541; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991:404).

There was no attempt to advise students academically, which in many cases results in their choosing the wrong modules. According to MaGillin (2000:365-380), Upcraft and Stephens (2000:73-83), students who attend orientation sessions have their first contact with academic advisors who, under normal circumstances, are supposed to help develop students' relationships with the University and its teaching faculty. This is especially important when professional academic advisers provide primary services to students, and as Upcraft and Stephens (2000:73-83) observe, advisors can provide the teaching faculty with valuable information about the students they have met.

The teaching faculty, on the other hand, can help advisors better understand the unique classroom challenges that the students may encounter and how to get around them. Career counselling, study skills workshops on examination preparation, and administrative support with student financial aid advice is becoming an increasingly important component of the University experience as students and their parents face growing challenges in paying for higher education (Kramer, 2003:64-65). The current and prospective students on the research site needed the above-mentioned services to be provided by the institution concerned in order to do well with their studies and to enhance the University experience. The students did not have suitable study space as most of their homes were not conducive to study purposes. Even the local library could not accommodate all of them as the reading

section was too small; the library closed early in the afternoons and was not open during weekends.

All challenges encountered in relation to the tutor system were due to the non-existence of a team to support and investigate possible solutions to the students' problems. A team of representatives could particularly take up the issue of lack of tutorial support for distance education. In this community there was no structure, vision or locally customised policy on how to assist local distance education students in finding an appropriate tutor system, learner support services or facilities that could enhance their endeavours to perform well in their studies. There were no collaborative efforts or SWOT analysis of the implementation of an effective tutor system. By conducting situational analysis the community could have been able to identify, for instance, the existing resources within the community that could be used to assist the process of establishing an effective tutor system. This structure, on the other hand, could have identified those resources that were not present which could have been acquired through negotiations with identified stakeholders inside or outside the community.

All these reflect the inability of the community to devise and prioritise strategies for local students to obtain tutorial and academic support through a tutor system that is community-based. Finally, there was no attempt to monitor or reflect on the processes with a view to identifying the risks that might cause the envisaged tutor system to fail, if it was implemented. As a study coordinator I needed to have an in-depth understanding of what was happening on the research site as participatory design, which according to Morse (1991:283) is used to gain insight into the experiences, fears and aspirations of participants so as to identify the challenges that they experience with a view to responding to them. A critical emancipatory mode was used to gather data; and I interacted closely with participants in a humane manner in order to observe and interpret their world (Merriam, 1998:8).

I initiated the discussion during the meetings by using the Free Attitude Interview (FAI) technique by Meulenberg-Buskens (1997:40-49). This technique, according to Mahlomaholo and Netshandama (2010:11), allows the data-gathering process to be humane and not alienate or undermine the research participants. Data in the form of participants' own words in meetings was gathered and analysed. Field notes were

taken when necessary during discussions to validate the observations I made through recorded communication and discussion. Taped data would be transcribed and analysed using a critical discourse analysis procedure (Van Dijk, 2004; 2006) on the basis of the objectives of the study.

Walter (2009:146-173) states that an essential element of PAR is that the problem that needs solving or the objective that needs reaching must arise from the community of interest. That is, it is those who have the problem or those who desire to achieve the objective that must decide what the problem or objective is and want to achieve change. Walter (2009:146-173) adds that it cannot be imposed or diagnosed from outside, especially by the researcher.

This section therefore discusses the components of the framework and the conditions that prevailed before the inception of the research project. It discusses how the community of the research site started voicing their concerns and how they proposed preliminary discussions about their situation. It examines the formation of the coordinating team and the discussions that took place among the members before consensus was reached in order to implement an action plan. There were five meetings that took place on the research site, including the first meeting of information session.

As mentioned above at 3.3.1, during that first meeting it was decided that it would be appropriate to organise a second meeting to which all the distance education students would be invited, including prospective students, out-of-school youth, parents and other stakeholders, such as churches, teachers and government departments officials who might be interested in the lack of the provision of an effective tutor system on the research site.

3.3.2 Brainstorming session

The brainstorming session, organised by the students, took place on 12 April 2012, in a local church in which some community members, especially the students, raised their concerns with regard to the lack of academic support provided to local distance education students. Problems raised were that these learners were unable to succeed with their studies because of the absence of academic support, and an

inability to attend the tutorials that were provided at the University's regional centre because of the distance to and from the regional centre where a comprehensive tutorial support system was provided. This was exacerbated, according to the participants, by socio-economic factors that bedevilled their community, which were a high unemployment rate among the youth and adult population and non-existence of opportunities to acquire skills and to further their studies at the tertiary institutions, such as universities, and TVET colleges.

During that brainstorming session, which about 85 people attended, I explained to them how the distance education institution operates and how tutorial support centres (learning centres) are established and the conditions that make their establishment successful. The introduction of a tutor system was discussed, and emphasis was placed on the involvement of the community in addressing issues raised around the establishment of an effective one. The community was conscientised that it must take a lead in identifying the problems and possible solutions as they had a better understanding of what was happening in their community. This issue is also raised by Selener (1997:1-358), who indicated that the first component of PAR is that the problem must originate in the community itself and be defined, analysed and solved by them. They were empowered to reflect on themselves in order to devise solutions to the problem(s) at hand. This is also one of the principles of PAR, says that participants are not subjects of research but rather active contributors who participate in all phases (Chandler & Torbet, 2003:133-152; Kelly, 2005:65-73).

It was then decided that there would be a second community meeting where all other sectors of the community which were not represented would be invited including parents, students, out of school youth, school governing body, teachers and many other people who may have had interest in the discussion of the establishment of the tutor system on the research site. The students who organised this first brainstorming meeting promised to organise that meeting by inviting as many people as possible within the community.

3.3.3 Broader community meeting to identify their problems

That meeting was scheduled for Saturday 14 April 2012, during which questions on the implementation of the tutor system were posed, including on other services such as administrative, counselling, and financial support. I indicated that I was in the process of conducting a study which would investigate in-depth issues of academic and administrative support to students who study through the distance education whilst living in remote areas. I suggested that I was keen to work with their community in particular because they had already raised pertinent issues about the lack of tutorial support in their area. I indicated to them that I was interested to work with them in order to find solutions that could try to solve the problems raised. I also indicated that it would be a research project that involved the community in the whole process (Chandler & Torbet, 2003:133-152; Kelly, 2005:65-73).

3.3.4 Selection of the coordinating team

As attendance was high, it was suggested that those who represented the community would investigate all issues concerned but instead of nominating the representatives they should volunteer. Fifteen people volunteered and the other five who were not present in the meeting were nominated by the community. After the information session, the 15 people including students, out-of-school youth, parents, teachers and a local pastor volunteered to participate in the research project. The volunteers and participants assembled in one of the rooms in the church to discuss the way forward and the process to be followed. They wished to address the roles they were supposed to undertake as volunteers in order to devise solutions to the problem of lack of the support in relation to the tutor system in their community. Although the room was small it accommodated all the volunteers, who were seated around tables in the room. The participants introduced themselves and mentioned what they were doing and why they had volunteered. I reintroduced myself and explained my role as the study coordinator and an employee of the distance education institution concerned.

After the introductions it was then decided that the following meeting would deal with planning. As Kelly (2005:65-73) and MacDonald (2013:34-50) note, the next step of

PAR that follows gaining entry is the planning cycle, and which according to Kelly (2005:69) “involves a balance between presenting ideas developed from a formal community assessment and working with community groups on the creation of priorities or strategies.” The focus of the planning cycle in essence is to identify community members and to involve as many different groups as possible within the community. After this had been discussed, the date for the formal planning cycle was decided.

Before the meeting was adjourned and the date for the following one set, the issues raised during the brainstorming session and broader community meeting were highlighted so as to make sure all the participants were informed about the aims and objectives of the study. This process was aimed at fostering common understanding of all aspects related to the tutor system and how its absence on the research site affected the local distance education students.

It was then requested that each coordinating team member should begin to think broadly about those issues and begin to play around with ideas that may make it possible to come up with some solutions to the issue at hand. This was seen to be crucial because it was a preparatory or reflective process for the following meeting in which all those issues were going to be raised in the planning session. It was also important because it was here that the possibility of devising possible solution was eminent, including possible prioritisation of important aspects that could be put forward for further discussion and debate.

3.3.5 Planning and data generation procedure

As indicated above, beginning a PAR project involves a balance between presenting ideas developed from formal community assessment, such as the brainstorming, and working with the Task Teams on the creation of priorities or strategies. Kelly (2005:65-73) asserts that “the researcher does not enter a community as a tabula rasa”, thus the researcher talked to the people, checked whatever statistics or data that needed to be taken into consideration, discussed thoroughly the problem of the tutor system, which was of the most concern to the members of the community. Assessment data was included in the agenda of the coordinating team and those

issues that needed special attention were identified so as to focus collectively on them with all the members of the coordinating team. This, according to Kelly (2005:65-73), is helpful in developing ideas about the potential solution to the problem, which in this case is the lack of tutorial support; and it is important to present the developed ideas in a simple format so as to enable discussion. Assessing the need and desire for action is the overall goal of the presentation, and stressing assets and strengths convey a more positive tone than focusing on problems (Kelly, 2005:65-73). This emphasis also provides an opportunity for suggestions and activities to address problem areas (Kelly, 2005:65-73; MacDonald, 2013:34-50; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006:1-192).

3.3.5.1 The first formal meeting of the coordinating team

The following Saturday, 21 April 2012, the coordinating team met and the process began by discussing with the participants all the issues that they thought needed to be addressed. This served as an ice-breaker because the participants freely engaged with each other and the atmosphere was jovial. After everybody had settled down, the reflection and planning process included the identification of pertinent issues regarding the tutor system. The participants raised many issues that affect their studies, beginning with how difficult it was to apply and ultimately register with the University and how misinformed they had been during the registration periods. This method, according to Kemmis (2008:130), creates opportunities to explore the boundary-crises by opening a communicative space among members of the coordinating team or participants and other people who are affected. Debates were generated as the members were engaged in issues that were related not only to the lack of the effective tutor system but also administrative challenges that students encountered even before they were fully registered. This debate encouraged active participation of the students who were the most affected and prospective ones, including parents who were also members of the coordinating team.

Dworski-Riggs and Langhout (2010:215-230), write that a PAR project is one in which stakeholders participate in one or more of the following: problem definition, problem assessment, intervention planning, implementation, and evaluation. The coordinating team members understood that they were co-researchers, therefore

their participation was crucial and the community showed confidence and trust in them. Dworki-Riggs and Langhout, (2010:215-230) states that “Participation means having a say in the process”. During this meeting thorough brainstorming was conducted around the issue of the tutor system, and different perspectives of parents were voiced on their concerns of parenthood. Teachers also had their perspectives, as did students and out-of-school youth. This diversity of perspectives necessitated the opening of the communicative space and enhanced leaning toward inter-subjectivity, which according to Kemmis (2008:128-129) was “opened by communicative action, and participatory action undertaken as a kind of process of communicative action, is an inter-subjective space that exists between and beyond individual participants”.

Besides the debates and different perspectives, all the issues that were raised culminated in issues that were concerned with the effective tutor system, trained tutors, student support services aspects such as suitable tutorial venues, computer labs, study space, lack of Internet connectivity, student funding, unavailability of academic books in the public library, the issue of long distances between the research site and the nearest University regional centres, and unavailability of qualified people who could be tutors for some modules. Some of the issues were on the policy of the institution which advocated online delivery for which the students felt that it was unfair as they did not have facilities for which they could take advantage of this new system. The inter-subjectivity also needed critical discourse analysis (CDA) as an analytical tool appropriate in relation to cognitive analysis as espoused by Van Dijk (2008:85-86). It was a difficult meeting because most of these issues were directed to the researcher as the employee of the University, therefore I was expected to come up with answers or to clarify some of those issues that were raised which were predominantly related to student academic services. These issues ranged from the students not being orientated therefore not even knowing where to start after they had received their study materials, to how to begin to study and how assignments were supposed to be written and submitted (House & Kuchynka, 1997:540-541; Kramer, 2003:64-65; MacGillin, 2000: 365-380; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991:404; Upcraft & Stephens, 2000:73-83).

As Dworski-Riggs and Langhout (2010:216) indicated above, PAR dictates that the problems must be collectively identified and assessed in order to come up with intervention mechanisms that are decided by all the participants. After that process the actual need arose to devise solutions warranted thorough planning, implementation and evaluation. It was decided by the coordinating team that the following meeting would be dealing with issues of planning and role clarification because the issues needed clarification so as to know who would be involved and what role to play in the research process, including the activities that would be taken during the research process. The agenda for the next meeting was mainly the formulation of the Task Teams and different role that they would play after all the issues were tabled and prioritised and the planning action drafted. The venue for the next meeting was suggested by one of the participant who informed the group that he would talk to the principal of the local school in which he was employed to ask for use of one of the unused classrooms for future meetings.

Before the date of the next meeting on which allocation of roles was going to be made it was decided that performance agreement and delivery plans be drafted collectively among the participants so as to enable all coordinating team members to adhere to the agreed timeframes and envisioned deliverables after each one had been allocated the tasks and roles to play. It was also decided that after every meeting there would be a period of reflection on what had been discussed, which was a way of giving the team an opportunity to stand back from time to time to reflect on how the research was going and what had been achieved. This, according to Pain, Whitman and Milledge (2011:4-8) underlines the importance of building reflection into the research cycle. Thus, Walters (2009:146-173) asserts that PAR is essentially applied, rather than taking a standard linear model, and is cyclical, working its way through iterations of planning, acting, observing and reflecting: "The cyclical nature of PAR is its fundamental process feature (Wadsworth, 1998:324).

3.3.5.2 *SWOT Analysis*

SWOT analysis was performed and with the support of the research team, community members were acting as researchers exploring priority issues affecting their lives, recognising their resources, producing knowledge, and taking action to

improve their situation. Those who formed the coordinating team took it upon themselves to interrogate issues that affected the community of the research site and took action by going to find a comprehensive information about what the community had and did not have in order to give feedback to other participants, thus giving them confidence. The marginalised began to have a voice in what was troubling them and expressed this openly as what they wanted to change in their community on the research site. It was therefore important to assure the participants in the first meeting with the coordinating team that they were co-researchers and that their information was valuable to the project. I had also informed them that there was no leader in the coordinating team, and our status was the same. This could be achieved by respecting each other's views, debates and suggestions, because if anyone felt alienated they might withdraw and refuse to participate effectively. It should be avoided because it could be a possible threat to PAR.

The evidence of the success of the project is the implementation of the tutorial learning centre in which at least two or more tutorials will be taking place either face-to-face or through electronic means such as *Skype* and video-conferencing or e-tutoring. The growth of the project in terms of the number of students participating in the tutorial programme will be true evidence of the success of the framework, including the increase in the pass rate of students who attended the tutorial sessions.

On 28 April 2012 a meeting was held in a local school at which the Principal gave permission for use of one of the classrooms to have these meeting after school hours and at weekends. The participants were given an opportunity to provide feedback from their investigations. After each Task Team's presentation, analysis of feedback was made. SWOT analysis was used in this regard, in order to reach consensus about the decisions to be taken so as to prioritise issues. As Krimerman (2001:60-82) states, dialogue between the researcher and co-researchers is encouraged on the grounds that the investigator has experienced the problem, whilst dialogue is a means of discovering the shared nature of the problem and the common grounds for action. Participants therefore looked at the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the tutor system on the research site so as to come up with the appropriate solutions.

It was agreed firstly that having primary schools and high schools in the area was one of the strengths because the implementation of the project would be sustainable in that there would continuously be students who would be supported by the establishment of the effective tutor system on the research site. That there were some qualified teachers on the research site with University degrees was also regarded as a strength because tutors could be recruited from that group of teachers to support the tutor system. The local high school principals who were keen to assist with the implementation of the project were to be considered for further discussion around the issue of their classrooms tutorial venues, study space, and computer labs. Another strength lay in a promise by the librarians to find out from their superiors in Bloemfontein whether the provincial government would support the initiative of keeping academic books on behalf of university students, and the librarians did not doubt that the provincial government would support such initiative. Although *Telkom* was not sure about the free connection to the Internet on some computers, the local manager promised to find out from their Head Office whether that could be arranged, and he was excited about the initiative.

The other team reported that there was no video-conferencing facility on the research site and that this technology was said to be too expensive, therefore it was agreed that this was a weakness. After a lengthy discussion about this issue the team agreed that this was a necessity, especially because there might not be qualified people to be appointed as tutors for certain disciplines such as science and engineering on the research site. It was decided that this issue should be pursued by trying to find future funders. This Task Team also reported on the cheaper alternatives, such as *Skype*, to be considered, although it also needed computers and Internet connectivity.

The team considered security in schools as one of the important opportunities on the research site and it would encourage donors to invest in expensive gadgets if they were assured that their investment would be looked after. The team also regarded the appointment of tutors, the rental of venues and its appointment of the coordinator of the TS programme on the research site as important factors. They also regarded the career guidance workshops, pre-registration orientation workshops and study skills workshops conducted by the University as important in supporting the learners

on the research site. They also regarded the enthusiasm shown by the managers of companies and other local entrepreneurs with regard to this initiative as a good sign for possible involvement in the project.

The threats that were considered were those of students not getting bursaries, lack of support from the families of those students, lack of support from the provincial education department, increasing crime rates, persistent unemployment and proliferation of taverns in the area. Once this process was thoroughly completed and the collective agreement with all the participants reached the process of prioritising the issues was decided upon and the plan of action drawn up.

3.3.5.3 *Priorities*

On 5 April 2012 the group met to decide which issues that needed to be dealt with first and which incrementally so as to have a clear way forward. The following issues were debated and resulted in a decision to draw up the action plan in which those prioritised issues or components of the framework were dealt with systematically. Those were the identification of popular modules that were registered by local distance education students, tutorial support strategies which included face-to-face tutoring, peer tutoring, collaborative learning, group formation, assignment tutoring, suitable tutorial venue, computer laboratories with suitable hardware and software, tutor recruitment, library facilities, Internet connectivity, video-conferencing facility, *Skype* and other Technology Enhance Learning devices and Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) devices such as 'smartphones'.

Freire, as quoted by Baum, Macdonald and Smith (2006:8560) stated that human consciousness brings a reflection on material reality, whereby critical reflection is already action. During our meeting these aspects were tabled and discussed thoroughly, and those that seemed to be related were grouped together. The team then decided that the categorised issues be put on each flipchart and discussed so as to find out which of those that were tabled were important and which would be dealt with first in the order of importance and urgency. Reflection took place with a SWOT analysis and prioritising of issues to be tackled. Friere's concept of praxis helped form the position that action and reflection are indissolubly united and

'reflection and action on the world in order to transform it' (Baum, Macdonald and Smith (2006:8560).

At this stage the action plan was decided upon by the participants and is discussed in the following section. It was important that constant feedback by the coordinating team to the community at large be given frequently because plans and projects, according to Čiagis and Gineitienė (2007:112), which were designed but had not included public involvement, may face opposition which would slow or stop the project. Thus, a participatory sustainable development strategy preparation process should be based on partnership and cooperation and consultation, opinion survey and discussions (Čiagis & Gineitienė, 2007:112). SWOT analysis was also one of the tools that gave possibility for many people to participate in the planning process and to influence the result. Strategic planning, according to Cope (1987:37), is about only what cannot be controlled, whereas strategic management is about what is under the control of the organisation. After the identification of the goals and preparation of a logical structure the operational planning phase began in which activities and tasks were defined, as well as an implementation timetable, responsibilities, possible source of finance and the monitoring process.

3.3.5.4 *Action Plan toward enhancement of the tutor system*

According to Baum *et al.* (2006:856), PAR perceives that action and reflection must go together, even temporarily, so that praxis cannot be divided into a prior stage of reflection and subsequent stage of action. He points out that when action and reflection take place at the same time they become creative and mutually illuminate each other. The following action plan was put into practice when each issue that was prioritised was dealt with by the participants in deciding what to do by whom and what results were found, which steps to be taken in order to implement the action and what corrective measures could be taken.

Issues that were raised ranged from whether there would always be a considerable number of students on the research site in order to make the establishment of tutor system sustainable, the shortage of trained educators or tutors who would facilitate learning effectively, affordability of the distance education programmes, tutorial

support which included face-to-face tutoring, peer support (peer tutoring and peer teaching), collaborative learning, mobile learning, online learning, assignment tutoring and use of synchronous and asynchronous devices. The issues that were raised were prioritised and categorised in tutorial support strategies, technology enhanced learning, computer laboratories and Internet connectivity, tutor and student recruitment and tutorial venues, study space and libraries. These prioritised issues were also allocated tasks teams which were going to investigate them thoroughly in order to give comprehensive feedback to the entire coordinating team.

3.3.5.2 Performance agreement and delivery plan

This performance agreement and delivery plan was aimed at assisting the processes of the project by enabling the coordinating members to perform the agreed upon tasks as stipulated, to take appropriate actions and to be able to do them on time so as not to delay the process. This also had dates and time of which the meetings would be held in order to give feedback to the entire team. This agreement and plan fostered cooperation among the members because they tend to respect, trust and feel obliged not to disappoint the team by not performing their allocated tasks. It was also humbling to hear that the task teams met at certain times in the respective homes of the members to discuss the tasks given to them before they came to give feedback to the entire coordinating team. This was a sign of commitment on the part of the Task Team members, confirming authors (Maricowitz, 2003:595-600, McNiff, 1988:1-220, Whyte, 1991:21) who assert that PAR involves commitment from all participants and requires mutual respect, trust, humility, adaptability and holistic approach to problem solving. Listening, dialogue and negotiating consensus are seen by Maricowitz (2003:595-600) as strategies to achieve mutuality and empowerment.

3.3.6 Formation of the Task Teams and possible solutions to the problems identified

As discussed in 3.3.5.1 this meeting was meant to form the Task Teams in order to thoroughly investigate different forms or strategies of tutoring by which the students

could be assisted. Different strategies and technologies were discussed in which face-to-face tutoring, peer tutoring, assignment tutoring, online teaching/tutoring, and formation of study groups were discussed as possible aspects of the tutor system, therefore there should be a Task Team responsible for investigating these strategies and how they could be implemented. The importance of Internet-driven technologies such as video-conferencing, computer conferencing, e-learning, and mobile learning technologies were also seen as means by which the tutor system could be delivered on the research site, therefore there should be people to investigate the possibility of utilising these.

Another issue of importance was the identification of possible suitable venues in and around the research site, including schools, churches, libraries and town halls that could be utilised for face-to-face tutoring, peer tutoring and group discussion. This also included online tutoring in which the issue of identifying available computer laboratories on and around the research site was regarded as important, especially those that had the relevant software and Internet connection.

Lastly, it was regarded as important to approach local companies which could assist students with work-integrated learning, mentorship and possible opportunities for employment and donation with regards sponsoring local schools, libraries and students with computers so as to make access to the Internet possible and cheaper.

All the above aspects were assigned Task Teams that were requested to report back to the whole group on 28 April 2012 as an elementary formal community assessment so as to jointly work with the coordinating team on the “creation of priorities or strategies” (Kelly, 2005:65-73). The teams were to report on their findings about the aspects that they were assigned to investigate, a process that was important because it was giving the whole coordinating team a clear picture of what the community had and what it did not have in order to come up with possible solutions to some of the aspects that were investigated.

That reporting back of the Task Team made it possible for the coordinating team to begin to look at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the situation on the research site. Reflection or evaluation is important to Kelly (2005:65-73) and MacDonald, (2012:34-50) because they believe PAR projects are scholarly works that include reflection and dissemination of results to a variety of audiences,

particularly the concerned community. These weekly or monthly meetings were held to exchange progress reports and support the coordinating team on the research site, enabling them to summarise their accomplishments and develop future plans. This iterative cycle of PAR of planning, acting and review, according to Walters *et al.*, (2009:146-173) and Pain *et al.*, (2010:1-8) is essential because these iterations are needed to resolve the problem or reach the objectives. The PAR process is self-evaluative, involving a constant evaluation of its process and modifications to adjust the research problem articulation and research practice: “As with all aspects of PAR, the deeming of a problem as solved or an objective as reached is a collaborative one (Kelly, 2005:65-73)”.

Another issue of importance to Kelly (2005:65-73) is maintaining meticulous records of discussions, interviews, and reactions in a field notebook because it helps clarify programme philosophy and the type of programming that is needed in the targeted community, as well as providing data for later in-depth analysis. One view is that: “Adequate time for planning process should be factored into schedules because the planning stage can easily take 6-12 months” (Lindsey & MacGuinness, 1998:1106-1114; Meyer, 1993:1066-1072), whilst Ellis and Crooks (1998:356-357) point out that since the goals of empowerment and action cannot always be obtained on a set schedule, PAR methods are criticised as time-consuming.

Cornwal and Jewkes (1995:1667-1676) point out that a unique component of PAR is the sharing of data with participants, in that the group can decide in what form (raw, summarised, or analysed) they would like to review the data, and time space should be made available for their input. According to Cornwall and Jewkes (1995:1667-1676), conclusions or findings are not considered final until participant feedback is received and integrated. Making the results of all activities available for public scrutiny and discussion transforms the process of developing and implementing community activities into research and makes it available for replication (Reinharz, 1992:22-28).

3.3.7 Prioritised issues

There are a number of issues to be prioritised.

3.3.7.1 Tutorial support strategies

The following tutoring strategies were regarded as important and therefore needed to be investigated thoroughly: face-to-face tutoring, peer tutoring/peer teaching (collaboration of learning), assignment tutoring and online teaching/tutoring, including the identification of popular modules registered by local distance education students. Tutorial support and identification of popular modules on the research site were regarded as important to be investigated by the coordinating team, thus Task Team A was assigned to them.

The different ways to facilitate learning to be investigated included the face-to-face tutorial which is regarded as the most popular mode of delivery by the students. Mrs Moletsane and I were given the tasks of investigating the possible ways by which the students could be supported academically on the research site. Besides the face-to-face tutoring that most of the students opted for it was found that peer support and collaborative learning could be an option to be encouraged, especially in modules with few students or no qualified tutors to teach them on the research site.

Peer tutoring and peer teaching, although different, were seen as an effective way to keep students together in groups, with senior students to facilitate learning to the lower level students. Peer teaching is a form of tutoring by which students on the same level or those who are taking similar module/s alternate in teaching each other in the group. Collaborative learning was another option for students taking the same modules, as they form groups that would meet regularly to discuss the content of the subject.

In order for these to succeed it was also important to have suitable venues in which students could meet regularly in groups. It was therefore important to ask Task Team B to assist in acquiring such venues on the research site. The responsibility for identifying the modules registered by local students was given to Task Team A, because the coordinating team believed that I as an employee of the University could have access to relevant data. Access to information regarding the modules

registered by local students was regarded as important in that it would give an indication of which modules had the higher number of students and which the fewer or no students registered. This indicated which tutors should be recruited on the research site if there were qualified people to be appointed as tutors. Task Team A was assigned to retrieve that information and circulate it to the coordinating team, especially the Task Team, as soon as possible and the decision to recruit the tutors was decided by the participants.

3.3.7.2 Technology Enhanced Learning (VC, Skype and PDAs) synchronous and asynchronous devices

Technology enhanced learning Task Team F, led by Mr. Tsoang, investigated possible interventions and the infrastructure required to install and utilise such devices for tutoring purposes. Mr. Tsoang found technology such as video-conferencing to be expensive and taking a long time to acquire, whereas Skype was free and so an alternative. However, for Skype the students need to be connected to a personal computer in research site with Bloemfontein (Tutor), and the computer should be connected to the Internet. The researcher approached the First Technology in Bloemfontein to find out more about *Skype*, and learned that *Skype* can connect to three or more classrooms, making it a viable option. The important requirement would also be a digital projector, which has to beam the activity on a large screen, especially if the number of students is more than three in each tutorial venue. The document camera will also be needed in order for the tutor to show whatever he/she writes to the students on the other side.

3.3.7.3 Tutorial venues, study space and library facilities

Task Team B, led by Mr. Matsoe, identified possible tutorial venues and made an appointment with the principals and SGB in research site, where a request for permission to use the school classrooms for tutorial purposes was discussed and the conditions under which such venues could be acquired. Although some of the principals outrightly refused to entertain the request, some were sympathetic to that project because they thought their learners and staff would benefit from the project.

There were two schools which offered the use of their facilities, namely, classroom and/or computer laboratories.

Mr. Thabana, as a member of the Task Team B was assigned to visit local libraries to find out about study space and the possible storage of academic books. The two librarians from two research sites indicated that they would be interested in helping because they had study space in both their libraries. They also told Mr Thabana that in the past those libraries had been stocking the former Technikon SA academic books, therefore they would gladly accommodate the University books for the students. The librarians also told Mr. Thabana that they each had a computer in their libraries that was connected to the Internet and made available to the public.

3.3.7.4 Computer laboratories and Internet connectivity (E-learning/ Online Learning)

The Task Team C, led by Ms Hlomoka, identified the computer laboratories in research sites and they had meetings with different schools that had computer labs. They singled out the lab that had hardware that was relatively new and software used by the students, namely *Microsoft 2010*. The Maputseng High School was located in town and was the only school that has a fully-fledged computer laboratory with Internet connectivity. The principal and SGB members were excited about the project as they thought that it would bring the University to their learners' doorstep, particularly because some of the teachers and administrative staff had enrolled with the distance education institution in question.

3.3.7.5 Tutor-recruitment and training

Task Team D, led by Ms Mol and Ms Mahlohla, together with the researcher, drafted copies of the advertisement for tutor positions and the required qualifications. Those copies were sent to local schools, banks, municipal offices, churches and the local Correctional Services office. Although there was little response the number of inquiries from the possible applicants showed a high level of interest.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE AND PROCESSES

This section describes the data collection procedure and processes.

3.4.1 Participants and their profiles

The participants are four University students, local Pastor, Policeman, three Educators, four Out-of-school youths, two Parents and a study coordinator. The participants are all residence of research sites and they were motivated to make a difference in their community. Participants were divided into five pilot groups according to the activities that were prioritised. Each activity has its champion or leader who took full responsibility in investigating issues around the activity and report back to all stakeholders during the reporting session. The champion had two or three team members. In most cases, some of the other group members supported other teams when, for an example, the pilot-group that is responsible for tutorial venues had a meeting with a School Governing Body (SGB) of Maputseng High School.

3.4.1.1 Coordinator for tutoring and tutorial strategies

The coordinator for tutorial strategies was responsible for investigating different strategies that are used for tutorial purposes, therefore the leader of the Task Team A which was responsible for tutorial strategies. The researcher as the study coordinator was given this task mainly because I was regarded as a person who may have better information regarding the different styles of teaching especially at the higher education sector. I was supposed to go out and research how each of the strategies was effective and in which environment and circumstances they would each be most suitable. This involved finding out whether each was more suitable in the conventional residential higher education institution or in distance education environment. With information at hand I was expected to come up with a report that I would present to the team so as reflect on these strategies collectively and decide which would suit the environment to which students are exposed on the research site. The coordinating team was supposed to weigh all options in order to decide which strategy would be suitable under which circumstances. For instance, should

some of the modules registered by the students on the research site have no suitable tutor to offer them, what would be the alternative strategy employed to assist them?

3.4.1.2 Coordinator for technology enhanced tutoring systems

The coordinator for a technology-enhanced tutoring system was responsible for investigating possible interventions that could be used and the infrastructure required in order to install and make use of technologies that would enhance tutoring and enable tutoring support service to be brought to this remote semi-rural research site for their benefit of local distance education students. This Coordinator had to investigate synchronous and asynchronous technologies that could make the tutor system accessible, not forgetting the type of infrastructure required. It was also important to investigate the old and new technologies available on the market for this purpose which could be effectively and easily acquired in the remote environment. It was crucial for the coordinator and the Task Team to research other higher education institutions, especially distance education around the world, in order to make educational opportunities accessible to students who lived at a distance from the main campuses and in rural areas. The coordinator for technology-enhanced education (Mr. Tsoang) was one of the distance education students who were regarded as a person with extensive knowledge of technology as he was employed in one of the telecommunication businesses on the research site.

3.4.1.3 Coordinator for tutorial venues, study space and Library facilities

The coordinator's tutorial venues and study space were used to investigate whether there were venues on the research site that could be used for face-to-face tutorials, peer tutoring/teaching, collaborative learning, group studies and study, as most students did not have study space in their homes. This coordinator and Task Team were to go out and look for such infrastructure on the research site and make recommendations to the coordinating team about where and what was available, with advantages and disadvantages stated. The coordinator for tutorial venues and study space (Mr. Matsoe) was one of the distance education students on the

research site, a community coordinator and one of the community leaders who was respected by the community.

3.4.1.4 Coordinator of computer laboratories and Internet connectivity

The coordinator of computer laboratories and Internet connectivity was to investigate whether there were community multi-purpose centres, Internet cafes and computer laboratories with Internet access on the research site. This was crucial because the distance education students needed such facilities for online learning, tutoring, and study groups, including the use of the LMS of the University from which they could access study material, assignment details, examination results and discussion forums, and interact with fellow students and the lecturers of the respective modules. Those computers were important because the majority, if not all the distance education students in the research had access to computers and Internet let alone personal computers or PDAs. It was therefore important to investigate whether such facilities were available on the research site and whether they were suitable to be used by the students for educational purposes.

The coordinator for computer laboratories and Internet (Ms Hlomoka) was also a distance education student who was employed by the law enforcement agency on the research site. He was popular among the peers as the person who assisted most of the students in accessing the Internet on his personal computer and was always willing to help other students who needed assistance.

3.4.1.5 Coordinator for tutor and student recruitment

The coordinator for tutor and student recruitment was responsible to help in recruiting qualified people within and around the research site who were interested in tutoring university students. He or she would visit schools, government departments, local municipality and local businesses looking for people who were keen to teach on a part-time basis. She was also responsible for recruiting out-of-school youth who qualified for furthering their studies to register with the distance education institution, because it was believed that there was no point in establishing a community-based tutor system if it was not going to be sustainable due to shortage of students on the

research site. She was to inform students about the application system and registration system, including funding in the form of bursaries, loans and grants available at the University, government departments, businesses and NGOs. Ms Mol, together with her counterpart, Ms Mahlohla, was regarded as having extensive experience in human resources therefore was deemed suitable to handle the tutor recruitment. They also had rapport with youth organisations in their respective churches, thus were thought suitable to recruit out-of-school youth and other community members to enrol with the distance education institution.

3.4.2 Instrumentation, methods and techniques employed to generate data on the research site

The instrumentation section discusses the instruments or tools that were used to collect or generate data, including the methods and techniques used on the research site. Data collection in PAR may be by means of participant diaries, field notes, reflective diaries, minutes of the meetings, recording meetings, FAIs, focus group interview, participants' observation and/or survey questionnaires (McNiff, 1988:1-220; Mash & Meulenberg-Buskens, 2001:141-148; Hugentobler, Israel & Schurman, 1992:55-76).

3.4.2.1 The transcribed text (field notes and minutes)

Earlier discussions held with the community during the brainstorming sessions were minuted and field used to supplement the recorded discussions. The data obtained from these discussions were transcribed then transcribed and sorted from into themes and thence codes, from which meaning was synthesized as descriptions and concepts (Materud, 2012:795-805).

3.4.2.2 Recording devices (voice recorder, video recording) to record meetings

Facilitative communication skills and probes were used to engage participants in the research subject. A voice recorder was used to capture data, but used sparingly in

the beginning because the relationship between the researcher and participants was not yet strong.

3.4.2.3 *Methods employed for data generation on the research site*

It is important to note that there are various methods that can be implemented for data generation in PAR, as indicated above in 3.8.3. These may range from focus groups, participant observation and field notes, interviews, a diary and personal logs, questionnaires, FAI and surveys. All these methods are effective for data generation employed in PAR (Gillis & Jackson, 2002:1-752; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006:1-192). In this study the methods most commonly cited in the literature were selected, namely focus groups, participants' observation and interviews, particularly the FAI. These will be briefly clarified below.

Focus groups: Kitzinger (1995:299-302) defines these as socially orientated interview processes that capitalise on communication between the research participants in order to generate data. They generally consist of seven to 12 individuals who share certain characteristics relevant to the focus of the study. The small number of individuals in a focus group facilitates an environment for optimal communication amongst all participants, thus increasing the potential for useful data to be generated (Marshall & Rossman, 2011:4). This therefore means that the researcher during a focus group creates a supportive environment in which discussion and differing points of view are encouraged. For McTaggart (1991:168-187), all participant viewpoint in PAR are recognised and valued, as all participants have an opportunity to communicate. McNiff and Whitehead (2006:1-192) write that in PAR all involved in research process are active participants throughout the process. The topic of discussion could be left up to the group while the facilitator provides structure (Gillis & Jackson, 2002:1-752). Morgan adds that combining participant observation with focus groups is useful in gaining access to the group, focusing on sampling and site selection, while also checking tentative conclusions and looking for possible changes to implement.

Participant observation: Participant observation, on the other hand is regarded as an innovative qualitative research method of enquiry and rich source of data

collection that is commonly employed in PAR (Marshall & Rossman, 2010:4). It provides the researcher with privileged access to research subjects in a social situation and captures the context of the social setting in which individuals function by recording subjective and objective human behaviour (Gillis & Jackson. 2002:1-752; Munhall, 2003:1-19). The researcher becomes part of the process being observed and immersed in the setting, hearing, seeing, and experiencing the reality of the social situation with participants. According to Marshall and Rossman (2006:3-35) and Spradely (1980:1-195), the researcher as participant-observer not only observes activities, participants, and physical aspects of the situation, but also engages in activities appropriate to the social situation. Participant observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviour and objects in the social setting through the use of detailed and comprehensive field notes (Marshall & Rossman, 2006:3-35). For Gillis and Jackson (2002:1-752) the researcher in participant observation attains first-hand knowledge of social behaviour as it unfolds over time in the social situation and so obtains a broader view of what is occurring, with the opportunity to detail what is communicated and what is implicit in the situation (Streubert & Carpenter, 1995:1-326).

Interviews: Stringer (1999:68), points out that *interviews* are methods used in PAR which enable participants to describe their situation, thus interviewing according to Kaufman (1992:108) and Kvale (1996:5), they are a theoretical approach to data collection, an engaging form of inquiry, and an appropriate method for collecting data regarding human experiences. Interviewing offers researchers access to people's ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words, rather than those of the researcher (Reihartz, 1992:19). For Gillis and Jackson (2002:466) an interview is "a face-to-face verbal interaction in which the researcher attempts to elicit information from respondent, usually through direct questioning". Both the researcher and participant share and learn throughout the interviewing process in a reciprocal manner. MacDonald (2012:34-50) asserts that throughout PAR process all participants are active in the development of the interview guide, as well as data analysis. It is therefore essential that interview questions "be carefully formulated to ensure that participants are given maximum opportunity to present events and phenomena in their own terms and to follow agendas of their own choosing" (Stringer, 1999:70).

Free attitude interview: FAI (1997:1-6) is a method or technique that involves asking one question to the interviewees in a focus group then allowing them to “deliberate, debate, discuss, and (dis)agree” about the issue that has been asked (Masehela, 2005:28). The role of the interviewer, according to van der Walt and Mathews (1995:1725-1729), is to provide regular reflective summaries and to ask for clarification when required. As indicated above, all interviews and focus group discussions were taped, transcribed and the contents analysed. PAR is seen as transformative, empowering process whereby researchers and participants co-create knowledge while developing a sense of community, educating each other by negotiating meanings and raising consciousness (Fals-Borda, 2001:27-37; Green *et al.*, 1995; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007:336-396).

3.4.3 Data collection procedure

In this section the FAI principles will be discussed in detail as they were adapted and used to generate data. It is important to note FAI and PAR have similarities in that participation, collaboration and mutuality of all participants on all levels of the research is the ideal in identifying the problem, defining the problem, planning the research, collecting the data, interpreting the data, planning the intervention, evaluating the intervention and re-evaluating the problem in light of the new information generated from the action implemented, and finally disseminating the information (Mash & Meulenber-Buskens, 2001:141-148; Reardon & Welsh, 1993:69-92; Khanna, 1993:62-71; Schensul, 1999:266-283; Macaulay, Commanda & Freeman, 1999:774-778). The FAI technique was used in all the meetings at which issues of a community-based tutor system were discussed. The FAI was introduced and workshopped to all the coordinating team members in order to understand its principles and the reason it was employed for data generation in this study. They were urged and encouraged to use this technique mainly because it was non-directive and, as Maholomaholo & Netshandama point out (2012:11), it allows the production of knowledge to be humane and human because it does not alienate or undermine the integrity of the research participants as human beings. It respects the views of all participants therefore it is in line with PAR, with important goals being to empower and bring social change. Social change could not be achieved if the

community of the research site were alienated and undermined. Equality in sharing control and power is a basic value of PAR (Marincowitz, 2003:595-600).

The research aim was to design a framework towards the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system, but the research question was too broad, therefore follow-up questions were asked in which pertinent issues raised by the participants during the brainstorming sessions and situation analysis phase could be addressed.

These follow-up questions were in line with objectives of the study, thus the first follow up question was: ***“What are the challenges and experiences that the distance education students on the research site are facing with regard to the tutor system at UNISA?”***

The Second question was about the possible solutions to the challenges that the students were facing with regard to the tutor system in order to make it effective: ***“How can the challenges experienced by the distance education learners at UNISA be addressed?”***

The third follow-up question was about the conducive or suitable conditions on which the tutor system could thrive and be effective on the research site: ***“Under what conditions would the suggested strategies for addressing the distance education learners’ challenges be optimally implemented?”***

The fourth question was to make sure that the tutor system did not fail because of the inherent threats and risks that might arise, therefore the coordinating team was asked: ***‘What are the possible threats and risks that could impede the successful implementation of the suggested solutions and strategies ? How can these risks and threats be addressed?’***

The coordinating team, after identification of risks and threats that could affect the effective tutor system, needed to analyse the evidence: ***‘What is the evidence that can be cited to demonstrate the successful implementation and the positive impact of the suggested strategies?’***

3.4.4 Data analysis

According to Emerson (1995:1), it is important for the researcher to be involved in the lives of the participants so as to enter into their social setting and get to know them. The researcher tried to be in contact with the participants although the issue of distance was a factor that hindered everyday face-to-face contact. Nevertheless, the researcher took any opportunity that availed itself to attend meetings that the participants organised, and observed from the inside how people led their lives and the passion that they had to change the status quo in their community.

The researcher wrote field notes describing experiences and observation made during the interaction with participants. Writing of field notes was not just writing the findings about what happened, but an active process of interpretation and making sense of the occurrences and deliberations. Emerson (1995:2) states that it is important to recognise that field notes involve inscriptions of social life and social discourse. Geertz (as quoted by Emerson, 1995:2) states:

The ethnographer inscribes social discourse; he writes it down. In so doing, he turns it from a passing event, which exists only in its own moment of occurrence, into an account, which exists in its inscription and can be re-consulted.

The study coordinator initially used audio tape recordings other than video recordings because at that stage I was unsure of how the participants would react, even though I tried to explain the intention. The use of audio tape recordings, which according to Emerson seemingly catch and preserve almost everything occurring within an interaction, actually capture but a slice of social life. Emerson goes on to say that what is recorded in the first place depends upon when, where, and how the equipment is positioned and activated, what it can pick up mechanically, and how those who are recorded react to its presence. The audio recording and video-recording were freely used after the participants got used to the idea that it was important to use them in order to capture the proceedings, and this happened when the participants became familiar with my presence and the element of trust was enhanced.

A video recording provides a valuable record of words actually uttered and gestures actually made. But the ethos of fieldwork holds that in order to fully understand and appreciate action from the perspective of participants, one must get close to and participate in a wide cross-section of their everyday activities over an extended period time (Emerson, 1995:3).

The participants were also encouraged to write minutes and notes whenever they went out to the field to which they were assigned. These notes were taken by the researcher after they were thoroughly discussed.

The actual analysis of the data will be discussed at greater length in the following chapter on how critical discourse analysis was used to analyse data. According to Van Dijk (1993:252), critical discourse analysis does not primarily aim to contribute to a specific discipline, paradigm, and school or discourse theory but is primarily interested in and motivated by pressing social issues, which it hopes to better understand through analysis. Wodak (1995:1), defines critical discourse analysis as fundamentally interested in analysing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language which aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimatised by language use.

The data collected was subjected to critical discourse analysis as a continuous process so that “implicit argumentations, and opaque texts are deconstructed and their underlying meanings made explicit” (Wodak, 1995:1). CER encourages people to participate freely in research and their contributions and inputs are accepted and respected. It is through CER that data is analysed during the “interpretive, analytic and educative phases of CER to identify the constructs with the objective of the study” (Tlali, 2013:167). For Nkoane (2011:111-126), conducting research located within CER is used to promote social justice and democratic citizenship with the aim of showing respect to participants and enhancing humanity, social values and equity. CER’s analysis of text is intended to create meaning from the history or social standing of the participants:

During the past decade educational researchers increasingly have turned to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a set of approaches to answer questions

about the relationships between language and society (Rogers *et al.*, 2004:365-416).

According to Rogers (2002:251), it focuses on how language as a cultural tool mediates relationships of power privilege in social interactions, institutions, and bodies of knowledge. Thomas (2002:89) states that CDA seeks an understanding of how discourse is implicated in relations of power, while Corson (2000:98) states that CDA goes beyond other forms of discourse analysis by focusing directly on macro and micro power factors that operate in a given discursive context. Anderson (2001:202) and Collins (2001:144) cite Fairclough, who suggested a three-dimensional approach to discourse analysis, namely spoken or written language text (textual analysis), interaction (discursive practices), and analysis of text as a social practice (social action).

The information on which people base interpretations of the world around them comes from a wide range sources, such as personal interactions with other people, knowledge and experience, their cultural and social world, and the public media. Each of these sources carries with it different values in terms of status so information received from these sources can be interpreted as having different degrees of validity. The main mode through which most of these sources provide information is language, though recent advances in multimodal analysis (Norris, 2002:97-121) of signs have crucially indicated that other modes of meaning making, including gesture, intonation, image and gaze also play a crucial role and should be taken into account.

As a discursive process, language is a neutral reflection of society and social reality. According to Rogers (2002:251), CDA focuses on how language as a cultural tool mediates relationships of power privilege in social interactions, institutions, and bodies of knowledge. Instead of drawing meanings passively from pre-existing knowledge of the world, it plays an active role in classifying the phenomena and experiences through which individuals construct, understand and represent reality. The way in which people make sense of the world is therefore discursively mediated. CDA needs to be understood as both a theory and a method (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999:16), in that it offers “not only a description and interpretation of discourses in social context but also offers an explanation of why and how

discourses work” (Rogers 2004:2). Language, according to Fairclough (1993:133), is socially shaped, but also socially shaping, constitutive, therefore it is important that critical discourse analysis (CDA) explore the tension between these two sides of language use, the socially shaped and socially constitutive, rather than opting one-sidedly for a structuralist or ‘actionalist’ position.

Theoretically, according to Van Dijk (1993:249), in order to be able to relate power and discourse in an explicit way, a cognitive interface of models is needed which includes knowledge, attitudes and ideologies and other social representations of the social mind. These cognitive models also relate the individual and the social, and the micro- and macro-levels of social structure.

The use of CDA was crucial because it is in line with CER, which according to Mahlomaholo (2012:41-42) and Biesta (2010:45) is inclined towards social justice, democracy and the change of the society from the clutches of oppression to the state where society is empowered to take a stand in transforming the status quo. In this study, CDA was utilised because it provides a way of thinking that analysing text and discourse that may give access to social identities and social relations. Phillips and Jorgensen (2002:61) observe:

Discourse practices through which text are produced (created) and consumed (received and interpreted) are viewed as an important form of social practice which contributes to the constitution of the social world including social identities and social relations.

The production of text draws its meanings from social practice and *vice versa* (Ng’ambi, 2008:31-39). Burbules and Bruce (2001:1102-1121) add that the discourse theory states that every word spoken draws its meaning from social practices of which it is a part, or, recursively, from the sediment of prior practices. In this study, therefore, in accordance with discourse theory, the production and interpretation of text is not free from the social conditions of production and social conditions of interpreting such text. As Fairclough and Wodak (1997:277) point out, discourse involves social conditions of interpretation, and the relationship between social action and text is understood in a context of interaction. It therefore follows that interaction is a product of social action, and the traces of its interactive process,

according to Ng'ambi (2008:31-39), left on the human mind reproduce social practices (interaction).

Planning of a communicative event which involves the decisions about the time for the meetings, the venue, agenda and the invitation of the participants was done collectively by the entire coordinating team in a form of consensus. The settings were not decided by me as a researcher but by the team. Van Dijk (1996:85-104) gives examples of a patient taking an initiative to talk to a doctor, and a student asking to talk to a professor. In both the situations the doctor or a professor would usually decide on the setting. Here the presence of these powerful actors, the doctor and the professor, constrains interaction as it takes away the focus from the content of communication to the source of the content. Thus, in this study the issues of power were dissolved.

The authentic context in this case developed when the participants, irrespective of social status and stature, were encouraged to interact and engage in the discussions as equal partners. The power to regulate communicative events was not entertained in this study, except that whosoever asked a question or commented on the issue at hand was allowed to do so freely and to be responded to by whoever wished. As Van Dijk (1996:88) observes, the power to regulate communicative events:

consists of various dimensions of speech and talk; which mode of communication may/must be used; which language may/must be used by whom; which genres of discourse are allowed; which types of speech acts; or who may begin or interrupt turns at talk or discursive sequences.

In this study, however, it was unanimously agreed that the participants could use language with which they were familiar and comfortable during the discussions, that is a local one that was used intensively during the initial engagements to 'break the ice' and make everybody feel free to participate. There was, however, a change of language later in the study when participants also used some English during their deliberations. That did not alienate other participants because everybody was comfortable with conversing to each other and speaking the language they felt at ease, or interchangeably.

In this study the analysis of data was neutral (not taking sides), collaborative and encouraged pragmatism, which according to Ng'ambi (2008:31-39) is the discursive type of discourse that addresses practical issues. The production and interpretation of text followed that iterative analysis (moving from text to social action) of CDA (i.e., Description, Interpretation, and Explanation) that would help to unravel social practices embodied in text. In this study data was analysed contextually, textually, cognitively and socially.

3.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed PAR as operationalisation of critical emancipatory research by giving its theoretical origins and comparing it to other conventional research paradigms. It also discussed the objectives, aims, formats and the challenges of PAR in order to understand how it is to be utilised in forming the coordinating team, the roles of the coordinating team and the tasks of the team and other participants. It also discussed how entry was gained to the research site by discussing its profile and assessment, including the conditions that prevailed before the inception of the project. This was done in order to measure or assess whether the interventions that were proposed and implemented had made any difference with regards to the status quo. It described the planning and data generation procedure, which included the situational analysis, prioritisation of aspects or issues that needed attention, the action plan and performance agreement and the delivery plan.

Data generation and methodology were discussed in relation to PAR principles, with FAI used in order to make participants feel free to participate, mainly because they were treated with respect, humility and utmost care. The chapter further discussed CDA and its principles such as the explicit socio-political stance of discourse analysts on analysing data. It emphasised how CDA focuses on issues of dominance relations of the elite groups and institutions as they are being enacted, legitimised or reproduced by text and talk. Textual analysis, cognitive analysis and social analysis were used.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS ON THE STRATEGY TO ENHANCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TUTOR SYSTEM

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to formulate a framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches at the distance education institution. This chapter analyses data gathered, then presents and discusses the findings towards the formulation of the aforementioned framework. To systematise this discussion, the chapter firstly analyses the challenges facing the tutor system as it now operates based on the empirical data gathered at the research site. Each identified challenge is discussed in relation to the relevant literature, which includes theory, policy and the findings of the previous research to show how that particular challenge hinders the effectiveness of tutor system. The relevant extracts of the empirical data gathered that highlight the origins of the challenge in question are cited and analysed in relation to the literature. The analysis is also conducted in relation to the theoretical framework of this study (CER) in order to highlight the role that deferential power relation plays (Wicks & Reason, 2009:246). In order to understand the deeper meaning of the empirical data, CDA is used at both the discursive practice and social structural level (Liasidou, 2008:483–500; Sheyholislami, 2008:2).

I will then look at the components of the solution that would enhance the effectiveness of the framework for the tutor system as well as the contextual issues conducive to the success thereof. This will be done by analysing and interpreting data, presenting and discussing the findings of each component in relation to the corresponding challenge that was identified. The analysis of the components will also be made in the same process and procedure followed in the presentation and discussion of the challenges. This means that CER will also be used in analysing the components, and CDA as the analytic tool including literature will assist in drawing the findings of what would emerge as the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system. After discussing the conditions under which the components of

the emerging framework could be successfully formulated, I then investigate risks to the successful implementation of the emerging framework so as to find mechanisms to circumvent them. I finally present and discuss what constitute the elements of success which were achieved the new framework in response to the challenges that were initially identified. The extracts from real-life data are cited to support each subheading and, as mentioned above, these are analysed in terms of CER and CDA, which is applied to the engagement of power relations (Billing, 2008:783; Van Dijk, 1993:249; De Beaugrande, 2006:114).

4.2 CHALLENGES FACING THE TUTOR SYSTEM

In this section I consider and analyse the data in respect of each of the identified challenges relating to the ineffectiveness of the tutor system, from its key aspects, namely the learner, the tutor, tutoring and support. These are intricately and interdependent (Palfreyman, 2001:1-28; Ryan, 2001:78-86; Shale, 2001:98), thus, to enrich the argument and understanding of the areas of weaknesses and threats inherent in each of the aspects of the tutor system I organise the discussion under thematic sub-headings then identify the inherent challenges under each of them.

4.2.1 Lack of dedicated local coordinating team

The coordinating team dedicated to making the tutor system effective engenders the operationalization of principles of accommodation of diversity, unity of purpose and collaborative learning among the participants and relevant stakeholders (Williams & Ronan, 2013:1-13). In this way the coordinating team serves to facilitate the creation of inter-subjective spaces in which participatory and democratic values find expression (McNeely, Aietoro & Bowsher, 2002:9). The purpose is to ensure that the participants' diverse knowledge and competencies are readily accessed as resources towards addressing problems experienced by the learners and their support, tutors and tutoring processes (Rocha-Schmid, 2010:355). For instance, the learners' problems regarding the envisioned traits to be achieved through learning, namely the critical cross-filed outcomes, become pivotal (DBE, 2011).

The coordinating team facilitates the formulation of a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system on the research site (McNeely, Aiyetoro & Bowsher, 2002:1-40; Pitcoff, 2004:1-40). The establishment of the structures such as the one envisioned in this study, was also carried out in countries such as Namibia, Nigeria and Malaysia, to improve and/or expand the provision of the tutorial support system to the respective country's citizens, including those living in remote rural areas (Haufiku, n.d.: 1-8; Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:47).

On the research site there was no coordinating team that engaged the local people, especially those who were directly affected by the tutor system and those with diverse experiences, knowledge and skills commensurate with the nature of the activities of the tutor system (Laverack & Labonte, 2000:255-262; Zuber-Skeritt, 2011:157-166). The need for a coordinating team that could lead and manage the processes associated with making a tutor system effective is evident from the comments by Ranthako and Tshepang. The following views were expressed by them during one of the meetings which considered the strategies for making the tutor system effective in the area of this study. Ranthako said:

Seabo sa moifo ka Me Selina hore re fumane tselase ya ho balla le sa Ntate Thabang ho hlophisa ditsebi ka hore bana ba ka rutana jwang le tse ding ke ntho tse ikgethileng (The role played by the coordinating team through Me Selina to enable us to have access to the classrooms for study purposes and the role by Mr Thabang of how they can they teach each other and others that were exceptional).

It is apparent from Ranthako that the coordinating team had the capacity to organise resources and information that could enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system. In the statement above, the aspects of the tutor system that appeared to have been enhanced were learner support (classroom for study purposes) and tutoring (peer-tutoring) as reflected in the phrase 'ba ka rutana jwang' (how can they teach one another?).

Furthermore, it would appear that Ranthako is also considerate of the value of 'influence' or power wielded by the individual members, namely Me Selina and Mr Thabang. Me Selina had directly or indirectly influenced the SGB's decision to avail

study space, whilst Mr Thabang influenced the resource persons on issues of peer tutoring and related issues.

In the same vein, Tshepang confirmed the use of the power of the knowledge (Israel, Schultz, Parker & Becker, 2001:172-202) which could be possessed by different stakeholders. Tshepang suggested that:

Re lokela ke hona mema batho ba ka re thusang ho nka karolo hore re kgone ho fihlela makgabane a bona ha bobebe bakeng sa ho re thusa (We should [always] invite people who can help us to participate in order to access their competencies and skills with ease).

Tshepang realised that the coordinating team members might not always have the power to deal with all matters pertaining to enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:141; Mahlomaholo, 2010:10). The power mentioned here was in the form of relevant knowledge, expertise and experience to deal with issues pertaining to tutor competencies, tutoring, learners' and learner support (Tait, 2003). This view was embedded in Tshepang's apparent 'open door policy' on obtaining support with relative ease (Van Dyk, 1993:249-283). Tshepang held in high esteem the capabilities that other people had, which must be accessed in order to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system.

4.2.2 Lack of impelling vision

The formulation of the vision is important because it serves to direct participants to work in an orderly manner and is the foundation for unified project commitment. In this way it harmonises the inescapable ideological differences and thus helps to level off power relation differences. An impelling vision is therefore about consensus among the stakeholders in their attempt to address their own problems and needs. It has a capacity of synergising the variant and diverse efforts and thoughts of the people by centralising the unity of purpose among the people in order to address their needs and to support one another (Yoeli & Berkovich, 2010:451-467). In Namibia, for instance, NAMCOL had one common vision of expanding access to the educational opportunities to its citizens by establishing learning centres in the close vicinity of where people lived, irrespective of the locations around Namibia (Haufiku,

n.d.:1-8). Similarly, a team set up the National Commission for Open Distance Education in Nigeria, which formulated a common vision for people of Nigeria in order to make possible access to support through open distance learning (Agboola, 2005:1-6; Ajadi, 2008:61-70). The prevalence of shared goals tends to influence people to align their interests with those of the groups, teams and organisations with which they share the vision (Thompson, 2000:6). This led Tlali (2013:311) to make a conclusion that “the alignment of activities, efforts and interests of participants with diverse situational and contextual experiences, knowledge and backgrounds is a critical technique and tool that enhances cohesion and synergy towards a common goal.” This stresses the importance of a common goal and vision for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system.

There was however no vision that could be related to the introduction of a community-based tutor system in the area of this study, as was evident during the situational analysis meeting(s) facilitated by the study coordinator and subsequently by the study coordinating team members. During one of these meetings a religious leader remarked:

Ha hona ...tjhebelo pele motseng wa rona ke kahoo menyetla ya ho thusa bana ba rona ha e ka sehlohlolong. ... ha re na tjhelete ya ho thusa bana ba rona ho ntshetsa dithuto tsa bona pele, ...feela ...monyetla .. wa ho tlisa thuto motseng wa rona ha re o amoheleng ka matsoho a mabedi. Re o ntshetse pele molemong wa rona bohle. (There is no ... vision in our community that is why opportunities of helping our children are not cardinal... we do not have money to help our children to further their studies ... however ... the opportunity of bringing education to our community must be welcome with both hands. Let us pursue this opportunity for our benefit).

The pastor used the phrase, ‘*ha hona tjhebelopele motseng wa rona...*’ (there is no vision in our community), he/she indicates that the vision (*tjhebelopele*) relates to bringing education to their community (*ho tlisa thuto motseng was rona*). This view is corroborated and amplified by the sentiments expressed by another participant:

Le ha bana ba rona ba sebetsa hantle sekolong empa ha re na tshebedisanommo, le moo re ka thwarisanang hore re atlehe re ntse re ikemela ka bomong. Re hloka tataiso e ka re isang moo re reng re batla ho ya teng

(Even if our children may perform well at school but we do not cooperate [with one another], even on issues that need us to work together in order to succeed we continue to do things as individuals. We need guidance that takes where we say we want to go).

The sentiments expressed above suggest that lack of cooperation or unity amongst the people tends to weaken them. According to the speaker, if people do not cooperate when they should they fail to achieve what they intended to achieve. It is also apparent that for people to unite there is a need for them to be guided on how to cooperate. It can thus be said that the guidance required should be such that it enables the affected persons to manage their inherent differences on matters of common interest, in this case to be resident in making the tutor system effective for the well-performing learners. The critical aspects which deserve attention in order to make the tutor system effective included tutoring, learner support and issues relating to the tutors and learners.

The issue pertaining to working as individuals as opposed to teams that supported one another may be conceived as and traced from the effects of the 'lingering' historic past imbalances (Mahlomaholo, 2009:224-237). The dominance of one cultural belief system (i.e., individualistic) over the others (communal / social) is the issue at hand (Veenhoveen, 1999:1-25). The speaker perpetuates the view that for them to work together there must also be someone from elsewhere to guide them on how to address their problem and needs. Thus, the speaker may be conceived of as disempowering him/herself and the community.

As there was no vision for the enhancement of the effective tutor system, the following was perpetuated: lack of direction, non-attendance of the community problem and need, lack of focus, non-engagement of the affected participants, and lack of resources for supporting learners and the tutor system.

4.2.3 Lack of situational analysis (SWOT)

In this study, a SWOT analysis was conducted in the environment where the tutor system was to be operationalised (Dyson, 2003:1-10; Sharma & Bhatia, 1996:453-464). The analytic process was to identify and eliminate the weaknesses and to

counter the threats relating the same issues (learners, tutors, tutoring and support) of the tutor system, from the environment, namely both the micro and the macro levels of the tutor system. It sought to clarify the contexts within which the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system could be optimally operationalized. The clarification of the contexts of the framework to enhance the tutor system was conducted concurrently with the determination of strategies to eliminate weaknesses and to counter the threats (Sabbaghi & Vaidyanathan, 2004:3-19). SWOT analysis encourages collaborative and participatory action from the affected participants from who the process derives benefit in skills and competencies (Srivastava, Kulshreshtha, Mohanty, Pushpangadan, & Singh, 2005:531-537). It fosters transparency and openness amongst the participants in order to ease access to resources, competencies and skills of the participants (Weshues, Lafrance & Schmidt, 2010:35-56).

However, in this study, the community did not conduct a situational analysis in respect of the tutor system. This was evident in the sentiments expressed by the participants, as they indicated during the initial meeting facilitated by the study coordinator in respect of the possible introduction of the study to the prospective participants. In an attempt to elicit possible causes of the ineffectiveness of the tutor system one parents whose child could not complete his studies raised a concern that:

Bana ba bangata ba ile ba tlohela dithuto tsa bona hara nako mme ha ke so utlwe ho thwe na molato o bile kae (Many learners abandoned their studies prematurely and I have not heard anyone saying what was the reason for that).

The parent expected to be given feedback on his child's and other learners' abandonment of their studies. He awaited an opportunity such as this when he and other participants could be afforded an opportunity to enquire about the matter, regarding the high number at which learners abandoned their studies as a problem (*molato o bile kae*). This phrase presupposes that the parent was of the view that the problem of abandonment of classes in high numbers could be traced to the weaknesses or threats in one or more aspects that constituted the tutor system. It is though the parent was of the view that had the reasons for untimely abandonment of

studies been identified and appropriate strategies developed to curb them, many learners would have stayed on longer in their studies.

One of the learners who untimely abandoned her studies, Montsheng confided to the meeting in response to the parent's concerns. In her response she confirmed that there was no investigation or analysis that she was aware of regarding the reasons they abandoned their studies:

Leha ho so be le motho ya re botsang, re hlokile tshehetso e topaletseng ya ho ngola diasaenmente, re diehile ho fumana fitbeke ka motho ya hlalosang e seng feela mongolo (Even though there has been no one who asks us we lacked support on writing of assignments, our feedback was delayed and could only be given in writing and as such we could not interact or engage sufficiently).

According to Montsheng, she and other learners' abandonment of studies was a result of lack of support with regard to the writing of assignments. She had expected tutoring on the assignment to have been provided by the tutor, a face-to-face support from someone who would be more knowledgeable than herself and the learners. Thus she considered different engagement modes as having varying degrees and extents of influencing learners to learn, such that face-to-face was more powerful or influential. It can thus be said that learners missed out on being exposed to diverse and more influential modes of learning. This aspect is emphasised by Montsheng by further pointing on the importance of having the feedback on their assignments given through discussion with the tutor or lecturer.

Dirontsho, another learner added that

Ke bone ke sokola haholo ke le mong ho se bao nka netefatsang le bona. Jwale le disebediswang tse kang di khomputa le inthanete atjhe ke ne ke sa kgone ho di sebedisa (I struggled very much alone I did not have anyone to discuss with. I could not even use computer and Internet).

Dirontsho had considered tutoring that was facilitated through electronic devices, namely computer and the Internet. She however indicated the lack of timely analysis of the weaknesses and the threats of the tutor system, which may have been prevalent in their situation as the main problem. This led to the tutor system failing to

expose the learners to a prevalent opportunity to use electronic resources for learning purposes.

That the meeting was able to identify the possible causes and ways according to which such problems could be addressed, attested to the significant role played by the community members in the possible enhancement of the tutor system. The ability to ask relevant questions such as the one asked by the parent and the contribution of the affected persons in the problem or need proved to be influential. It is thus imperative that SWOT analysis is conducted in a manner that affords the participants an opportunity to actively participate and freely express their views. It should be a process that seeks to give the participants hope that they will be able to address their own needs and problems.

4.2.4 Lack of prioritisation for effectiveness of the tutor system

In this study the process of prioritisation should lead to the identification of desired inputs and outcomes of the priorities of the tutor system and the enhancement of its effectiveness (Israel, Schultz, Parker, Becker, Allen III & Guzman, 2008:47-66). Thus, the inputs and outcomes pertaining to *inter alia* tutoring, tutors, learners and learner support deserve critical consideration. The due consideration of these priority areas, namely tutoring, tutors, learners and learner support, necessitate the engendering of time management and considerate allocation of resources through the prioritisation (Park, Port & Boehm, 1999:560-563). Accordingly, the study should make the choices and decisions through the prioritisation of the elements that constitute a specific priority area which may be identified as ineffective (Johnson, 1999). For instance, inefficiencies pertaining to tutoring may require that the tutors prepare, facilitate their lessons presentations and assess the learners in cognizance of the critical cross-filed outcomes which are pitched at the appropriate NQF level(s) (SAQA, 2001). Through the prioritisation process the study should be able to recognise what is important, as well as to see the difference between urgent and important. The high priority tasks are those that help with the achievement of the long-term goals or can have other meaningful and significant long-term consequences (Campbell & Vainio-Mattila, 2003:417-437).

In the case of issues pertaining to the learners, the study through the coordinating team may focus its attention on achieving two or three critical cross field outcomes that may be found to be lacking. Being able to work individually and as a team member, using the technology responsibly and caring for the environment may be pivotal (UNESCO, 2009:41). For the tutors, specific issues that may require attention and warrant enhancement of the tutor system are the preparation and feedback as well as accounting for the performance of the learners. (See paragraph 4.2.3). Other issues that could be identified were around empowerment of people by increasing confidence and motivation of the excluded young people, and improved core skills that allow individuals whose previous educational experience had been negative to tackle and solve important issues in their lives (Curran *et al.*, 2004:1-42). Once the priorities have been identified they are listed and put in their order of importance (Sharma & Bhatia, 1996:453-464), using agreed upon prioritisation criteria (Wates, 2000:9).

The community of the research site did not conduct the prioritisation process for the enhancement of the tutor system through a community-based approach, thus the inputs and outcomes pertaining to the priority areas of tutoring, learner support, the envisaged learner and the roles of the tutor were left unattended. The disadvantages of not attending to these issues are apparent in the frustrations expressed by learners Dirontsho and Montsheng earlier. In addition, Tlhokomelo, a learner who stayed for much a longer period in his studies said:

Hoja bonyane re ne re tsebana hore ke bo mang ba ingodisitseng thutong dife le hore ke bo mang ba tsamaileng tsela ena bao re ka ithutang ho bona le hore disebediswang re ka di fihlela jwang (It would have been better if we knew other learners who registered and for which modules/courses, also who amongst them had some experience of this mode of learning from whom we could learn and how to access [and use] the resources).

According to Tlhokomelo, it is imperative to make the registered learners aware of other learners who may be within their reach for purposes of seeking support. Tlhokomelo might be motivated to learn by working with other learners and evidently valued learning that could be derived from other learners with experience of being exposed to the tutor system (Chickering & Gamson, 1999:75-81). The experienced

learners might share their frustrations and struggles with the resources such that the new ones would be enabled to address similar challenges with relative ease. This shows the power of collaborative learning, when people respect one another for their capacity, an opportunity denied learners by virtue of having failed to prioritise their need for the tutor system. One such need is aptly captured as one of the critical cross-filed outcomes, which would also permeate the learners' learning encounters in their respective courses or modules (Carmichael & Stacy, 2006:2).

In the same vein, Tsikwe emphasised the involvement of other persons in the processes of prioritisation of critical aspects affecting the envisaged learner:

Ho ntse ho hlokahala tataiso e phethahetseng ho ithuteng...mekgwa ya tshebetso ka bo mong le ka kopanelo..., ...tlhokomediso e keneletseng ka botebo le bohlokwa ba seo re ithutang sona (There is still a need for appropriate guidance during the learning process... ways of working as individuals and working together in teams... awareness [being made aware] which is deeply embedded in learning and the importance [relevance] of what we learn).

The need for tutoring (*tataiso*) which is appropriate for enhancing the learning process was the crux of the matter for Tsikwe. He considered individual and collaborative learning as critical but the learners did not know how to operationalise these approaches effectively. A reason for the failure was the non-prioritisation of issues pertinent to the envisaged learner, in particular the ability to work effectively with others and identify and solve problems using creative and critical thinking (Carmichael & Stacey, 2006:2-3; SAQA, 2001). Tsikwe was aware that through an effective tutoring processes the learners would have been exposed to in-depth learning encounters, revealed in the phrase "awareness which is deeply embedded in [the learning process]" (*tlhokomediso e keneletseng ka botebo...*). The sentiments expressed have an implication for other aspects of the tutor system, namely the tutor, tutoring and support.

It is evident that prioritisation by persons directly affected by the problem associated with the ineffective tutor system is pivotal, and it should consider issues that threaten and/or weaken the various aspects constituting the priority areas of the tutor systems.

4.2.5 Lack of collaborative strategic planning

A collaborative strategic plan identifies the best use of people and resources for the most important results (Wates, 2009:9), thus enabling allocation of appropriate resources and persons to specific aspects of the priority areas of the tutor system. This helps to improve accountability and tracking of progress in achieving the said priority areas. For instance, the issues pertaining to the role of the tutor as a priority area may be allocated different persons and resources as per its different aspects, namely preparation, planning, assessment and learner performance management. It also harmonises the macro level (university) activities and programmes with those at micro level (specific community centre), thus the possibility for sustenance of participation of various stakeholders in the planning, implementation of the plan, reflection and re-planning are enhanced (Čiegis & Gineitiene, 2010:107-117). It is also evident that the plan will help keep a coordinating team and the study on track and guide its actions, whilst all other participants can check their achievement over time (Gordon, Hazlett, Cate, Mann, Kilminster, Prince, O'Driscoll, Snell & Newble, 2000:841-850).

In the area of this study, however, the participants did not plan together, notwithstanding the prevalence of their common need and problems relating to the ineffective tutor system. This was evident from the sentiments expressed by the members of the coordinating team during a planning session. In one of the meetings, Ntshiuwa, one of the community members who attended it, observed:

Ha moralo o ne o entswe ka kopanelo re ka be re na le maikarabelo ao re a phethang ho ya ka makgabane a rona. Re ka be re bile re tseba mananeo a fapaneng a yunibesithe le dinako tsa oona (If the plan was done collaboratively, we would have had responsibilities that we execute according to our abilities. We would also be aware of the programmes of the University and the dates [times] on which they take place).

Ntshiuwa wished that there was a collaborative plan in place for (the participants) to participate in enhancement of the tutor system. The issue pertaining to 'taking responsibility' which Ntshiuwa sought is understood as indicative of the need to own the plan and the study. Also, the development of a sense of ownership of the plan was in turn considered as affording the study an opportunity to encourage the

participants to be accountable. As a result of the lack of collaborative plan, the participants were denied an opportunity to access valuable information which Ntshiuwa considered to be in the University programmes. The knowledge of them (that Ntshiuwa held highly), is indicative of a need to align the efforts of the community regarding the enhancement of the tutor system with the efforts of the local community. This inevitably also helped determined the direction the study should take.

Thato added to the sentiments expressed by Ntshiuwa:

Moralo mabapi le boikarabelo ba thuthara o ka be o re thusistse ka tharollo yabothata ba ho fumana di asaenmente morao ho nako, le hore ba nke karolo ho hlahloba mosebetsi wa rona (the plan on the responsibility of the tutor could have helped us to resolve the problem regarding late assignments, also that they (tutors) should take part in assessing our work/performance).

Thato confirmed that collaborative planning could help to optimise the derivation of the best possible solutions to their problems. He demonstrated this aspect by referring to the planning for the roles of the tutor in assessing the learners' performance, believing the collaborative planning process could have helped them to address the problem of receipt of assignments late because they would have identified that tutors needed to assess the learners' performance. The reasons the tutors were not engaged in the assessment of the performance of the learners would for instance be sought from the affected institution and the person to be assigned this responsibility would probably have been a member of the coordinating team with easy access to the relevant section of the University. The information would have been used to convince either the learners or the University otherwise. The best solution would then be reported during the reflective reporting sessions which would have also reviewed and adjusted the plan accordingly. This opportunity was also missed because of lack of collaborative planning which also resulted in the perpetuation of social injustice because the learners continued to be denied equitable access to education (Healey, 1997:12). Eventually, some learners lost hope and abandoned their studies (*see paragraph 4.2.3*). It can thus be concluded that collaborative planning is indispensable to the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system.

4.2.6 Lack of locally customised policy on effective tutor system

The policy endows the participants with roles and responsibilities which legally empower them to execute their legislated public mandates, which are relevant policy imperatives in this case as they include ensuring that learners achieve the critical cross-field outcomes, that tutors execute their tutoring roles efficiently and that support is provided to enhance the provision of the tutor system on a sustainable basis (Bixby, Gordon, Gozali-Lee, Akyea & Nippolt, 2011). As such, the policy also serves to facilitate processes which are engaged in the tutor system in a peaceful and orderly manner (Greasser, Person & Maghano, 1995:495-522). The issue of orderliness may also be traced to the systematic manner in which learning programmes or specific curriculum statements and level descriptors determine the performance levels at which tutoring and learning are to be pitched (RSA, 2011:4-14).

In the area of this study, however, there were no attempts made by the community members to ensure effective operationalization of the policy imperatives in order to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system. This was notwithstanding the community members' realisation that many registered learners in this same area of study abandoned their studies and that the majority of the learners who proceeded performed badly in their examinations. An indication of these realities and issues was prevalent during the meeting which considered the need for the enhancement of the tutor system organised by the coordinating team. Mr Sehloho commented on an item that considered the role of policy in the enhancement of the tutor system:

Ho tseba le ho etsa ka pholisi le molao bakeng sa ho fihlela thuto ke matla ho ba tsebang mme ba tjhesehela ho etsa jwalo.... Ka pholisi re ka be re ...sireletsa ditabatabelo tsa baithuti...ra ntlafatsa maemo a ho ithuta...
(Knowledge and the operationalization of policies and education laws is power to those who know the law and have keen interest of realising their provisions...through policy we could have... protected the interests of the learners,... improved conditions for learning).

Mr Sehloho confirmed the power that the public bestows upon the public representatives who aspire to serve the community and broader society through the relevant policy and the law. This is clear in his view that "the knowledge and

implementation of policies” is power to people who are passionate about serving the people. He continues to illustrate how the power bestowed by the law and policies can and should be used in this case. In this study, the interests of the learners for learning that must be protected are understood to be related to the seven critical cross-field outcomes (SAQA, 2001). In the same vein, the conditions under which learning should take place and which must be improved through the use of policies, are understood as being related to the support that the tutoring processes provide the learners and tutors. In the same vein, Me Manaka, another experienced social activist in the affairs of young persons, added:

...tumellano le kutlwisisano tse tlisang tsepo ho baithute di ne di ka fihlelwa ka kgotso...e ka thusa ho laola tshebediso e mpe ya maemo kgahlanong le ba eisehang (agreement and mutual understanding which bring about hope to the learners could have been attained peacefully... it could help control abuse of status / positions against the downtrodden).

According to Me Manaka, policy brings about agreements and mutual understanding among the people. This is understood in this study as also implying that policy is not and should not be divisive, but rather it should encourage inclusivity and accommodation of diversity. Also, Me Manaka is understood as having said that policy-driven agreements and mutual understanding in turn bring about hope to the learners in a relatively peaceful manner. Finally, according to Me Manaka, policy helps in combating abuse of administrative power by the public representatives. It is as such imperative that the participants should acquaint themselves with the relevant policy imperatives, thus ensuring that opportunities the learners missed as a result of failure to implement the policies are not lost. The missing of learning opportunities by learners is conceived as an indication of the ineffectiveness of the tutor system.

The use of relevant policy imperatives which extend from the critical cross-field outcomes to the roles of the tutor, and to the process of tutoring that connects the learning content with the learners and the support that the tutors and learners should access is central

4.2.7 Lack of tutor training for effective tutor system

The tutors should be sufficiently and appropriately trained, including in the enhancement of the tutors' knowledge of the content of their respective modules and courses. Also, the training based on the best possible strategies relating to how to effectively facilitate the learning of the said content knowledge is pivotal (Fouche, 2006:1-11; Musal, Taskiran & Kelso, 2009:4; Weeks, 1994:1-43). The pedagogical knowledge should pay special attention to the most useful forms of representation of topics, analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations and demonstrations (Shulman, 1986:3-36). The tutor training should also focus on helping the tutors to diagnose or identify possible reasons for the performance of the learners. This means the tutors should be able to establish why learners perform poorly or are good on some sections of the work. The diagnosed challenges should equally develop possible strategies to address them. In this way tutoring may be viewed as being considerate of the learners' interests and backgrounds. This is in line with O'Rourke's (2003:18) contention that tutors should be trained to enable learners to pursue their studies in a way that is appropriate for their circumstances, learning goals and learning style. This can be achieved if the training also includes learner support, guidance and counselling (Underhill & McDonald, 2010:91-106; Ribchester & Edwards; 1998:281-294).

The tutor training should also incorporate the effective use of available and relevant resources (Keegan, 2003:2; Sherry, 1995:337-365), thus the use of interactive approaches such as collaborative learning, instant feedback, project-based learning, and small group learning are critical to the effective tutorial system (SAIDE, 2011:3). These should enable tutors to avoid what Jonassen (2009:1-25) calls the "sponge method" of instruction, whereby the tutor imparts knowledge to learners who are expected to absorb and regurgitate it during the assessment phase. It does not promote critical thinking, self-reflection, dialogue or consciousness raising (Van der Merwe & Abertyn, 2009: 153).

In this research site, few modules were allocated to the tutors, however the learners who were able to attend other tutorials in the nearest regional centre indicated that some tutors were not facilitating learning but rather reading from the textbooks, while some encouraged rote learning by encouraging students to read and try to answer

previous question papers. This lack of training on how to use facilitation strategies in the tutorials conducted by tutors was echoed by a student, Mrs Hlomoka:

..ho ya ditlilaseng ... ka nako e nngwe ha ho thuse hobane di tutor tse ding di ipalla di theksbuku ha e mong a re qobella ho bala le ho araba dipotso tsa di question paper tse fetileng. ... ke bona ele tshenyo ya nako feela(... to attend tutorial sessions...is sometimes not helpful because some of the tutors read for themselves from the textbooks, while the other tutor ... forced us to read and answer the questions from the previous question papers. ...that it is just a waste of time ...).

According to Mrs Hlomoka, some of the tutors' methods of teaching or learning facilitation were unsatisfactory, as they preferred to read from the textbooks, which she regarded as a waste of time in that they as learners expected tutors to facilitate their learning in a way that would address their learning needs. The methods used were apparently unhelpful and demotivating. The attitude of learners towards the tutors' teaching skills tended to have caused the learners to think that the tutorial session was a waste of time (*"tshenyo ya nako feela"*).

The reasons for the choice of reading as a tutoring strategy in this instance are numerous and may be indicative of one or a combination of the following: the tutor's lack of preparation or planning for the lesson; a tutoring method which does not fit the appropriate content; and learners' negative attitude as a result of unmet expectations which the tutor seemed to have taken for granted. These and other possibly relevant causal factors that may not have been mentioned here may be traced to the limitations associated with tutor competencies. To this end, Musal, Taskiran and Kelso (2009:4) advise that employing appropriate and effective instructional strategies is instrumental in producing best performing tutors. There was a need to support tutors to create learning environment when learner have the opportunity to "shed their passive roles of being knowledge consumers and to assume the role of meaning makers" (Johnson & Morris, 2010:86; Stevenson, 2010:72).

In the same vein, another learner, Matswe, expressed his experience of the tutoring strategies:

Ka nako tse ding nna ke ne ke ye be ke nahane hore e se be mohlomong unibesithi ha ena disebediswang le maqiti a lekaneng...(Sometimes I thought maybe the University does not have enough resources and strategies...[for enhancing the effectiveness of tutors and tutoring]).

Matswe's apparent perception regarding the "University's limitation of resources and tutoring strategies" suggests his and other learners' expectations for exposure to more effective tutoring methods. This was however not the case, and learners tended to be frustrated by this failure to use relevant resources to facilitate and enhance the tutoring processes. There was an expectation that the tutor would do more to help the learners to engage meaningfully with the subject matter at hand. The tutors' ability to organise and facilitate the learning environments such that they were more practical and appealing to the learners' backgrounds was central, understood as the learners' request for intervention on the part of the tutor and tutoring processes.

Me. Tlhokomediso, a retired teacher who was also an HoD at a local school was in attendance. She shed some light on the complexity of the contexts of the tutor system. Without contesting Matswe's observation of the immanent limitations regarding the resources and techniques and strategies for effective tutoring, Me. Tlhokomediso added that:

...ho fapa-fapana batho ka tsebo, maikutlo, tebello, tshehetso le boikitlaetso...ho fapane mekgwa e sebediswang e ka bang metle kapa ya fokola maemong a feto-fetohang...(the difference seem to be in the knowledge, attitudes, expectations, support and courage that people have...[tutoring] strategies that are used also differ, they can be effective or ineffective depending on the circumstances).

According to Me. Tlhokomediso, there were numerous factors that might have affected the tutoring processes negatively, including 'knowledge' which they already had, attitudes, expectations and courage. These were considered to be among those that tutors should have considered when preparing and presenting their lessons. The issue pertaining to how these could be integrated in the lesson and the tutoring process was understood to have been a matter for the tutor. It could thus be argued

that the learners' perceived frustration could not be entirely divorced from the tutor and the relevant training they may have not received.

The tutor's inability or failure to use tutoring strategies that accommodated the learners' diverse traits and capabilities had contributed to deprivation of the learners of the opportunity to learn.

4.2.8 Lack of learner support for effective tutor system

Learner support, which is an integral part of an effective tutor system, includes actions and activities which enhance learners' access to facilities, resources and opportunities which will enable them to achieve their academic and social objectives (Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:1-61; Rekkedal & Qvist-Eriksen, 2003:7-30; Sewart, 1993:3-12). The learners' academic and social objectives tend to be resident in and consistent with the critical cross-field outcomes (CCFOs) and the developmental outcomes as identified by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). Thus the support that learners receive should be geared towards enabling them to achieve the CCFOs and Developmental Outcomes (SAQA: 2001).

The actions and activities which are geared towards enhancing learner support may be in the forms of one or a combination of optional face-to face tutorials, interactive technologies such as video and telephone conferencing, and online instructional support by e-mail, discussion boards and synchronous chats (Jonassen *et al.*, 2009:1-25; Jung, 2005:21). The online interactive technologies contribute towards increasing the range of learning outcomes, which may include collaborative learning and communication skills (Thorpe, 2001:1-5).

In the area of this study, however, the learners could not be supported to the extent that they could organise and manage their study-related activities responsibly and effectively. This was attested to when the learners abandoned their studies prematurely (see *par* 4.2.4). It could also be said that the learners could not, by themselves, solve the problem that resulted in them either performing poorly or abandoning their studies. They could thus not reflect or explore a variety of strategies to learn effectively (Chickering & Gamson, 1999:75-81).

This was evident from the data obtained during the preliminary discussion sessions held with learners. Those who were consulted had registered with the institution(s) of higher learning in the area of this study and the meeting sought to determine the nature and extent of the challenges relating to access of institutional support. The meeting(s) sought possible solutions to the problem of inadequate learner support in respect of the enhancement of the learners' achievement of CCFOs. During these consultations, one of the students, Tsohang highlighted the problem by sharing his views regarding the role of contact sessions:

Kopano tsa ho ithuta di tshwarwe kgafetsa mme di kwetlise baithuti ka mekgwa ya ho rarolla mathata, tshebediso e molemo ya disebediswang... (contact sessions should be held frequently and should serve to train learners' problem solving strategies, responsible use of resources...).

The issue of regular contact sessions among the learners and tutors was conceived by the participants as beneficial. It was a necessary condition and an opportunity, for example, for learning and practicing problem-solving skills over a reasonable time. It was evident to the participants that learners in the area of this study were to some extent disadvantaged in that they could not learn skills that could help them to identify problems and work towards successfully addressing them. Another participant, Letsoho, supported the view of regular contact sessions:

... dikopano tsa ho ithuta di be haufi le moo re dulang... di rupelle ho hlwaya le ho sebedisa disebediswang tsa mantlha ka nepahalo, ho rarolla le ho hlokomedisa baithuti ka dikgaello tse atisang ho etswa ke baithuti, mme re eletsana ka ditharollo... (study sessions should be organised closer to where we [learners] reside...they should teach identification of resources, to address and to make learners aware about the common shortcomings [mistakes] which learners commit and together work on possible solutions...).

Letsoho's proposal of contact sessions closer to the learners' places of residence was understood as an attempt to enable learners to access useful information and knowledge. This is because they would be attended by the administrative staff who would *inter alia* be concerned with organising relevant facilities with the lecturers to enhance the facilitation of effective tutoring and administrative support. The purpose of the contact sessions suggested by Letsoho and Tsohang was also found to be

pivotal. It sought the tutors to prepare common mistakes which learners committed and find possible solutions which should be determined in conjunction with them. According to Tshohang, an approach that accommodates the views and needs of the learners when tutoring was critical. This approach by Tsohang was understood as requiring the participants to adopt values of mutual respect for one another in order to collaborate and cooperate with great success.

The views by Tsohang were supported by another participant, Moshe, in his attempt to summarise the issue regarding the support that learners anticipated however in vain, in the area of this study:

Kopano tsena ha di ka tshwarwa kgafetsa, di matlafatsa mabaka a ho batla sebaka sa ho ithuta, disebediswang tse kang dibuka tsa di reference laeborari, dikhomputara le inthanet...(holding contact sessions regularly will strengthen the acquisition of space, resources such as reference books, access to library, computers and Internet...).

Moshe noted the reason for the identification and acquisition of resources, namely, to support learning and tutoring. It can also be said that the same resources were simultaneously intended to support tutoring processes. For instance, reference books, computers and the Internet could be used by both the tutors and learners during the process of tutoring and learning. Furthermore, the study considered supporting actions and activities as those that lead to the acquisition of resources and facilities that would enhance the effectiveness with which the CCFOs would be achieved.

4.2.9 Lack of appropriate facilities, infrastructure/resources and media for effective tutor system

The appropriate facilities and infrastructure for support are provided in the literature, as for example well equipped learning centres; well-trained tutors (Nekongo-Nielsen, 2006); quality materials and media (Islam *et al.*, 2006:1-7); resources and infrastructure such as electricity, access roads to centres (Pfukwa & Matipano, 2006:61), and ICT network (Potashnik & Capper, 1998:1-6; Pfukwa & Matipano, 2006:61; Islam *et al.*, 2006:1-7). For instance, in Portugal learning centres are

supplied with laptop computers (Deb, 2012:1-8; Gouveia, 2006:19-31), but developing countries such as RSA, Nigeria, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Malaysia and Bangladesh, which still have larger populations of citizens in remote and rural areas find it difficult to supply students with such resources (Deb, 2012:1-8). This creates space for the enhancement of the tutor system through community-based approaches which will enable expansion of the provision of educational opportunities to citizens in remote and rural areas (Adekunle, 2006:1; Ambe-Uva, 2007:73-84; Haufiku, n.d.:1; Nekongo-Nielsen, 2006:1-6; Ng & Kong, 2009:92-106; Islam *et al.*, 2006:1-7). However, in the area of this study there were few tutors for some modules and learners had to travel long distances to access support for the rest of the modules (see paragraph 4.2.8). The TS also requires appropriate facilities in order to support learners, but without it learners on this research site had no appropriate or efficient facilities available.

The issue of lack of facilities and resources was raised by Mr Matsoe in the initial meeting with students and other concerned community members held in a local church about trying to establish the reasons that could have hindered learner support. Mr. Matsoe vehemently expressed his concern:

Ha re na moo re ballang teng kantle ho Laeborari. Le yona e kwala ka mora hora ya bone mantsiboya. Ka wikente ha e bulwe ho hang (We do not have a study place besides the library. It also closes after 16h00 in the afternoon. It doesn't open at all during the weekend).

This statement was corroborated by Mrs Hlomoka:

Laeborari eno e nyane. Ha re kgone ho sebeletsa teng bohle (That library is small. We cannot all use it).

The words “we do not have a study place” suggests that the learners needed a space in which to read and study, “like [local] library” is closer and accessible to them. The available local library was considered too small by Hlomoka, as not all could use it at a common convenient time.

It appeared as though Mr Matsoe had long waited for an opportunity to share or vent his frustrations about the lack of educational facilities and resources, evident in the passion and desperation with which he expressed his sentiments. It can thus be

argued that the learners' did not have space where their concerns could be addressed equitably and freely. As a result it could also be shown that the social injustice (Fraser, 1999:72-74; Young, 1990:63) brought about by the lack of equitable access to educational resources would not be alleviated (Miller, 1999:371-391; Rawls, 1999). As Webber (2002:261-290) confirms, "...everyone ought to enjoy equal rights to fundamental freedoms. Policies ought to privilege the disadvantaged for the benefit of the society as a whole".

The comments of Mrs Hlomuka and Mr Matsoe above indicate that the people from rural and remote areas continue to face social injustice and inequality of the redistribution of social goods such as educational resources and facilities. The South African policies promoting redress do not necessarily imply redistribution of resources in the form of substantial positional goods (Connell, 1994:125-50). Redress, equity and justice are, according to Connell, located in a discourse of uniformity and standardisation of operative according to the principle of sameness.

A possible solution to these challenges may be through collaborations and adaptive use of collaborative learning systems (DHET, 2012a:1-33, 2012b:58; Rahman, 2000:1-464). The DHET (2012:1-33) encourages institutions of higher learning to collaborate with other institutions and departments within the communities where facilities such as study space, libraries, computer laboratories and many other resources could be acquired in order to make educational opportunities accessible. Private-public partnerships are increasingly seen as an important mechanism for improving community education and the socio-economic status quo. The ultimate aim of a community-based tutor system that is co-owned by the community is to improve the access, quality, and outcomes of educational opportunities and other social services interventions, while maintaining or reducing cost (Ayers, 2005:527-549; Shortell *et al.*, 2002:49-91).

4.2.10 Lack of monitoring and reflection for effective tutor system

The monitoring and reflection processes serve to determine the extent to which the actions and activities to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system are achieved. This is done by way of establishing how and to what extent the responsible persons,

resources and date affect the implementation of related actions and activities. They also serve to collect data and information in respect of each priority area, namely tutoring, traits for an envisaged learner, tutor support and facilities, with a view to facilitate its achievement. This is a critical process which involves active participation of affected participants in the continual assessment and evaluation of effective TS processes and systems. It takes place from identifying the problems and needs in respect of enhancing the tutor system to the development of processes and mechanisms to address the identified problems (Molee, Henry & Sessa, 2010:239; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:65). Through this reflexive critical reflections the coordinating team is able to systematically collect data, provide information, gather feedback, analyse contextual changes and provide early warning systems from which commensurate risk assessment plans are developed and implemented (Bemberger *et al.*, 1986:6; UNESCO, 2009:10).

The monitoring and reflection processes would thus be regular observation and recording of activities that are taking place in an effective tutor system that is community-based (Curran *et al.*, 2004:1-44). It is a process of routinely gathering information on all aspects of the project (McKinney-Prupis, 2010:240-243). In the case of the tutor system, institutions of higher learning have consistently employed and developed different types of tutorial services (Underhill & MacDonald, 2010:93).

In a meeting with registered learners during the first reflection session for the study they complained about the scanty attention they were given by their respective institution. The information obtained was evident in the sentiments expressed by one learner, Sello:

Hoja ho bile le mokgwa wa hore re ngole asaenmente ka kopanelo, re le baithuti ba ka bang bane, mme ho shejwe hore e mong le e mong o kenya letsoho re ne re tla tseba ho thusana (if there was a way learners were made to write an assignment as a team of about four learners per team, and there be mechanisms in place to ensure that each learner contributes, we would learn to collaborate).

The issues that Sello identified as having required monitoring and reflection were the actual writing of assignments and that every learner in a team contributed. The assignment would represent a common challenge or problem which the learners

were to solve. The centrality of the use of communication in addressing these challenges may not be overemphasised. Also, the mechanisms that would enable the monitoring and submission would require critical reflection and attention. The aim of encouraging the learners to write assignments as teams was construed by Sello as having to do with 'learning to collaborate'. It was on the basis of this aim, that the study understood that the mechanisms to be employed would be structured and purposeful.

The nature of mechanisms to be used would have thus necessitated their periodic reflection to collect information regarding the extent to which they were useful in enhancing the tutor system. The periodic reflections of mechanisms to engender collaborative learning would in turn be used to generate data and information relevant to the enhancement of these mechanisms. Furthermore, the nature of the mechanism would be affected by the members of the team, and issues that would be worthy of considering would be the inescapable power relations, socio-cultural realities and differences that each learner brought to the study team.

4.3 THE COMPONENTS OF THE FRAMEWORK

Having dealt with the identified problems and challenges to the tutor system, in this section I discuss the possible solutions for each, as the key aspects or components which are conclusive to enhancing effectiveness, using community-based approaches as a resourceful mechanism (Israel et al., 1998:173-202).

4.3.1 A dedicated team

A team comprising democratically elected community members with a vested interest in education and community development serves to lead and manage the processes of enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system (Bush, 2009:391-406). Its leadership role is necessitated by *inter alia* the facilitation processes of the development of impelling vision, mission and values. These focus and synergise the efforts of the team and participants towards enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system, thus the leadership focus is on enriching and sustaining unity amongst all the participants. The management function of the dedicated team is thus to serve the

study with the operationalization of the systems, tools and mechanisms that will enhance the attainment of the vision. The leadership and the management roles of the team may not be separated (Bush, 2009:391-406; Jung, 2005:10; DHET, 2012:11, 30; Maloney & Tello, 2003:16; Maguire, 1987:657-666).

Pursuant to finding solutions the study adopted collective leadership as a community-based approach. The attributes, roles and responsibilities of the collective leadership were articulated during the initial stages of the study. During one meeting which reflected on the issues of leadership and management of the processes of the study, one student, Molelekoa, reminded the meeting that:

Baetellipele ba rona ho tswa mafapheng a fapaneng ba thusitse hore re be le tjhebelopele le hore re tsepamise maikutlo a rona ho yona (Our leaders from different sectors helped us to develop a vision and to focus our efforts towards it).

Molelekoa confirms that the role played by the team of leaders is helpful and resourceful, evidenced by the words “leaders helped [them or the study] to develop a vision”. The process did not stop at the development of the vision because the leadership also facilitated the processes through which they were able “to focus [their] efforts towards” the attainment of their vision. The phrase that Molelekoa uses of “*tsepamisa maikutlo*” (focus attention) is reflective of the extent to which the leadership ably and positively influenced the participants throughout the study. *Maikutlo* translates as ‘attitudes’, thus it could be said the participation of the members and participants extended beyond just the physical and observable issues to the emotional and cognitive aspects. The thoughts of the participants could be said to have been geared and directed towards tangible issues that were synergised to enhance the achievement of the vision.

The issue of *mafapha a fapaneng* (different sectors) indicates the prevalence of inherent differences and possibly the inescapable cultural, ideological and power differentials with which the leadership contended, thus ably dealing with a plethora of diverse issues, some of which might have been competing. In the same vein, Meko, another member of the coordinating team, summarised the reasons which were thought to have enabled the leadership and management team to lead and manage successfully:

Re ile ra tsitlallela ho hlomphana, ho tsotella le ho ela sedi maikutlo a motho ka mong ka tshepo ya hore re tla atleha mmoho... (we pursued to mutual respect, care and being sensitive to each person's views with the hope that we shall succeed together).

Mekoa was aware of the importance of adopting a set of values and principles that had eased the processes geared towards realising the vision and to effectively and efficiently deal with issues of diversity (Yakl, 2002:1-4). The values Mekoa captured in the summary included mutual respect which he thought had to be pursued (*tsitlallela*), 'caring' (*tsotella*) and 'trust' and or 'hope' (*tshepo*) (Flanagan, 2003:165-171). The leadership and management team wanted to succeed with all other participants, understood as saying they valued success that is earned through the participation and engagement of all other participants. The leadership and management team, according to Mekoa, was able to synergise the diverse efforts of the participants because of the consistent observance of the values and vision agreed upon by all participants. The role of the democratically elected leadership and management team of facilitating processes in which the values and vision of the study were to be decided upon is important (Muller & Turner, 2010:437-448; Turner & Müller, 2005:1-13).

4.3.2. A vision

A vision for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system is necessary because it clarifies the nature and extent of the problem at hand (Zuber-Skeritt, 2011:157-166), thus the vision serves to direct and guide the participants' efforts towards enhancing effective tutor system through the community-based approach (Wang & Kreysa, 2006:1-125). According to Thompson (2000:6), the formulation of a clear and inspiring shared vision and accompanying objectives and expectations for the project serves as a foundation for unified project team commitment. The vision also serves to enable the participants to work cooperatively and make their engagements result in making decisions peacefully. For instance, countries such as Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia, Nigeria and Malaysia have a vision of democratising education, which entails providing education to the masses, particularly working adults, youth, and learners in the remotest regions. The target groups include senior citizens, the

underprivileged, the physically disadvantaged and prison inmates (Ali, 1999:1-6; Benza, Chitsika, Mvere, Nyakupinda & Mugadzaweta, 1999:1-7; Latif, Sungsi & Baroom, 2009:1-10; Ngara & Ngwarai, 2013:42-54). The inherent diverse realities such as power differentials, cultural and socio-economic imperatives require considerate attention.

The Co-ordinating team facilitated a meeting in which the issue of formulating the common vision for the project was discussed. It was agreed that the vision should represent the general view of the participants on enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system, consistent with Helling's (2007:335-349) view that it should have the power to impel, influence and unite the diverse views and aspirations of the participants. After robust discussion of the various suggestions the participants agreed on aligning the vision to the title of this study, as ***to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through the community-based approach***.

The mission was to create communicative spaces through a tutor system that would be efficient and effective in enabling local and remote communities to access educational opportunities. To this end the research focus seeks to enhance the current tutor system and other forms of accessing educational opportunities. The vision was accepted by all the participants, summed up by Nthabiseng:

Vijini ena ya rona entle haholo hobane e bontsha maikemesestso a rona a ho tswellisa pele thuto sechabeng sa rona (This vision of ours is very good because it indicates our aims and objectives of driving education in our community).

Nthabiseng showed that she accepted the vision by saying "*entle haholo*", which could be indicative of the notion that the vision was impelling, formulated by all the participants and owned by all: "*Vijini ena ya rona*" (This vision of ours). As Miser (2006:1-13) writes, "a vision is an expression of an aspiration or desire to achieve something in the future which is greater than the current reality".

The vision statement expressed above was formulated for the development and implementation of a tutor system that is effective through the community-based approach. Accordingly, young people and adults would be afforded the opportunity to further their studies with any other institution that is willing to support the local

students administratively and academically. The vision statement was a useful tool on which to focus the hopes and aspirations of the community, particularly the coordinating team and participants, to frame the project and set priorities.

By being couched in CER, this study embraces the values of mutual respect and trust (Mahlomaholo, 2009:224-237; Hickling-Hudson, 2006:201-218), and engenders the principles of giving hope by advancing the agenda for social justice through its contribution towards equitable access to higher education opportunities (Mahlomaholo & Nkoane, 2002:38-54). Furthermore, the vision and mission adopted in this study fostered responsiveness, care, and collaboration among the participants, helping the study synergise the diverse experiences and knowledge of the participants as they conducted situational analysis.

4.3.3 SWOT analysis

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) facing the tutor system are pivotal to establishing areas requiring enhancement of its effectiveness. The analytic process considers both internal and external factors that may have an influence on the tutor system and its effectiveness (Dyson, (2004:631-640). For Sharma and Bhatia (1996:455), SWOT analysis as a management tool is used for planning purposes, the ultimate goal being to match the identified strengths and opportunities to the existing weaknesses of the tutor system and to counter the possible risks and threats. It is also to enhance the interpretation and understanding of the challenges, complexities and numerous other factors that could either render implementation unachievable or enrich its development (Aref, 2010:2-5; Laverack & Labonte, 2000:258; Čiagis & Gineitienė, 2007:113).

The goal of this analysis is to get information about the real situation, which could show basic hindrances and negative elements in the present situation of the community (Čiagis & Gineitienė, 2007:113; Pickton & Wright, 1998:101-109). In the meeting of participants and members of the team gathered for this purpose, Mr Mahlomola, one the community members and a participant from the side of the University, made a brief presentation on what the current tutor system entailed. This was with a view to easing the deliberations regarding SWOT analysis in relation to

the enhancement of the tutor system (Anyaegbunam, Mefalopulos & Moetsabi, 2004:10; Aref, 2010:2). After lengthy discussion of various aspects one of the participants, Mr Boloto summarised the agreement of participants regarding the priority areas of the tutor system to be further analysed:

.... moithuti ya labalabellwang, mokgwa wa ho thutara, boleng ba tshehetso ya baithuti le di thutara; le karolo e bapalwang ke thutara (...The envisaged learner, tutoring strategies, the quality of support to students and tutors and the role played by the tutor).

According to Mr Boloto these four issues constituted critical priority areas of the tutor system, on the basis of which the meeting subsequently agreed to identify through brainstorming areas of the SWOT analysis and consider the extent to which the priority areas were affected and affected leadership, impelling vision, prioritisation, collaborative planning, policy imperatives and monitoring and reflection (Anyaegbunam, Mefalopulos & Moetsabi, 2004:10, Uemura, 1999:4). For instance, with regard to the role of the tutor the participants identified a weakness which related to the tutors not being held accountable for performance of their learners. For the participants in this study to be accountable the tutors were to select and use appropriate tutoring strategies that effectively responded to the diagnosed learner problems in specific topics (Williams, 2006:197). The critical assessment of learner problems would be the responsibility of the tutor. Furthermore the participants considered preparations for lessons, critical reflection, assessment and feedback as indispensable in the process of tutoring.

With regards to this non-accountability of the tutor, the coordinating team decided to propose to the University through Mr Mahlomola that this aspect be part of the tutor contracts. The participants also proposed that the University not take for granted that the tutors had sufficient content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge. The attempts would be made by the University in conjunction with the tutors to provide appropriate tutor training that infused both the pedagogical and content knowledge with critical cross field outcomes. This sentiment was expressed by Letebele:

Ha hona hore di thutara di ka lesellwe fela. Di hloka ho rupellwa hahang ka mora hore di hiruwe. (There is no way that the tutors are going to be left out. They need to be trained immediately after they have been appointed).

The SWOT analysis considered issues of learners for whom the identified weakness of learning in isolation was ultimately addressed. Through the community-based approach to SWOT analysis, the coordinating team facilitated the processes that enabled learners to network and engage in learning and learning strategies. The learners established study teams through which they explored collaborative learning, peer tutoring and teaching. In this case the role of the community in the process of SWOT analysis was critical (McArthw, 2010:304; Stevenson, 2010:72). It also highlighted the importance of training the tutors in effective tutoring strategies and pedagogical content knowledge (Chickering & Gamson, 1987:1-7) in order to ensure that the tutors were doing their work efficiently and effectively

Notwithstanding the issues that were yet to be brought to the attention of the University, Moutlwatsi reminded the meeting of the issues which the study achieved:

..ka mora ditlhophiso tsa rona tshchetso ya baithuti e ntlafetse haholo: ho ingodisetsa hae mona, ho tlisetswa orientheishene, ho ba kopanya le ho ba tataisa ho sebetsa mmoho le ho thusana ka disebediswang. (following our arrangements, learners' support has improved tremendously: registration at local [home town], orientation programmes are brought at local level, facilitating learners' network sessions and guidance in respect of working together to support one another).

Moutlwatsi confirms that SWOT analysis is part of planning as it informs the plan about issues that require attention. It is also apparent that Moutlwatsi wanted to draw attention to issues which were also achieved and which were local. This was understood as having the potential to motivate the participants to be considerate of what they had done and could do to bring about positive change. This meant that the people directly affected by the problem had the capacity and power to solve their problems, as shown by their ability to collaborate in analysing their situation. In this case such analysis helped them to match their strengths with their weaknesses and threats (Hill & Westbrook, 1997:46), and to identify issues that might not be addressed at local level. They referred to and negotiated with those who had the capacity, and power to address them (see paragraph4.2.9). Often the resources which are available do not tally or match the extent and magnitude of the needs and

problems, a problem that necessitates prioritisation of activities and issues accordingly.

4.3.4 Prioritisation

The prioritisation process serves to enable effective and efficient deployment of resources for the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system. Each of the priority areas of the tutor system has key aspects or elements which may require fortification, including the envisaged learner, tutoring, the tutor and learners support (Anyaegbunam *et al.*, 2004:10; Curran *et al.*, 2004:1-42). In this study, these priority areas constitute key elements or aspects of the tutor system identified during the SWOT analysis, as well as the extent of their weakness or the risk or threat they posed to the tutor system. Prioritisation thus serves to categorise the elements or aspects of the components of the tutor system according to their overall impact on the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system using community-based approaches. The prioritisation criterion that befits collaborative and participatory action that is considerate of the diverse stakeholders' views and aspirations is pivotal, are the democratic processes that promote consensus among the participants (Ghazinnory *et al.*, 2007:109; Innes & Booher, 2000:1-40; Leake, Oculito, Ramones & Caagbay, 2010:237-241; Wates, 2000:9).

The prioritisation process was enacted collaboratively by the coordinating team with the participants, who included learners and parents (Laverack & Labonte, 2000:255-262). During one session which reflected on the development of the prioritisation criteria and the outcomes of their implementation, Mr Thabane reminded the meeting that:

.. ho etsa dihlopha tsa ho ithuta tsa baithuti di ba thusa hore ba kgone ho utlwisisa, ho amohela le ho tswela pele mmoho ho sa natse diphapang tsa bona ba ntse ba nka boikarabelo ba thuto tsa bona k abo mong (...the established learners' study teams helped them to understand and to be accommodative of each other and to progress together despite their differences of opinions whilst still taking responsibility of their individual learning).

Mr Thabane felt that the study prioritised teamwork and inculcating responsibility for individual learners' work, because it helped them to address other challenges they faced, such as poor performance in their respective studies and shortage of resources. The latter could be achieved through sharing of resources such as study material and computers, which were scarce. Each learner learned to work with others whilst taking responsibility for completion and submission of his/her assignment timely. They learned to collaborate and to accommodate each other's differences of opinions, and how to use the different knowledge, experience and information to address their problems and needs (Carmichael & Stacey, 2006:1-15).

Nthabiseng added that:

...baithuti ba thusitswe le ho kgothaletswa ho sebedisanammoho ka kgotso, ba itlhomphe mme ba hlomphe ba bang, ba rutuwe ho hlakisa bothata ba bona le hore bo ka rarollwa jwang ...ba sebedise disebediswang ka boikarabelo (...learners were helped and encouraged to work together peacefully, to have self-respect and to respect others, they were taught to clarify their problem and to determine possible solutions thereof... to use resources responsibly).

Nthabiseng added other aspects of 'the envisaged learner' that were prioritised and on which the participants were in agreement. The elements being referred to are the identification of the learners' learning problems and their respective potential solutions by the learners themselves (SAQA, 2001). The learners' ability to use the education-related resources responsibly is understood in this study as being related to sustainable learning. The reason for the prioritisation of this aspect or element was related to addressing the problem of misuse and underutilisation of public resources (Isaacs, 2000:1-49; Wilkinson, 2003:161-167). To this end the study, through the coordinating team, addressed the issue of lack of venues which could be used as examination centres and for study purposes (see paragraph 4.29). The learners' self-respect and their respect for others helped to level off the power-related issues and realities in the interactions of the diverse stakeholders and participants (Mahlomaholo, 2009:224-237; Mangena & Chabeli, 2005:291-298; SAQA, 2001).

Regarding the priority on 'the tutoring process' the participants prioritised issues such as those highlighted by Mr Boloto:

...dithutara di nke boikarabelo ba tswelopele ya baithuti dithutong tsa bona.
(...tutors are to be accountable and liable for performance of their learners).

The sentiments expressed by Mr Boloto were understood as saying that the tutoring was the responsibility of the tutor because he or she wields the knowledge power in his or her module. This tutor knowledge was central to the tutoring processes in that it was considered as being used to set lesson (tutorial) objectives, select resources, tutoring methods and set lesson assessment questions. This study understood these tutoring activities as indicative of what Mr Boloto referred to as being accountable and liable for performance of learners. Through the assessment processes, the tutors were understandably able to establish areas of weakness of the learners and to determine alternative methods of addressing challenges.

It is evident from this discussion that the participants' diverse views were unavoidable, however they were to be accommodated. An enabling condition for the accommodation of the inherently variant views was the consideration of the principles of equity and social justice in a way that was consistent with the values of mutual respect and trust among the participants (Mahlomaholo, 2009:224-237; Israel *et al.*, 1998:172-202). The prioritisation which was considerate of resources allocation eased the processes for collaborative planning.

4.3.5 Collaborative planning

Collaborative planning processes include but are not limited to the determination of a joint vision, mission, values, situational analysis and prioritisation. They also involve setting of objectives, determination activities to accomplish each objective, decision-making regarding the timeframes for each activity, resources to be allocated and accountability. The latter activity entails sharing of responsibility among the participants which should as far as practicable be considerate of the participants' commitments, interests, competencies and capacities (Simpson, 2010:3-41). The comprehensive plan of action thus sets a critical direction and guides the allocation of resources to achieve long-term goal (Booher & Innes, 2002:221-236;

Schermerhorn, 1996:160). A collaborative plan clearly sets out what is to be achieved and provides a systematic approach to get there. It is an effective way to achieve results from available resources (Bartle, 1998:6). A participatory strategic planning process, presents “the possibility to concentrate on the main problems and ways of their solution, based on good knowledge of the present situation and future perspectives of local people” (Čiagis & Gineitienė; 2007:111)

During the second of the series of meetings and feedback sessions which were facilitated by the study coordinating team Mr Matsu commented on the planning for the study:

Re nkile lenane la dintlha tseo re di lotomantseng ka tumellano ya rona, re hlakisitse sepheo sa enngwe le enngwe ya dintlha tseo, re bontshitse hore ho hlokahala disebediswang dife ho di fihlela, le hore na re tla ba le disebediswang tseo ho tswa kae (We took the list of our mutually agreed upon prioritised items, we clarified the purpose of each priority/item, indicated the resources which were required to enhance the achievement of priorities/items and also indicated/identified the potential sources of the resources required).

Mr. Matsu was understood as saying that for each item or priority, sub-items or activities were identified. The reason for this thinking was indicated as being that the purpose of each priority would be clarified further, interpreted as a critical aspect to determine the activities or tasks for each priority area (Dudek & Stadler, 2005:668-687; Leake, Oculito, Ramones & Caabay, 2010:11-131). This thinking was further amplified in that resources and duration of the specific activities were also determined or decided upon. As Hlomuka contended:

Re kgonne ho akanya disebediswang hantle ka ho hlwaya mehato ya bohlokwa bakeng sa ntlha ka nngwe, re hlokometse nako e lokelang bakeng sa mohato le ntlha ka nngwe. Re ile ra arolelana mosebetsi le boikarabelo bakeng sa dintlha le mehato eo re e nkileng (we were able to make good estimates of the resources we needed by isolating critical steps/activities for each item whilst being alert about the appropriate time for each step and a priority. We divided the work among ourselves for each activity).

The critical steps or activities which Hlomuka suggested were the lower level activities for which time and costs could be determined with relative ease. The study coordinator made an example based on learner support to illustrate his understanding of Hlomuka's view to the participants. For instance, with a sub-activity on learner registration on local site for the tutor system, the steps or tasks that were undertaken included: determining the number of learners who were to be registered on site; contacting the University and asking for the service to be provided to the local tutor system site; and arranging the venue for the registration. In order to estimate the costs and resources required for contacting the University, the following were considered: establishing the relevant contact person required at least three telephone calls at an average of 35 minutes per call. This also required more time if it was to be done by a person who was not familiar with the University systems or personnel. The participants noticed immediately that it might cost the envisaged tutor system and learners nothing if the same responsibility were executed by a person attached to the University. In this study, the activity relating to the registration of learners on site was assigned to the study coordinator (see *annexure S.3* for more information regarding the planning process).

This was an involved exercise which required the participants with relevant and functional experience and knowledge of planning for support. The actual planning process was thus used as a training endeavour for the participants who were not well-versed with the planning process. The planning exercise served to open up communication amongst the participants which in turn led to them developing a sense of ownership of the plan that evolved as they all participated freely without their contributions being negated or criticised (Aref, 2010:1-4; Uemura, 1999:1-36).

4.3.6 Policy imperatives

Policy imperatives have the power to instil orderliness and address inescapably deviant behaviour and conduct in the tutor system (Thomson & Perry, 2006:24), and promote transparent process and procedures in addressing issues, thus promoting acknowledgement of contributions of participants' approaches (Kabi, 2013:153). According to Kabi (2013:154), transparency in addressing issues is important, especially in situations in which many people are involved, as is the case on the

research site. The legislative and policy imperatives are therefore an important component in the formulation of tutor system that is effective through the community-based approach.

In Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Namibia, Malaysia the government policies support the expansion of educational opportunities to its citizens, including those who live in the remotest areas of these countries through the establishment of the learning centres and the tutor systems (Ali, 1999:1-6; DHET, 2012:1-33; Fagbamiye, 2002; Latif et al., 2009:1-6; UNESCO, 2001). The government policies are important because they give direction on how initiatives such as enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system can be implemented. Policies also foster harmony and peace among the people and participants, especially those with diverse backgrounds and belief systems. They are geared towards enabling people in the same space to find common ground and resolve inherent conflict (Nel, 2006:46). There is also cooperation among the 12 SADC member states in policy for education and training according to the Protocol on Education and Training (2006:1-30), which promotes student support in different forms, including the tutor system. One of the areas of cooperation among these states is “widening provision and access to education, training and student support as well as addressing gender equality”. The relevant policy imperatives in relation to this study are the critical cross-field outcomes adopted by SAQA, which contribute to the full personal development of each learner and the social economic development of the society at large.

The coordinating team initiated and facilitated a process geared to the formulation of the localised policy for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system in the area of this study. Pursuant to this issue they and the participants organised a session to discuss this policy matter extensively, in which Sello reflected on policy issues that were pertinent to this study:

Re bile le molawana e ipapisitseng le molao wa naha le wa thuto ho re thusa holaola le ho fokotsa kgonahalo ya dikgohlang le boitaolo bo senyekgenyekge. (We had [developed] a policy which was consistent with the laws of education of the land regarding control and curbing of possibilities of conflicts and disorderliness).

Sello's comments point to the significance of having policy developed in line with the provisions of the laws of the land, and representative of the views of the public. By implementing it the study executed the public mandate, on the side of the law which in the RSA context is predominantly on the side of the marginalised and the oppressed (Kumashiro, 2000:25-53; Zine, 2001:239-269). Also, Sello correctly pointed to the significance of the policy in dealing with inherent conflict and disorderliness embedded in the inherent power struggles. To this end the study successfully accessed the use of community library hall as an examination centre (see paragraph 4.2.6). Sello held a strong view that policy could contribute towards empowering people to address their own frustrations and problems (Adam & Hess, 2001:13-23; Gidley, Hampson, Wheeler & Bereded-Samuel, 2010:123-147).

Ntsoaki, one of the young adults who was in attendance of the meeting referred to above, added in support of Sello that:

Dikateng tsa molawana oo ebile ntlha tse kenyeletsang melao ya naha eo molawana o itshetlehileng ka oona, sekhoupu sa molawana le bao o ba amang, dipehelo tsa bohlokwa tsa se amehang jwaloka maikarabelo, jwalo-jwalo. (The contents of the policy were aspects such as legal mandates to the policy, scope of the policy, special conditions such as roles and responsibilities of affected parties and so on).

Ntsoaki's comments summarise the features of the policy that could be developed and subsequently implemented to strengthen the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system (Adams *et al.*, 2001:13-23; Walters, 2005). The coordinating team and the participants discussed these issues at length and agreed that policy did have the capacity to bestow enabling power on the persons appointed to be responsible for initiatives such as this one (Bush, 2009:391-406; DHET, 2012:1-33).

In order to formulate the localised policy the coordinating team members considered other examples of policy documents in order to familiarise themselves with the contents of those that supported student support initiatives. The use of power bestowed by policy as in this case tends to be empowering and transformative on the part of the community affected (Biesta, 2012:683-697). It was for this reason that the study pursued the idea of developing a policy for the development and

implementation of a framework which formulated long deliberations (see annexure S2).

4.3.7 Tutor training

The best practiced tutoring programme provides initial and continuous training opportunities to build the capacity of tutors to best meet student needs (Bixby, Gordon, Gozal-Lee, Ayea & Nippolt, 2011:1-69). Similarly, Musal, Taskiran and Kelso (2009:4) found training of tutors in effective instructional strategies as one quality of best performing tutoring programmes, a nother being the close collaboration between tutors and the students' classroom teachers. Furthermore, tutoring programme quality can be enhanced by requiring training prior to and throughout the tutoring experience (Schultz & Mueller, 2007:11), though this requires consistent feedback as part of the tutors' professional development (Bixby *at al.*, 2011:1-69). The tutors should enable learners to pursue their studies in a way that is appropriate for their circumstances, learning goals and learning style (O'rourke, 2003:18) (see paragraph 2.4.17).

The coordinating team considered possible support programmes that could contribute significantly towards attaining the attributes of the envisaged learner. During the meeting that considered this issue Mr Tlhaku alluded to the important contribution that a good tutor training programme can have:

..bathusi ba rona ba utlwisisa mefokolo ya rona, ke bone ba leka ho sebedisa mekgwa ya ho ruta e kenyeletsang maemo ana ho hlakisa dithuto tsa rona.
(...our helpers seem to understand our problems, I noticed that they attempt to use methods of teaching that involve or use our backgrounds to clarify [simplify] our learning or subjects).

Mr Tlhaku noticed that the tutor system could succeed if tutors grounded their teaching approaches on the learners' backgrounds to simplify the more complex phenomena with which learners have to contend. This is clear in the averment that tutors tended to empathise with learners by taking into account their contextual and situational factors. Mr Tlhaku suggests that tutors should, as far as practicable, use these in their attempts to progressively explain complex concepts, encourage

learners to work in groups, encourage problem-solving and inculcate self-management on the part of the students. Evidently, this approach seeks to integrate the learners' community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005:69-91) to enhance tutor training. This presupposes that tutor training should be made relevant and functional as far as possible.

Thateng reminded the meeting that the activity which the coordinating team was to follow up with the University pertained to continual training programme for tutors. The tutor training was to be considerate of the CCFOs and level descriptors approved by the DoE (SAQA, 2001; Troskie-de Bruin, Albertyn & Machika, 2014:386) (see paragraph 2.4.1.7 & 2.4.2.7). The study delegated the responsibility of sensitising the University to the issue of continual good tutor training programme to the study coordinator, Mahlomola. The underlying purpose of the tutor training programme should be to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system.

The feedback that Mahlomola gave to the participants during one of the subsequent meetings indicated *inter alia* that the tutors were offered training which included the different facilitation strategies, presentation skills and the use of audio-visual aids and other teaching aids in order to facilitate learning effectively. The academic departments were involved during the tutor development training session in order to guide the tutors on specific issues of the content subject and what needed to be covered by the tutor during the tutorial sessions. This training of tutors by the teaching and learning division of the University had a positive impact to the learning of the students. To this extent one of the students Mapaseka corroborated what Tlhaku had said earlier about the improvement of the tutorial sessions:

Ke bone re fuwa ho araba dipotso tse qholotsang mehopolo tse fapaneng ka dihlophatsa batho ba bararo sehlopha ka seng. Ra fana ka tlaleho tlelaseng e ileng ya re botsa potso tsa tlhakisetso tse kenenletseng. Ra etsa hona ka fapanyetsano... ke ithutile hore ke tsela e matla ya ho ithuta... feela thutara a ntse a le teng ho re tataisa. (I noticed that we were given different thought provoking questions [based on the assignment] per group of three persons per team. We gave feedback to the entire class [individual team responses] which in turn asked [us] clarity seeking and in-depth knowledge seeking questions. I

noticed that this was a powerful mode of learning... however the tutor was always there to guide us).

Thabang corroborated Mapaseka's comment:

Mojulong wa rona re rutuwe ha latela simuleishene ya porojeke ya kgwedi tse tshelentseng. Porojekeng ke ne ke le menejara mme ke laola projeke – bajete, basebetsi le mosebetsi. Ntho e thabisang jwalo... (during our module we were taught [theory] followed by simulation [practical] of a project within a duration of six months. In the project I was the project manager and I managed the project [for the period of its duration] – [within] its budget, people management and the workmanship [specifications]. What a fulfilling experience...).

Mapaseka and Thabang had noticed the improvement with regard to the tutor system, thus they both agreed that there was an improvement with the tutorial sessions which therefore improved the effectiveness of the tutor system on the research site. What appeared to be appreciated by the learners were tutoring approaches that were learner-centered, activity-based and problem-based. The learners appeared to have been keen to work together and support each other in their respective teams. It was thus imperative that Mahlomola give feedback to the University, and impress upon it that more such training should be sustained.

4.3.8 Learner support

Learner support entails guidance, counselling, administrative support and assignment feedback (Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Dillon & Blanchard, 1991:1-2; Garrison & Baynton, 1987:3-15; Kangai, Rupande & Rugonye, 2011:12-32). The pre-admission or pre-registration counselling is important as it enhances the students' choices of courses as well as guidance and counselling of students (Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32). The administrative support on the other hand includes admission procedures, registration process, and submission of assignments, registration enquiries, delivery of study material, and provision of venues for tutorials and issuing of tutorial schedules (Asun, 2004:1-13; Benza *et al.*, 1999:5; Molefi, 2002).

Moipone, one of the distance education students commented during a brainstorming session on the nature of support needed by the learners in the area of this study:

Bohokahanyi ba rona bo thusitse ho lwantsha le ho fokotsa qaka tse mabapi le tshehetso ya baithuti. Qaka ya ho fumana matheriale wa ho ithuta ka mora nako o rarollotswe ka hore batho ba amehang ba kopane ka nako. (The coordinating team helped to fight and curb the problem relating to [poor] learner support. For example the problem of receiving study material late was resolved after all people who were affected in the matter met on time [before commencement of lectures]).

The solutions being suggested by Moipone recognised the opportunity of timely resolution of problems inherent in collaborative work, Moipone and considered the unity of purpose especially with regard to resolving common problems and needs as pivotal (Adler & Heckscher, 2005:11-105). Furthermore, Moipone was aware that the coordinating team for the effective tutor system would be endowed with the power to tackle the problems that learners experienced over the years regarding the late receipt of study materials. The power that the coordinating would have had emanated from the community and the public as the apparent custodians of universities, schools and other public facilities and institutions (Laverack & Labonte, 2000:255-262).

The other student, Tlhaku confirmed the statements expressed by Moipone:

Kopano ya pele e ile ya tshwarwa pele dithuto di qala. Baithuti ba ile ba kgothatswa, ha hlophiswa dinako tsa di tlelase le ho tshehetsa baithuti. Baithuti ba ile ba etsetswa orientheishene (first meeting was held before the commencement of lectures. The learners were encouraged (motivated) was schedule of dates for tutorials were decided upon. Some form of orientation was made for the students).

Tlhaku suggested an economic and efficient way of using resources, especially time. The suggestion that a variety of issues should be addressed timely during the first meeting prior to the commencement of lectures or tutorials was indicative of this aspect. This suggestion helped the researcher to consider the collaborative plan for inclusion of the issues raised by Tlhaku (Booher & Innes, 2003:221-236; Dudek & Stadler, 2005:668-687). The coordinating team members needed to approach the University in a manner that would not antagonise the institution in order to gain their support and peaceful future engagements. It must prepare a plethora of items in

order to be efficient and economic on the uses of resources. This meant that an equitable division of labour that was considerate of the skills and competencies of the participants was inescapable (Dudek & Stadler, 2005:668-687; Jamal & Getz 2009:152-173).

The involvement of the University personnel in the discussions yielded good results because those issues of support were taken forward by those participants. Mr Lebona, also responsible for student support in the University's regional office, said:

Re tla e kopana le boetapele ba lebatowa ya unibesithi hore re hlaise taba ena. Bo nneteng tse ding tsa tshebeletso tse le dihlaitseng ho ka kgonahala hore re di fetisetse mona sebakeng sa lona, feela re hloka ho bontshana le ketapele ya rona hore re ka etsa jwang. (We shall meet the University's regional management about this issue. In actual fact it is possible to offer some of the services that you have mentioned in your area, but we need to discuss the modalities with the management).

During the following semester the University provided pre- and post-registration counselling workshops on the research site, with services that included career counselling, student advice, study skills workshops and academic counselling on the research site. The students were provided an opportunity to attend academic literacy workshops in which the issues pertaining to mathematics and reading and writing were extensively dealt with for those students who did not have a good background in them.

The financial aid officers were sent to the research site in order to provide the students with the relevant information regarding student funding and how to access funds from the University and other external providers of student funding. Those tutors, who were appointed to facilitate learning on the research site, were urged and encouraged to provide counselling, academic advice, motivation and pastoral care to students. They were made aware of the importance of CCFOs during their training and those outcomes were the integrated in learning facilitation and in the tutoring of learners so as to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system. Tutors were also mandated to prepare and submit lesson plans to the facilitation of learning coordinator prior to the tutorial session. They were given a template of the instructional plan (see Annexure S5 There for a sample of the instructional plan).

4.3.9 Facilities, infrastructure and resources and media

A range of human and non-human resources and facilities that can guide and facilitate the educational provision are pivotal to the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system (Dillon, Gunawardena & Parker, 1992:29-45; Garrison, 1989:29; Usun, 2004:1-13; Wang, 2005:8). These resources include library facilities, various media and software programmes, tutors and community leaders. They can also be the various socio-economic variables such as student's financial self-efficiency and capacity to cope with their roles and responsibilities in the family and community. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system the use of a combination of appropriate resources, facilities and media is imperative (Usun, 2004:1-13; Garrison, 1989:29).

During one of the reflection and monitoring sessions which considered the progress of the study towards the end of the study period, Sebolelo reflected on some of the resources which were organised by the study:

Stadi sena se hlophisitse hore laeborari ya setjhaba e fumanehe ho sebediswa ho balla, ho boloka dibuka tse itseng tsa unibesithi e le direferense, le ho fuwa monyetla wa pele ho sebedisa khomputara (The study was able to organise the use of library for study purpose, and to keep the University books as reference in certain modules and the learners were arranged to use the computers for study purposes).

By the '*stadi*' Sebolole refers to the people who took an active role in ensuring that the resources and facilities needed were acquired. These people included the coordinating team members, the SGB members of the affected schools, the municipality and the Department of Arts and Culture which released the library. It can be argued that the success of the study successfully dealt with and levelled off the inescapable power struggles from the diverse stakeholders who were leaders and people in senior positions in their respective areas of work. This the study achieved through the adoption of the values and principles of social justice and equity. The engagements of the coordinating team members with diverse participants were apparently imbued with mutual respect, humility and care to enable their support for the learners who appeared to have been marginalised by not being provided with the necessary educational resources.

It was as a result of this approach that the study coordinator Mahlomola reported that the Department of Arts and Culture through a local librarian even went to the extent of providing additional two more computers in the library for use by learners to access the Internet. Another local high school allowed the University to use the computer laboratory for training purposes and for students' access to the Internet. Sebolelo recalled how learners were able to use technology to enhance their learning:

Re kgonne le ho kena laeboraring tsa unibesithi re ntse re le hae mona ka khomputara tse... orientheishene ya maqalong a selemo thusitse haholo ka kwetliso ya baithuti ka tshebediso ya dikhomputara tseo (We were also able to access the University library from home using the computers... the orientation at the beginning of the year also helped us with the training on the use of these resources).

According to Sebolelo, the learners were able to access the University library online, helping them a great deal in that they could access books and articles needed for completing their assignments. The study also helped the learners by having organised training on the use of software prior to the commencement of the classes. That eased the pressure and stress on the students such that by the time lessons commenced they were well versed in mechanisms of accessing information through the use of technology.

Evidently, the members of the community in the area of this study stood up together against marginalisation of learners and actively sought, developed and implemented mechanisms for addressing their own problem (Ajadi, Salawu & Adeoye, 2008:63). As a result of their collaborative efforts the learners and community members had access to educational opportunities on that basis and thus also addressed their socio-economic challenge associated with dwindling financial resources and fiscal constraints (Ambe-Uve, 2007:73-84). This kind of oppression in RSA, Zimbabwe and Nigeria is equated to structural oppression (Young, 1990:56). Thus, to the structurally oppressed learners and communities, as well as the team of mediators to their situation, this act of the learners' marginalisation (Young, 1990:63) is socially unjust (Fraser, 1999:72-74). May (1979:414) and Mapolisa (2013:278) support this

and indicate that it leads *inter alia* to extinction of indigenous languages and knowledge.

4.3.10 Monitoring and reflection

The monitoring and reflection processes are aimed at ensuring that the plan for the formulation of a framework is successfully implemented (Malena, Reiner & Singh, 2004:6) and facilitate the sustenance of public participation in the processes that enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system. The processes can best be performed in instances of the collaborative plan being used as a basic tool for the assessment (Shortell *et al.*, 2002:49-91). They are often an integral part of the collaborative planning and implementation processes, this enhancing the planning and implementation and the re-planning or adjustment of the plan (Fernandez-Gimenez, Ballard, & Sturtevant, 2008:1-22). They are systematically used to collect data, provide information, gather feedback, analyse contextual changes and provide early warning systems of potential challenges to stakeholders and the participants on continuous basis (Bemberger *et al.*, 1986:6; Bjorkman & Sevensson, 2007:6; Platteau, 2004:223-246; UNESCO, 2009:10).

In this study, the meetings which were organised and facilitated by the study coordinating team were fundamentally monitoring and reflection sessions. The participants were encouraged to frequently check their respective contribution towards the success or failure of an activity. It was through such self-reflection processes that the study learnt the importance of being considerate of the skills, connections/relations and resourcefulness of persons prior to their ultimate deployments. For instance, one such reflection was when the researcher was confronted with the problem of being denied access to the use of a community hall as an examination centre. To this end, Letsoha, one of the coordinating team members confided that:

Ke na le kgopolo ya hore karolo ya ka ya dipolotiki phathing ya ke sesosa sa hore re hanelwe ka holo, haholo jwang ha ke ne ke le moetellipele wa sehlopha se neng se ronngwe (I am of the view that my party political activism is the main

reason we were denied access to the use of the hall, moreso that I was led the team that was assigned that responsibility).

Letsoho believed that the power struggles between his political party and that of the manager responsible for the upkeep of the community hall was the cause of the study's being denied access. The participants considered this aspect and agreed with Letsoha's view that perhaps they were not considerate of the possible hindrances. That Letsoha was even made a leader of the delegation to a manager who was apparently from the opposition party to that of Letsoha aggravated the matter. Upon further reflection the participants identified possible interventions to remedy the situation and it was ultimately addressed successfully (for the importance of monitoring and reflection see paragraph 2.4.2.10).

Further monitoring and reflections enabled the study to identify areas of weakness and those that pose a threat to the different aspects of the tutor system. It also enabled the study to suggest relevant interventions to address each of the risks and threats, as evident in the following statements by Tatolo during one of the reflection and monitoring sessions:

Re fumane hore mekgwa ya ho ruta e bokowa, ho hloka nako e lekaneng ho tlwaetswa dikateng tsa mojuhu le tshetso e fokolang di nyahamisa baithuti ho tla disesheneng. (We discovered that ineffective teaching approaches, failure to make time for discussing contents of modules and lack of learner support were the main causes of non-attendance of tutorial sessions).

In the same vein Thato added:

Re bile ra sheba ka ho ikgetha hore ke eng seo e leng bothata hantle-ntle ka e nngwe le e nngwe ya ntlha tsena.ra ba ra shebisana le ho dumellana ke mekgwa ya tokiso. Tsena re ile ra di etsa karolo ya moralo wa rona oo re o lekolang kgafe-kgafetsa. (We looked more closely or intensely for specific challenges in respect of each aspect... we even searched and agreed about the mechanisms of how to correct the situation).

Tatolo and Thato were confirming that the SWOT analysis, prioritisation and collaborative planning processes were in essence reflective sessions, because during these sessions the priority areas of the tutor system were identified as well as

respective activities which sought to address them. The planning process ensured the involvement of all participants through the delegation and sharing of labour or accountability processes. The use of the plural pronouns namely 're' and 'ra' (we) by both Tatolo and Thato confirm the involvement of other participants, such as the coordinating team members, learners, parents, university and local municipality representatives.

The reality of prevalence of power relations struggles during these reflection and monitoring session were inevitable (Liasidou, 2008:483-500; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010). These differential realities are embedded in the participants' diverse backgrounds, experiences and knowledge. For instance, the public institution may have claimed to be more important on the basis that if they did not avail facilities no tutor system would be realised. In the same vein, the institutions of higher learning may have claimed the same power on the basis of their academic resources and staff they were to provide. In order to level off these prevalent power differential realities, the study engendered the principles and values of mutual trust, respect and caring (de Beaugrande, 2006:31) among the participants. These values should be instilled in conjunction with the mission and vision of the study, as discussed in detail in chapter 2 paragraph 2.4.

4.4 CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE TO THE SUCCESS OF THE FRAMEWORK

This section considers the data in respect of the conditions conducive to the development and implementation of the tutor system, by analysing the data relating to each of the themes.

4.4.1 Dedicated team

The dedicated team is important because it has a responsibility for achieving the goals of the tutor system. The team members were from different backgrounds therefore brought diverse expertise, skills, interest and values (Emery & Flora, 2006:19-35; Kemmis, 2011:9), which with diverse competencies and experience were necessary conditions for enhancing the performance of the coordinating team (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:47; Tang & Harrison, 2011:583-58) and needed to be

reconciled and harnessed. This can be achieved, according to Bungane (2014:70), by openly giving information that appeals to team members' diverse interests that are related to the goal. It enables the team to be unison in determining the direction and leadership which the tutor system has to take (Bush, 2009:391-405). As indicated above, the team required these qualities for extracting the said direction and providing the leadership from the views and expressions of the participants and literature. Evidently, management tasks which include coordinating skills are paramount for the team to manage the numerous activities, including the development of policies and agreements amongst key stakeholders within the effective tutor system team (Derry, 1992:413-418; Nye & Schramm, 1999:1-76; Rocha-Schmid, 2010:355; Tang & Harrison, 2011:583-589).

The diverse skills, experiences and competencies of the tutor system coordinating team members should enable the team to compile reports and give appropriate feedback, thus the process of giving feedback allows the marginalised voices to be heard (Wenger, 2000:3). In this study the voices of the parents and learners from remote areas were excluded from the main discourses on accessing higher education and the necessary administrative and academic support (Young/Fraser). This exclusion is seen in this study as oppressive and in the context of RSA it can be described as unconstitutional as it violates the principle of equity, social justice and human dignity for all citizens (RSA, 1996; Smentelli & Abel, 2000:459).

This engagement of diverse skills, experiences and competencies in the coordinating team also instils confidence (Laverack & Labonte, 2001:111-127) to those who were marginalised. The confidence which is thus resuscitated enhances the condition conducive to the establishment of an effective coordinating team for the effective tutor system. It would thus help curb barriers and hindrances to free flow of ideas. Thomas and Thomas (2000:92) advise that community members should take on the responsibility for planning, implementing, sharing the risks of and monitoring a community-based programme which benefits them. This requires that confidence be instilled among the community members for purposes of gaining and creating knowledge (Björkman & Svensson, 2007:1-64; Malena *et al.*, 2004:6).

In the area of this study, the conditions for the establishment of a coordinating team that could instil confidence in the community were not conducive. This was evinced

by the sentiments expressed during one of the coordinating team meetings with the other participants, aimed at considering possible conditions under which the coordinating team for TS could function optimally. During that meeting Ms Moipone spoke of leadership as a necessary condition for optimising the functioning of the tutor system through its coordinating team:

Re hloka boetapele bo sebete bo bile bo tseba taba tsa bona ka tutor system. Ho hlokeha boetapele bo tshetlehang taba tsa bona ka maikutlo, mehopolo le ditumellano tsa bohle ba amehang hore tutor system e be seo ba reng e be sona. (We need the leadership that is courageous and well versed with issues relating to tutor system. There is a need for the leadership that is considerate of the attitudes/aspirations, views and agreements/resolutions of all participants so that tutor system should be what the people want it to become.).

According to Ms Moipone, the leadership should have courage (*bo sebete*) to pursue what the participants and the tutor system seek to achieve. The phrase 'know their story' (*tseba taba tsa bona*) contextualises that which the tutor system is geared to achieve, understood in this case as not being about the leadership or their diverse interests, as may be derived from their diverse experiences, knowledge and competencies. Rather, the focus should be on the effective tutor system as may be articulated by all the participants. The tutor system coordinating team was to facilitate processes geared towards the creation of communicative spaces that would enhance equitable access to higher educational facilities and support for learners in remote and rural areas. Ms Moipone was aware of the gap likely to be created between leadership and the other participants, and suggested a pro-active way of addressing or narrowing it by advising the leadership to be considerate of attitudes, aspirations and views of the participants at all times.

This study thus contends that the gap between the leadership and participants can be detrimental to the existence and sustenance of a tutor system that is effective. This is because it is viewed as having the potential to create unnecessary tensions and power relations struggles between the leadership and the participants (Van Dijk, 1993:254). For instance, should the tutor system coordinating team make

agreements that are perceived by the other participants as inconsistent with the aims and objectives they agreed upon, then divisions would ensue.

Ms Moipone's view was supported by Me Maele:

Ha boetapele bo hlompha, bo sa ikgopole bo bile bo utlwisisa le ho ikokobeletsa ba nka karolo, ba nka karolo ba tla bo tshepa. Sena se tlo etsa hore tshehetsano le tshebedisanommoho di rene. Le rona ba hodisitsweng ka tshabo le ho tshoswa re tla buleha, ho itshepa ha rona ho tla tiya kaha re sa tlo hlomphollwa le ho phoqwa (If the leadership is respectful, selfless, empathetic and humble to the participants, the participants will trust them. This will promote mutual support and cooperation. And we, who were brought up in fear, we will open up and our self-confidence will be revived because we will not be disrespected and humiliated).

Me Maele had experience of being brought up in an oppressive environment in which she fell victim of humiliation and disrespectfulness, clear from her contention that she was brought up in fear. She believed that the leadership of the tutor system should not act in a manner that would reinvigorate her fear, and so she was reserved. Me. Maele valued the significance of openness and transparency during the tutor system engagements between those who were entrusted with leadership roles and the participants. She felt that principles of openness and transparency should prevail during the tutor system engagements and considered principles and values of respect, selflessness and humility as pivotal to engagement in an open and transparent manner.

This view is consistent with the one expressed in the literature (Chrislip, 1995:2; Derry, 1992:413-418; Rocha-Schmid, 2010:355), thus a coordinating team that serves as mediator (Kegler, Norton & Aronson, 2008:170-179) and works to address the needs and problems of the oppressed (McNeely, Aiyetoro & Bowsher, 2002:3; Zuber-Skerrit, 2011:157-166) will be able to create conditions conducive to the establishment of an effective tutor system. It can also be shown that a coordinating team that serves the marginalised learners in that manner is itself a necessary

condition for successful establishment and implementation, because such a team would successfully facilitate the processes.

4.4.2. Unifying vision for the effective tutor system

The vision, according to Miser (2006:1-8), has the capacity and power to compel the team members to own and share it in order to implement it. According to Senge (1990:211), the power of vision is fundamentally the common caring attitude of the participants towards the formulation of the framework. The caring attitude of participants in developing a compelling vision becomes a necessary condition for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system and for those who own it to commit to its realisation (Miser, 2006:1-7). The importance of the caring attitude towards the vision that literature is alluding to above was expressed by Tatolo:

Tsela eo re qetetse re dumelane ka yona bakeng sa ho ba le vijini e lengwe le ha re na le di tabatabelo tsefapaneng ka morero ona; ho bontsha hore re rata tswelopele ya motse wa rona (The way we ultimately agreed on having one vision in spite of our different interest about this project shows that we love the development of our community).

According to Ajadi, Salawu and Adeoye, (2008:61-62) in Nigeria and Haufiku (n.d.:1) in Namibia, the members of the teams who planned for establishment of the tutorial systems also cared about the development of the all the people. They had strong conviction that the extension of educational opportunities and support through the tutor system programme to the citizens, irrespective of their location, would bear positive results.

The words “*ho bontsha hore re rata tswelopele*” (“shows that **we love** the development”) indicates that the balancing of power took place among the people who participated in the formulation of the vision. “We love” shows that the vision was formulated and owned by all the participants and that once the team has a shared vision it can collectively understand and address whatever problems it faces together, as a team (Bungane, 2014:76).

That the unifying vision, according to James and Lahti (2011:108-120) and Zuber-Skerrit (2011:156-168), clarifies the nature of the problem that brings together the

community and the coordinating team (Shortell *et al.*, 2002:49-91). The processes of working together toward the unifying vision foster and deepen the participants' or the coordinating team's understanding of complexities and of the multitude of factors embedded in their problem (Shortell *et al.*, 2002:49-91). The vision must unify the community to one goal or direction, thus Adams and Hess (2001:14) observe that the key to understanding community is shared identity and reciprocity over time. Community is about groups of people who create relations based on trust and mutuality, within the idea of shared responsibility for wellbeing. In the new discourse 'community' emerges as normative construct and the ontology underpinning this normative discourse have been summarised as by Adams and Hess (2001:17, as follows:

Communities: are social actors that cause things to happen; tend to be homogeneous with common identity and set of values, tend to distribute benefits and burdens equitably, are a form of accountability, as in the phrase 'accountable to the community'; and can plan, manage, deliver and coordinate better than governments and markets.

They add that modern "while democratic" state relies on legal authority to regulate relations, and the developed market relies on voluntary monetary contracts, community relies on shared values as the 'glue' that explains and reproduces social relations. It is thus important that the community own its formulated vision and a vision statement that will drive them to the attainment of the effective TS (Adams & Hess, 2001:14).

It is against this background that community participation in formulation of a vision is the foundation of any community-based project such as the effective tutor system in this study. It must be noted that the members of the community had a say in that issue and their views were respected equally, in spite of their individual social standing within the community:

It is the moral mandate and authority of shared values of communities which identifies and gives confidence to members that their contributions, and the contribution of others, will benefit both the individual and the community. This reciprocity is premised on a non-exploitative value system (Shortell *et al.*, 2002:49-91).

According to the DHET (2012:5-11), the design and implementation of the colleges that are community-based is motivated by a need to enhance learners' equitable access to education, which is also common in the literature from Nigeria (Ajadi, Salawu & Adeoye, 2008:61-62); Namibia (Haufiku, n.d.:1) and Malaysia (Ng & Kong, 2009:363-364). It is therefore important to note that these countries identified the need to expand educational opportunities to the masses of their population in the rural and remotest areas. For the tutor system to thrive it is necessary to involve the community, as Adams and Hess (2001:14) postulates above.

In the area of this study there was no unifying vision that could have clarified the problem relating to the learners' inability to access higher education opportunities and support through an effective tutor system, as evident during one of the coordinating team meetings, the strategic planning session. One of the aspects had to establish was the issue of having a vision for the TS, and during that meeting Mr Kwakwa conceded to the observation made above (see paragraph 4.2.2.) by the pastor, who commented that there was no vision in that community. Thus Mr Kwakwa said:

Ho hlakile hore ho ba le tjhebelopele e hlakileng ho hlakisa maikemisetso a rona ka TS e lokela ho ba ntho ya pele eo re e etsang. Jwale e be re sheba yona kgafetsa ho lekola hore e be re motjheng (It is clear that vision which clearly clarifies our intention about TS should be the first thing to be drawn. We should then refer to it regularly when we check our progress.)

Mr Kwakwa reminded the meeting that vision was important in clarifying the problem, so it should be clear and be amongst the first things articulated. He indicated the significance of having a vision, namely that it should serve to direct and determine the direction of the progress made in establishing effective TS. He referred to the vision often, as understood in the study as a central aspect through which unity of purpose is achievable. In this sense, vision serves as a condition under which numerous aspects of the effective TS can be achieved. Even the coordinating team becomes united if it upholds the vision of the TS which has been developed through collective and collaborative efforts of the affected participants.

It is through the formulation of a unifying vision that conditions are made conducive to TS to thrive. This condition allows the participants and coordinating team

members to enjoy equal consideration during the deliberations and discussions around formulation of the vision. This has the potential to instil a sense of belonging and ownership of the TS on its members. They would as a result contribute their views and resources freely towards the TS. The learners would, to a large extent, have peace of mind and focus on their studies, in turn giving them hope of achieving what they had intended (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999:345-373). It would however be imperative to ensure that the conditions created by vision are also supported by conditions conducive to contextual and situational analysis for the TS.

4.4.3 SWOT analysis for enhancing effectiveness of the tutor system

This section illustrates the importance of circumstances with regard to the conditions conducive to performing a situational analysis in relation to enhancing the effectiveness of the tutors system through the communit-based approach. SWOT analysis is used to generate a list of items through the brainstorming exercise, from which the coordinating team choose the most feasible items and those most likely to promote the positive change needed with regard to the implementation of the framework (Dyson, 2004:631-640). Since this exercise is performed jointly by all those affected, concerned and interested (Jason *et al.*, 2004:4) it has to have support ownership of the entire community. The selected identified issues which are collaboratively chosen are legitimised by this joint venture. Those that have been identified, are listed and put in the order of importance before prioritisation take place (Anyaeqbunam, Mefalopulos & Moetsabi, 2004:10), five of which are chosen by consensus as per the recommendation of UNESCO (2009:41). They will be discussed further, selected not only because of their inherent importance but also because of their feasibility (Gordon *et al.*, 2000:842). It is important for the coordinating team to conduct environmental scan by means of SWOT analysis because it is a planning tool that can help to answer the question of how to implement an effective tutor system community-based approach.

During the brainstorming session and environmental scanning the following comment made by Mr Matsu indicated the importance of SWOT analysis:

Ho molemo ho tseba dintho tseo re nang le tsona, maemo a tsona, hore na di ya fumaneha kapa tjhe le tseo re se nang tsona feela re di hloka mapabi le morero ona. (It is important to know the resources that we have and those that we do not have in relation to this project. There is no way that the community does not have anything to assist in order to make this project successful.)

Mr Matsu's concern that the team should take stock of what they have and what they do not have can best be achieved if it is done in relation to what they need for establishing an effective TS. It is inferred from Mr Matsu's view that identifying the resources, skills, and competencies that are available and/or not available but necessary for the TS is pivotal. These issues should include the students, the tutors, and venues that are suitable for tutorial sessions, study space and venues for conducting workshops and training sessions.

On the research site during the brainstorming meetings, such issues were identified and the mechanisms of addressing them thoroughly discussed. Equally critical were the sentiments expressed by another attendee of the same meeting, Mr Kwakwa, who added that:

Ke tlatselisa ka hore re shebe le diqaka tse ka re sitisang ho tswela pele re be re batle maano ao re ka sebedisang ho di hlola ka oona. Ka nako e nngwe e ka nna yaba re na le menyetla kapa bokgoni ba ho etsa jwalo (I add that we should also identify things that can bar us from achieving our goal as well as possible strategies that we can use to combat them. Sometimes we may be having the ability to curb such problems).

In the same vein, Mr Kwakwa considered as paramount the inclusion of those things that might threaten or derail the implementation of the framework for effective TS. He also considered the identification of relevant strategies that would address the threats as equally important. It would appear that the process of analysis is central in facilitating the creation of conditions conducive to the individual aspects of the TS. The aspects which should be subjected to a thorough analysis have been identified as learner support, tutor training, facilities and resources, to mention a few.

The process of SWOT analysis harmonises the weaknesses and threats with the opportunities and strengths which are available. This harmonisation process is central to the subsequent processes of planning (see paragraph 2.4.3.3). It thus serves as a condition conducive to the planning processes for the establishment of TS through a community-based approach. It can also be demonstrated that this harmonisation process serves to establish a peaceful environment in which diversity is accommodated. The diverse skills and competencies of the participants find expression through robust engagement pursuant to appropriate alignment.

4.4.4 Prioritisation and priorities

This section demonstrates conditions suitable for conducting prioritisation for the emerging framework. Prioritisation which leads to the identification of desired inputs and outcomes is conducted after the situational analysis (Čiagis & Gineitienė, 2007:113; Gordon *et al.*, 2000:842), through community involvement or that of the participants selected by the community (Curran, Kerr, Peacock & Wallis, 2004:1-42; Nettles, 1991:379-406; Laverack & Labonte, 2000:260). Prioritisation helps the communities to focus on key issues and so maximise impact, using their resources as effectively as possible because the identified issues are listed and put in the order of their importance (UNESCO, 2009:41).

In the studies conducted in countries such as Namibia, Nigeria Zimbabwe and Malaysia the teams assigned with the establishment of the tutor systems created an environment conducive to conducting prioritisation process. In Malaysia, for instance, the government took the lead (Ng & Kong, 2009:363-379) in prioritising the establishment of community learning centres in which the tutorial support system was going to be provided to the learners. The Namibian government supported the prioritised project, hence the use of local facilities for NAMCOL activities was conducted with ease (Haufiku n.d.:1-3; Nekongo-Nielsen, 2009:23-38). During the discussion about the prioritisation Mr Matsu replied to the question earlier asked by Mr Thabane on which issues to prioritise:

Re ile ra seka-seka dintho tsa mantlha bakeng sa TS. Re dumellane ka di prayorithi tsa tsona ho bebofatsa mosebetsi wa rona. Re a tseba hore le

kantle ho baithuti bahlokaang tshehetso le dithutara the hlokaang ho sebesa mekhwa e hlwahlwa ya ho ruta, disebediswang tse kang sebaka sa ho ithuta, stadi matherial, motlakase, khomputara letseding di lokela hore shejwa sethatong. (We had the opportunity to consider basic needs for TS. We agreed on priorities that could ease our work. We know that beside the students who need to be supported and the tutors who need to offer tutorial support using effective tutorial techniques, we also need facilities/resources such as venues, study material, electricity, computers and others as basic to be considered initially).

It is evident from the sentiments expressed by Mr Matsu that prioritisation of basic resources for TS could ease the working conditions. This view is clear from the words '*prayorithi ... ho bebofatsa mosebetsi*' (priorities ...to ease the work). It can be argued that the resources which are basic for the establishment of the effective TS as per the averments of Mr Matsu, involve multiple stakeholders. For instance, venue may be obtained from a local public school or library whilst study materials may be acquired from the institutions of higher learning with which the learners are registered. This inevitably has implications for power relation struggles and implies that the mediators (Corson, 2000:93-120) from the TS need to be strategic in their approach when dealing with these multidimensional and complex relations. The relevance of critical emancipatory research principles may not be over-emphasised.

Mathabo corroborated what Mr Matsu said above:

Disebediswang tsa mantlha ha di le teng mme di lotomantswe hantle, maemo a tshebetso a ntlafala le kgonahalo ya katleho e ba teng. (If the basic facilities / resources are available and are prioritised appropriately, the working conditions are improved and there will be the possibility of success.)

Mathabo emphasises the importance of prioritisation of basic resources and facilities as enhancing working conditions (*maemo a tshebetso*) and as increasing the chance of success of the effective TS. In this way it can be argued that prioritisation of basic facilities and resources for the effective TS, mentioned above, serve as a condition conducive to the enhancement of the effectiveness of the TS. It is inevitable that the working conditions are inherently part of the processes and systems created for TS and as such should be considered pivotal to the implementation of effective TS. It is

also imperative that the prioritisation processes are considerate of the learners' contexts. For instance the identification and prioritisation of a specific public school or public library for TS purposes should serve the learners' interests in line with their cultural and socio-economic situations. Thus, the prioritisation criteria should lean towards the learners than to the other participants. This issue should be handled with great circumspection as it may involve power differential realities which have the potential to disrupt than to build unity among the participants in the implementation of the effective TS (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:140-151).

In order to pro-actively address the inherent disruptive possibilities associated with the prioritisation criteria that are biased to the learner, it is necessary to create conditions conducive to collaborative planning for effective TS.

4.4.5 Collaborative planning

This section discusses the conditions conducive to conducting planning, including the identification of venues, date and time on which the sessions would be conducted. This is the process whereby the prioritised issues are put into strategic activities and the responsible people who are accountable for each strategic activity identified. It is important to note that the collaborative planning to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approach occurs when the participants respond collaboratively to the question of how to realise the priorities set out to be achieved (Bartle, 1998:6; Lawson, 2010:137). It provides a systematic approach to achieve the prioritised issues effectively from the available resources (Wates, 2007:7).

Community involvement often entails the allocation of resources to eliminate disadvantages in students' access to resources, but in this case the community plans together, which enhances community participation (Chickering & Gamson, 1989:140; DHET, 2012:17). Laverack and Labonte (2000:258) support this by stating that TS design "can be more empowering by using participatory planning approaches [and that] such approaches allow the involvement of the participants and help resolve conflict that may arise later during implementation and evaluation". The involvement of the community in the planning process, according to Lawson (2010:135-160) and

Wates (2000:7), helps the participants feel important and respected because their voices which were suppressed are heard, and therefore a sense of having equal power and responsibility is developed. This is expressed by Nthabiseng:

Re sebetsa mmhoho he etsa plane ena e sebetse (We are working together to put this plan in action).

This utterance by Nthabiseng shows that the important condition for the plan to succeed is for the participants to work together in a manner that does not alienate or marginalise others. This is critical because it eliminates conflicts that may arise if collaborative planning does not take place.

Community participation is regarded as the most effective strategy for the success of local educational development and is premised upon the hypothesis or assumption that the members of the wider local community have common interests and common goals for their children (Chickering & Gamson, 1989:140; DHET, 2012:17; Wates, 2000:7). According to Laverack and Labonte (2000:258) and Okitsu (2012:33), it was through community participation that the public accountability was improved. In his study, Okitsu (2011:33) observed that it was through collaborative planning and information sharing that local authorities and school managers who had been delegated adequate authority and resources to respond to the demands expressed by the community began to make decisions that should assist the community they are serving with educational development. Empowerment, according to Laverack and Labonte (2000:260), presumes that the identification of problems, solutions and actions to resolve them are carried out by the community, and this process helps communities develop a sense of self-determination and capacity, thus participation and leadership are closely connected.

The conditions for collaborative planning in the area of this study were however not conducive, as evident from the sentiments expressed by the participants. For instance, Mrs Molelekwa, who commented about this aspect during the planning session meeting organised by the coordinating team said:

Re se re ile ra dula mmoho ra lekola le ho lotomanya ntlha tsa rona ka TS, ra ba ra etsa moralo o re kgontshang ho phethahatsa maikemisetso a rona ka TS. (We sat together and identified and prioritised our issues relating to TS.

We also developed a plan that enabled us to carry out / accomplish our intentions about TS).

The words '*ra etsa moralo*' (we have developed a plan) clearly indicate that the coordinating team for TS had developed a plan. Also, it is clear that it created conditions conducive to the team accomplishing their intentions (*maikemisetso a bona*) about or regarding the TS. According to Mrs Molelekwa she and other members had a meeting during which they considered and organised the issues (*ntlha tsa rona*) pertaining to TS. The concept, '*lekola*' carries a number of meanings, which include 'investigate', 'interrogate', 'cross examine' and 'consider'. In the same vein, the concept '*lotomanya*' carries meanings such as to arrange in a certain order, prioritise and organise. Thus, the comments made by Mrs Molelekwa are understood and interpreted as saying that working together towards developing a plan for TS facilitates and enhances the creation of conditions favourable to the establishment of TS.

Masechaba shared the sentiments expressed by Mrs Molelekwa, and added that:

Ho bile bobebe hoba re arolelane mosebetsi ho ya ka bokgoni ba rona ntle le ho sitisa maemo a rona a mosebetsi le bophelo. Sena se entse moralo wa rona o be re fe sefutho (It was relatively easy because we allocated responsibilities according to our competencies and experiences without distracting our individual work and living situations).

According to Masechaba, the sharing of responsibilities (or division of labour) among the team members and the participants contributed significantly to the development of the plan for establishing the TS. In this study the effect of the division of labour is also attributable to creating conditions conducive to the establishment of TS. It is apparent from Masechaba's comment that the division of labour respected and recognised the participants' competencies and skills, which in turn enabled the plan to be developed in a manner that made it considerate of the participants' interests and other responsibilities.

It is evident that the processes of developing plan for effective TS contributes to the empowerment of the affected learners, learners' families, the community in which they live and the broader society (Sayed, 2002:35-38). In the context of sustainable

learning empowering environments, the focus of inclusion of the community in planning for the implementation of the effective tutor system is crucial (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2005:50; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:54). The inclusion of local people enhances their cooperation and collaboration with people and structures at macro level, such as the universities (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2005:49-52). The cooperation between the community and the affected University and its regional offices and learning centres in RSA and the tutoring centres in the case of Namibia (Haufiku, n.d.:1) is important for the implementation of TS. The inclusion of affected persons in this way fosters democracy and impels the participants' prolonged or continued participation (Sayed, 2005:38-39). As Collaborative approach to planning equitably involves all partners and the coordinating team in the planning process and recognises the unique strengths that each person brings, it leads to social change, making the participants feel empowered to improve community access to educational opportunities and to eliminate educational disparities (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003:4).

On the research site the coordinating team collaboratively planned to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system by performing some of the activities. The examples of the activities below illustrate that a number of activities took place during the study.

4.4.5.1 *Effective use of tutorial sessions*

As the coordinating team had concerns about the fluctuation of the tutorial session on the research site; Mr Mahlomola held a discussion with the students during the post-registration counselling workshop, saying to the students:

Ladies and gentlemen, during the last semester your attendance of the tutorial sessions was so irregular in spite of the fact that we requested you to give your input the tutorial schedule. The attendance of some of the tutorial sessions decreased in such a way that tutorial sessions had to be stopped because tutors availed themselves to the empty classrooms.

Mr Tsoai commented:

Ntate Mahlomola, babang barona ha re kgone ho athenda ditlase hara beke hobane transpoto ha eyo ka mora ditlase tsa bosiu. (Sir, some of us are

unable to attend the tutorials because there is no transport after the evening classes.)

Ms Molelekoa interjected by saying:

Ache ho a makatsa hobane rona baithuti re ele ra khetha diklase tsa hara beke bosiu. Batho babang ba khethele diklase tsa ka moqebelo hobane di le tsa mosheare. (It is surprising because we the students chose to attend the tutorials organised during week in the evenings. Some of the students chose the Saturday tutorials because they are organised during the day.)

Mr Mahlomola said:

You are all adults. You need to take responsibility for your studies. Rescheduling of tutorials to suit the students is not a big deal. This could be discussed with the people who are responsible for the tutorial support. This tutor system is meant to support you therefore you are the most important component of the tutorial support system. Without you, the students, there is no need to have this system in the University.

Mr Mahlomola was talking to the students about the importance of attending the tutorials regularly and that they were welcome to come with inputs and suggestions that would make the tutor system efficient and effective. They were also expected to raise their concerns to the responsible people rather than just deciding not to attend the tutorials. This talk encouraged the students to come up with various suggestions and inputs such as use of emails to complement the SMSs for reminding and notifying students about the time and dates for the tutorial sessions. This open talk to the students therefore created an atmosphere conducive to the students speaking openly and freely.

4.4.5.2 Improving student support through liaison with university regional management

In order to improve the tutor system the coordinating team facilitated discussion with the University regional representative.

Nthabeleng said:

Re thabile haholo hobane ha re sa tlameha ho palama transpoto ho fomantshwa di tshetso tsabohlokwa tsa Unibesithi. (We are glad because we do not have to travel to the University's regional centre in order to get important support services from the University).

Ms Moletsane corroborated this by saying that:

Baithuti baneng bahloka tshetso ya Unibesithi bakeng sa boingodiso, dikeletso le tataiso ya ho bala le tsela e nepahetseng ya ho ngola di asayimente ba se ba difumana mona motseng wa rona. (The students who needed support from the University with regards application and registration, advice and guidance on how to study and how to write assignments they are now getting them here in our area).

Nthabiseng added:

Thuso tse tshwanang le tseo di ya fumanaha ka le baka la di puisano le boemedi ba Unibesithi hore di thuso di tleswe mona mo re dulang. (Services such as those were extended to our area because of our open and earnest discussion with their University Regional Management).

The above extracts illustrate how the student support services were improved on the research site after the coordinating team initiated discussions with the University representatives. Collaborative planning by the coordinating team therefore created an environment conducive to both the coordinating team and the University regional management to extend the services to improve student support. This initiative enhanced the effectiveness of the student system through a community-based approach.

4.4.6 Policy provisions

As policies tend to guide and instil orderliness it was important for the coordinating team to develop the policy for the effective tutor system. Policies serve to give effect to the legislative imperatives which determine the direction of institutions. Haufiku (n.d.:1) writes that the institutions of higher education were challenged to transform their policies and procedures in order for the masses of the people who were not accommodated by the conventional universities to be accommodated (Ali, 1999:1-6;

Ojo *et al.*, 2006:1-9; Okonkwo, 2007:31-35; Ngara & Nwarai, 2013:42-54). This is seen in RSA, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, where the principles of social justice and equity inform policy and legislation (Ajadi, Salawu & Adeoye, 2008:63; Ali, 1999:1-6; DHET, 2012:5-11; RSA, 1996:16). It is therefore crucial to have a policy that supports the tutor system because it gives the coordinating team a foundation, guideline and direction for the formulation of the framework for the envisaged effective tutor system through the community-based approach. The expansion of educational opportunities which were created in many institutions around the world, including Namibia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Malaysia, China and South Africa, were because of transformed policies (Ambe-Uve, 2007:73-84; Ng & Kong, 2009:92-106, Santos & Okada, 2007:2).

Since in the area of this study there were no policies that were developed in order to facilitate conditions conducive to community engagements towards the development of TS, the coordinating team initiated a process geared to the formulation of such policy. The team agreed that there were existing policies with regards to the tutor system at the universities which could be adopted and re-aligned towards the enhancement of the effectiveness of a tutor system through the community-based approach. This issue of looking at the existing policies on the tutor system was highlighted by Nthabeleng:

Ha ho hlokahale hore re qale pholosi encha fatshe ya thuta system hontse honale dipholosi tse ngata tse re kankang dintho tseo re bonang di tlaba molemo ho thuta sistimi encha yarona. (There is no need to start the new policy for the tutor system from scratch when there are so many that we could look at and extract what we think will be useful to our new tutor system).

The importance of policy and conditions conducive to the development of the relevant policies for the effective TS were highlighted by Mr Tsoang:

Ha re ka ra thusana, ra ba le mekgwa eo ka yona re ka laolang tshebedisano mmoho ya rona ho qoba ho imetsa e mong ka mosebetsi, boikarabelo le thuso, re tla tswelapele ha bo bebe (If we can help each other, by having means / mechanisms according to which we can control our cooperation in order to curb/minimize possibilities of over-burdening one person with work, responsibilities and support, we will progress swiftly).

According to Mr Tsoang, it was imperative to develop means according to which the TS coordinating team could have cooperation with other stakeholders. These control mechanisms would create conditions conducive to the establishment of the effective TS because the participants would be guided by the policies that they developed. This is evident from the words ‘...mechanisms according to which we can control’. The concept ‘control’ in this context presumes that the people would have control over the use of the control mechanisms which they will have developed. That the affected participants would be involved in the process of developing the control mechanisms presupposes that they would also abide by its provisions. The suitability of the conditions created by the said mechanisms were dependent on the people not being overburdened with work and/or responsibility. This was understood in this study as indicative of but not limited to issues that may have legal implications for the participants.

In line with Mr Tsoang’s sentiments, Mrs Molelekwa added that:

Ho hlile ho shebahala ho tla ba le tlhokeho ya ho laola ntho tse ngata haeba re tla atleha. Mohlala, pakeng tsa TS le dikolo, laeborari, le unibesithi ho tea mohlala (It appears that we will need to control a number of issues if we are to succeed. For instance [relationships] between the TS and schools, public library and the University [must be controlled]).

Mrs Molelekwa here enumerated instances in which control mechanisms would be necessary to enhance the creation of conditions conducive to the establishment of TS. The use of public facilities such as public schools for higher education and for learners from basic education is inherently imbued with power struggles. One of the reasons for their emergence may emanate from the facilities being public and all learners having the constitutional right to use them. Thus, policies that can help control stakeholders’ interactions regarding the use of public facilities are imperative for *inter alia* the enhancement of conditions suitable for effective TS.

The policies that are geared towards enhancing conditions conducive to the successful implementation of TS should be underpinned by the principles of social justice and equity (Young, 1990:63; Fraser, 1999:72-74). The participants should constantly be reminded about the origin and extent of their social and educational problem of lack of access to the support services that could be brought about by the

effective TS which is community-based. The realities of their historic apartheid past and how its ideological imperatives contributed to the disparities in education should be revoked with the aim of advancing the agenda for equity and redress (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:287-301; Syed & Carrim, 1997:91-100; Webber, 2002:261-290). The policies developed in this way will also have a positive impact on the training opportunities for the tutors and the provision of other support services for students who are not particularly academic.

4.4.7 The tutor training for the effective tutor system

Training of tutors on effective instructional strategies enhances the effectiveness of the tutor system (Moreno, 2009:583-587; O'Rourke, 2003:18; Ngara & Nwarai, 2013:42-54) and the best performing tutors are encouraged to stay (Musai, Taskiran and Kelso, 2009:4). Tutor training should encourage active student learning because learning is not a spectator sport and teach effective tutoring techniques because those strategies and techniques promote learning. The close collaboration between the tutor and the subject lecturer or faculty is also regarded as one of the qualities that enhances the performance of the tutor (Musai, Taskiran & Kelso, 2009:4). According to Underhill and Jared (2010:95) tutor training must be incorporated into tutor development in mainstream disciplines as peer tutors will not be able to effectively act as facilitators of subject content and discourse. They propose that academic development practice be integrated within subject-specific curricula via trained tutors, to enable learners to pursue their studies in a way appropriate to their circumstances, learning goals and style (O'Rourke, 2003:18).

These sentiments were expressed at a time when the issues pertaining to the significance of appropriateness of the training provide the tutors were being discussed, geared towards establishing how the tutor training could be used to facilitate and enhance the creation of conditions conducive to effective TS through a community-based approach. Mr Matsu said:

Mohlomong di tutor tseo tse sebetsang moo ha di na mangolo a tshwanetseng kapa ha se batho ba rupelletsweng ho ruta univesithing. (Maybe those tutors

who are appointed do not have appropriate qualifications or they are not trained to teach at the University.)

Mr Matsu saw a vast difference between teaching at a university and teaching at another institution, as he makes reference to people who are not trained to teach at that university. The qualifications of tutors should enable them to create conditions conducive to learning, and as learning is at the centre of the establishment of TS the focus should be on ensuring that they are sustained. For Mr Matsu, appropriate and effective tutor training has the capacity to enable the TS to achieve that.

Underhill and Jared (2010:106) propose that the academic development practice should be integrated within subject-specific curricula through tutor training, whilst O'Rourke (2003:55) and Beck (2007:1-26) believe that training of tutors in employing instructional strategies in which students are engaged effectively as well as personally in the content plays an important role in facilitation of learning. One of the four typology for change processes conceptualised by Nettles (1991:379-406) is instruction, which embraces actions designed to assist students in their intellectual development or in learning the rules and values that govern social relationships in the community.

The training of tutors on instructional strategies promotes deeper learning, and learning at tutorial sessions is best facilitated by non-lecture oriented techniques (Ngara & Ngwarai, 2013:42-54). A tutor who is trained allows student-participation in learner dialogue by which they learn to argue purposefully and present their ideas rationally. Those learners enquire and critically evaluate knowledge presented by others and experience collective advances in knowledge. This is in line with values of CER, which according to Merwe and Abertyn (2009:153) promotes critical thinking, self-reflection and dialogue, and raises consciousness. Learners are encouraged to question distorted assumptions such as fear, inhibitions and psychological defending mechanisms. Through training of tutors students are helped to be independent, think for themselves, make their own judgments and draw their own conclusions, which are other values of CER (Biesta, 2010: 39). They encourage active learning, give prompt feedback, and bolster students' motivation, confidence and self-efficacy while mastering the material (Chickering & Gamson, 1997:1-7). All these skills attained by

the tutors through tutor training create an environment conducive to an effective tutor system that culminates in the realisation of the envisaged student.

4.4.8 Learner support for the effective tutor system

Learner support, according to Southern African Development Community, Centre for Distance Education (SADC CDE) is that learners are provided with a range of opportunities for two-way communication through the use of various forms of technology for tutoring at a distance, contact tutoring, assignment tutoring, mentoring where appropriate, counselling (both remote and face-to-face), and the stimulation of peer support structures. The need for learners to access physical facilities and study resources and to participate in decision-making is also taken into account (SADC, 2006:1-30). Garrison and Baynton (1987:7) on the other hand define learner support as the resources that learners can access in order to carry out the learning processes.

Countries such as RSA, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Nigeria and Malaysia have larger populations in remote rural areas that have limited access to the learner support resources referred to by Garrison and Baynton (1987:7). The higher education in these countries has shifted from an elitist to and mass-based system of education of fostering democratic nation-building and cohesion (Jones, Coetzee, Bailey & Wickham, 2008:5–6; Scott, Yeld & Hendry, 2007; Underhill & McDonald, 2010:93). In RSA, the emergence of new comprehensive institutions has been accompanied by demands to accommodate students from diverse backgrounds. Student enrolments have become diverse in terms of racial, cultural, socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds as well as the level of preparedness that the students have for traditional higher education (Underhill & McDonald, 2010:93).

The universities, whether residential or distance education had to devise the means to bring extra support to meet student's learning needs effectively. Since the classes became larger and there was limited contact time with individual students, the tutor system was vital (Underhill & McDonald, 2010:93). The same scenario occurred in Australia, according to McNaught and Beal (2012:191), as the student body became increasingly diverse, culturally and linguistically, with a resultant impact on teaching

and learning. As Murray (2011:27-33) reiterated, universities have a moral and ethical obligation to support and assist students they have enrolled to persevere and achieve success through the introduction of tutorial support services.

In South Africa, distance education institutions had to accommodate most of those learners who could not be accepted in residential institutions therefore more learner support initiatives in the form the tutor system were urgently needed, especially for those students in remote areas (DHET, 2012:1-33, 2012:11; Subotzky & Prinsloo, 2011:1; Underhill, McDonald & Jared, 2010:91-106). A dedicated team was required to ensure an effective tutor system through community-based approach was implemented and monitored effectively (Amba-Uva, 2007:73; Ng & Kong, 200: 92-106, Santos & Okada, 2007:2).

It is therefore important to note that the provision of the learner support could not be achieved if there was no collaboration with other stakeholders from communities in which learning centres were established (Jung, 2005:10, Maloney & Tello, 2003:16; Fink, 2002:27; Strauss, 2002:13; Janvier & Ghaoui, 2003:162; Danchak, 2002:2; Soles & Moller, 2001:12). The South African Department of Higher Education believed that there were a substantial number of learning centres throughout the country that could serve as sites for the support and/ or provision of open and distance learning programmes, with administrative and logistical support and access for students to computers and online materials, including libraries: “These could range from the hiring of the facilities of high schools and FET Colleges in the evenings and over weekends and school holidays for tutorial contact sessions through to stand-alone ICT-equipped and networked centres, possibly operating 24/7/365 and managed collaboratively” (DHET, 2012:30).

During the second community meeting, in which all stakeholders had the opportunity to voice their views about the issue of student support to enhance the creation of conditions conducive to effective TS, one of the parents said:

Ha maemo a tshehetso ya baithuti e ka ya ba e kgotsofatsang, bana le batswadi ba tla kgothala mme ba itahlele ka setotswana ho phethahatsa maikarabelo a bona ho ithuta le ho tshehetsa thuto. (If the support for learners can be satisfactory, the learners and the parents would be revitalised and

would resultantly commit themselves to carry out their responsibilities of learning and supporting the learning processes).

According to this parent, the standard or quality of learner support (*maemo a tshetso*) had the capacity to enhance the effectiveness of the TS, because the parent viewed good quality learner support (*e kgotsofatsang*) as potentially influential in making the parents and learners execute their responsibilities. The words, “...*ba tla kgothala mme ba itahlele ka setotswana ho phethahatsa...*” address two critical issues. First, the learners and the parents would be invigorated, encouraged and strengthened; second, as a result of being revitalised, the parents and the learners would engage themselves fully (*itahlele ka setotswana*) with their respective responsibilities relating to learning and learner support. In the same vein, Nthabiseng, a learner, passionately confirmed the view that learner support could enhance conditions conducive to effective TS:

...ha baithuti ba ka fumantshwa tataiso ka ntho tse kang mekgwa e metle ya ho bala [ithuta], boeletse ka mafapha a fapaneng a ho ithuta e le ho thusa ho kgetha dithuto tse tshwanetseng j.j. ho ka kgothaletsa baithuti le ho ntlafatsa maemo a TS. (...if learners can be supported on things such as effective methods of studying, information about different careers in order to help with their choices of appropriate subjects [courses] etcetera, that can motivate learners to learn and can also enhance the profile of the TS.)

Nthabiseng pointed out some of the specific issues on which she, and understandably other learners needed support. She also provided reasons, namely that the profile of the TS would be enhanced if the quality of learner support provided were satisfactory. Although the indicators of success were not clarified the study considered, among others, higher learner turnout, active learning by the students, problem-solving skills, self-regulated learning, low drop-out rate and even parental or stakeholder engagement and commitment to the TS. She said that learner support on issues such as career guidance and appropriate subject choices, as well as with effective study methods, would motivate learners to attend well. Her views were understood as having been influenced by her consideration of individual learner's vision for learning.

It is evident from the data above that the participants in the study were earnest in their attempt to address their problem of lack of equitable access to effective learner support services in higher education. They had the courage to find peaceful mechanisms according to which conditions conducive to the establishment of effective TS could be enhanced through quality learner support services, and had hope that their situation would change for the better so they could ultimately achieve their respective goals. Thus, the participants' further consideration of the enhancement of conditions conducive to TS through the appropriate facilities and infrastructure was pursued.

4.4.9 Appropriate facilities, infrastructure/resources and media

The effective tutorial support system requires appropriate and adequate resources in order to provide an efficient and effective student support (Usun, 2004:1-13; Kramer, 2003:9). According to Garrison and Baynton (1987:7), the resources that support, guide and facilitate education provision can be both human and non-human. These may be library facilities, various media, software programmes, community leaders and, most importantly, the tutor/teacher who through guidance and direction can help students achieve their goals (see 2.4.1.9). Some of the developing countries find it very costly to procure and set hardware that is suitable for e-learning (Deb, 2013:1-8; Pfukwa & Matipano, 2006:61). Facilities such as science laboratories, libraries and workshops are important to support learning, but some countries cannot afford to make them available at the larger scale especially in remote rural areas (Sweet, 1986:205; Mafa, Mpofu & Chimhenga, 2013:11-17).

According to Mafa *et al.*, (2013:11-17) in Zimbabwe the information and communication technology is regarded as an essential ingredient through its integration of face-to-face tutoring, but despite significant progress in expanding the research of basic and new ICT services and its application, the majority of the district centres for Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) still do not have access to telephone services, fax, computer or Internet services, leading to inefficiency in service delivery. This challenge of poor ICT penetration and inadequate basic ICT infrastructure is prevalent in African countries, often a result of lack of electricity to

power the ICTs materials, poor telecommunication facilities, and a poor postal system (World Bank, 2011).

The lack of infrastructures is in turn due to insufficient funds (Ololube, 2006:101-118). Governments in Africa, according to Mafa *et al.*, (2013:11-17), should embark on a comprehensive programme of recapitalisation of higher education, and be proactive in funding, monitoring and controlling their implementation. Deb (2013:1-8) recommends that more research be carried out to improve infrastructure required for expanding educational opportunities for billions of people in developing countries, through mobile technology and gearing up multimedia technology to be easily transported to remote and rural areas.

It also indicated that it was important for the coordinating team to look at the implementation of the effective tutor system wholly by using face-to-face tutoring and online or e-tutoring systems in accordance to the need and availability of the necessary infrastructure. In the context of the research site it is not possible for “focus of face-to-face meetings can be anachronistic” (Reid, 2009:588), because the research site is a poorly-resourced community in which citizens are too poor to own personal computers, laptops or smart-phones with Internet connectivity to link with tutors and lecturers. The only option was to find places within the community with computers to connect to their tutors and lecturers or have interactive linkages through *Skype* or video-conferencing with synchronous relations other than virtualised and asynchronous interactions (Burnett, 2003:247-261; Logorio, Talamo & Simons, 2002:137-152).

During the meeting in which the facilities, resources and media were discussed, some of the community members pledged that they would make sure that some of those facilities which were available in the community were acquired for the implementation of the effective TS. Mr Thabane’s statement attests that facilities could also enhance the conditions conducive to the establishment of the effective TS:

Hara disebediswang tsa mantlha tse ka bebofaletsang TS maemo a tshebetso nna ke bona di tlelaserumu ho sireletsa maemong a seng matle a lehodimo, laeborari kapa sekolo ho thusa ka disebediswang tse kang dikhomputara le Internet, mmoho le tshehetso ya unibesithi ka bokgoni ba yona bo

tshwanetseng. (Among the basic facilities/resources that can ease working conditions for the TS I see classrooms for protection during adverse weather conditions, [public] library or a school to support with resources such as computers and Internet, together with the support of the University with relevant competencies and capacities [relating to tutoring/tutor system]).

Mr Thabane identified the basic resources necessary for commencing with the TS and stated explicitly that the facilities and resources he identified were critical in easing the working conditions in the TS. Even though the reasons advanced for the categorisation of these resources are basic, the participants were well aware that the intention of Mr Thabane was not to downplay resources such as study materials, books, desks, writing boards and others. The understanding of the participants was that a classroom included all other resources that contribute towards conditions conducive to learning. Similarly, by a computer the participants elaborated on the Internet to include other relevant programmes and software as well as connectivity that would enhance learning. As such, it was clear to the meeting that Mr Thabane mainly painted a scanty picture of what was later discussed and further investigated for purposes of enhancing the content of policies and agreements with public schools and public libraries.

Mrs Selewane corroborated the sentiments of Mr Thabane and further unveiled the opportunities and strengths that the TS had in acquiring the use of some of the public facilities and resources:

Ho tla tswa katamelong ya rona le kutlwisiso ya ditaba ka ho tshwana re ka kgonang ho ba le seabo tshebedisong ya disebediswa tseo Ntate Thabane a di bolelang. Nnete ke hore le rona re na le tokelo ya ho di sebedisa ka ha ke tsa setjhaba mme re karolo ya setjhaba. (Depending on our approach and mutual understanding of issues we can have access to the use of the facilities and resources which were identified by Mr Thabane. The reality is that we even have the right to use public facilities because we are members of the public).

Mrs Selewane was sensitive and careful not to disrespect those who were given the responsibility to care and protect public facilities, namely schools and libraries in this case. This was apparent in her consideration of the approach and mutual understanding of issues between the coordinating team members and those

responsible for the care and protection of the identified public facilities. She was understood as having said that the study coordinating team members should approach these sensitive matters circumspectly, an approach that was to be imbued with mutual respect and trust in order to be able to level off the inherent power struggles successfully. The source of power for the coordinating team members (the public) appeared to have been legislation in arguably the same way as those who were appointed (administratively) to manage the use of resources and facilities (Lawson, 2010:135-160). Thus, Mrs Selewane was interpreted as saying that in order to engender mutual understanding of the reality of the problem rather than the constitutional principles which both parties upheld, there needed to be a basis for the arguments and discussion. For instance, discussion should centre on issues pertaining to enabling the achievement of equitable access to educational resources; on facilitating the enhancement of conditions conducive to the establishment of TS; and on the role that each sector of the public institutions should play in order to give hope for the marginalised young learners. It was as such imperative to consider how monitoring and reflection would further enhance the creation of conditions conducive to effective TS.

4.4.10 Monitoring and reflection for the effective tutor system

According to UNESCO (2009:10), monitoring relates to continuous review and collection of data, which will help to determine whether anticipated outcomes are being met. Monitoring is an essential part of evaluation and data feeds into the more overarching process of evaluation, hence to the systematic collection of information conducted during or after a project in order to make judgments about effectiveness against anticipated outcomes and to help inform decisions about future interventions (Bemberger *et al.*, 1986:6; UNESCO, 2009:10). Monitoring and evaluation efforts assist in determining whether a programme has achieved its intended outcomes, so as to be accountable and to make the most effective use of the resources' effectiveness (Björkman & Svensson, 2007:1-64; Molee, Henry, Sessa, McKinney-Prupis, 2010:239-257; Steinberg & Kincheloe 2010:140-141).

Monitoring should be carried out on a continuous basis to ensure that the aims and objectives of the project, in the case of this study, are being met and to readjust

programming based on lessons learned. After the strategic direction and vision had been adopted, the coordinating team had to implement and monitor the strategy, systematically collecting data in order to provide information for all stakeholders and participants on the progress of implementation and the achievement of the desired goals or outcomes. Bemberger *et al.* (1986:6) state that critical functions of monitoring are to gather feedback from participants, analyse contextual changes, and provide an early warning system for potential challenges.

The key success factors (KSFs), which were key choices around which favourable results were necessary, were identified and decided upon and the key success indicators (KSIs) used to assess them. According to Shortell *et al.* (2002:51), some of the reasons for lack of documented achievement in community-based projects is lack of a well-articulated commonly defined vision of what is to be accomplished and underestimation of difficulty in encouraging diverse groups to work together to achieve a significant impact on relatively intractable problems. This also includes insufficient time to track the interventions and assess their long-run sustainability issues that may be required in order to achieve measurable lasting outcomes. In relation to the study it meant that the coordinating team should assess progress against a well-specified and articulated vision of what was supposed to be achieved, explicitly paying attention to issues of partnership, governance and management, including the impact of the partnership on individual participating organisations. It also meant developing a monitoring, evaluating, and tracking system in order to assess the sustainability and impact of private-public partnership within the community of the research site in order to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system.

As can be noted from the preceding discussions, the non-existence of an effective tutor system through community-based approach in the area of this study meant that there was no basis for collecting data about the tutor system for developing mechanisms for monitoring the success of the framework for effective tutor system (see chapter 2 paragraph 2.4.4). However, monitoring and reflection were identified as pivotal for enhancing the creation of conditions conducive to the development and implementation of the framework for effective TS. This was evident from the sentiments expressed by Mrs Matsau during the meeting that considered reflection

and monitoring as conditions conducive from the establishment of TS. Mrs Matsau indicated that:

Ho hlokahala hore re behe moralo/polane ya rona leihlo, sehlopha se fuweng boikarabelo se hloka ho fana ka repoto ya sona. Sena se tla re fa monyetla wa ho tseba hore seo re se kgonneng ho se etsa le seo re sa atlahang ho se etsa hore re kgone ho qoba mathatha ao re kopanang le ona. (As we know that we need to keep an eye on [monitor] the progress of the strategic plan, the Task Teams need to give us feedback about their progress towards what they were assigned to do. This will give us the opportunity to know what we have achieved and what we have not achieved so as to find other means to solve or circumvent the problems that were encountered by each).

Mrs Matsau suggested that the comprehensive plan be used as a tool for monitoring the progress made in respect of developing and implementing the framework for the TS, as contained in the phrase 'keep an eye on' (*beha leihlo*), which could also mean investigate, watch, and interrogate. She further considered as important the issue of seeking clarity on any aspect of the plan for which a progress report was given, saying it was critical that the participants identified the areas and causes of the success and of failure of the development and implementation of the framework of the effective TS. The reason for this was for the participants to develop mechanisms to strengthen areas that needed to be strengthened and alter where necessary. It would appear that the main purpose for this was to further enhance the creation of conditions conducive to the development and implementation of the framework for effective TS. The issue of conducive conditions is indicated by Mrs Matsau as a proactive way of averting problems (*re kgone ho qoba mathatha*).

In the same vein, Mr Phutsisi introduced another significant aspect of self-reflection and reflection by corroborating and further contributing to the views of Mrs Matsau:

Ho hlakile hore ho bohlokwa ho lekola tshebetso, le bokgoni tsa TS, le mekgahlelo yohle e amang hore e dule e ntlafatswa kgafetsa. Mekgahlelo ena e ka kenyetsa tse kang boitekelo le tekolo ya seabo sa bankang karolo, mafapha a fapaneng a setjhaba, dithuto le mananeo a ho ithuta. (It is clear that it is imperative to reflect on the working and capacity of the TS, as well as its related areas/aspects so that it can be improved on continual basis. The

related areas/aspects may include self-reflection and reflection on the roles of participants and stakeholders, different sections of the public/community, learning and learning programmes.)

Mr Phutsisi considered reflections and self-reflection as central to ensuring sustenance of the conditions conducive to the development and implementation of the framework for TS. He held the view that the success or failure to achieve certain aspects of the effective TS might be hampered by the extent to which the various aspects achieved their respective mandates and responsibilities. Also, his view was considerate of the extent to which external structures prevalent in the community could contribute to the sustenance of favourable conditions for TS through monitoring and reflection (Bemberger *et al.*, 1986:6; Björkman & Svensson, 2007:1-64). The issues of self-reflection alerted the participants to the necessity for continuing to respect the possible contribution of other members of the society. Through self-reflection the participants were made aware that they might also hinder the progress to be made for the TS (Van Dijk, 2008:86). Thus, Mr Phutsisi warned them to be weary of pertinent and inherent distractors and to earnestly attempt to address them timely (Malena, Reiner & Singh, 2004:831-837; Molee, Henry & Sessa, 2010:38; Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010:140-141). The study interpreted these possibilities and highlighted them as central to sustaining the conditions conducive to the development and implementation of the effective tutor system through a community-based approach (Curran *et al.*, 2004:1-44).

4.5. RISKS AND THREATS FACING IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents analyses and interprets the data in respect of the inherent risks and threats that might derail the development and implementation of a framework for the effective TS. They are identified in relation to the components and conditions conducive to the successful implementation of the strategy. The risks were identified during the implementation of some of the aspects of the study and were related to the literature on promotion of community participation, democratic election of the coordinating team, the development of the shared vision, conducting the SWOT analysis, prioritisation, joint strategic planning and monitoring of the outcomes (Morrissey, 2000:59; Munt, 2002:1; Davies & Murshed, 2006:16; Dube, 2009:22).

4.5.1 The dedicated team

This section considers the risks and threats related to the leadership and management of the processes of development and implementation of the framework for the TS. The effective tutor system could be threatened if there is no coordinating team that is democratically elected by the community and which represent all levels or membership from different stakeholders. If this is the case on the research site there would be a contradiction to the rationale on which the tutors system through the community-based approach is anchored.

Another risk is that if the coordinating team is not democratically elected it will not have a full mandate or the capacity to provide sound leadership, effective and efficient management of the processes and systems of enhancing the effectiveness of the TS. The lack of leadership and management skills has the potential to derail the TS processes and thus could threaten its existence (see chapter 2 paragraph 2.4.4). The election exercise, even though it may be time- consuming, legitimises the team because the members would have been elected by the community (SAIDE, 2000:11). They represent the aspirations of each sector of the community and are able to bring to the fore issues and ideas that can be explored from a number of different perspectives within the community, thus enriching the decision-making process (Maguire, 1987:657-666). This creates an environment of collective responsibility which can create “a commitment to work together in productive a way, help to build a sense of ownership of the project, which is an important ingredient for building a commitment to change” (Munt, 2002:2). This therefore means the lack of buy-in of the team members in the formulation and the implementation of the effective tutor system could be another critical challenge.

Absence of buy-in or commitment from the members could lead to non-attendance of members and so pose serious challenge that could result in the non-compliance of the policy directives, continuity of the project, and effectiveness of the coordinating team (Laverack & Labonte, 2001:255-262). It is also important to note that the exploration of bottom-up and co-management approaches improves project outcomes (Gregory, 2000:179-199) which could not happen effectively with the top-down approach. In the bottom-up approach the community is not dictated to by authorities (national or local), outsiders and locally powerful individuals, but it is

encouraged to be involved at the project planning, design and inclusion in the management process, thus it has the power to decide who will represent it in the coordinating team (Jason *et al.*, 2004:1-9; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2010:1-544). The coordinating team is therefore given the mandate to make decision for the community and consistently give feedback to the community in order to make sure that besides being informed it goes along with what the coordinating team is doing.

During the discussion about the election of the coordinating team Mr Thabane corroborated the earlier statement by Mrs Molelekoa on the importance of electing democratically the people who will represent the community in establishing the community-based tutor system:

Boemedi boo bo tlameha ho nka boikarabelo le diqeto tsa projekte bakeng sa sechaba, feela bo tlameha ho fana ka tlaleho kgafetsa hore sechaba se dule se tseba hore ho etsahalang. (The representatives that you elected will have to take responsibility of the project on your behalf, but they have to give the report regularly so that the community should be kept informed of what is happening).

The words “*boemedi boo bo tlameha ho nka boikarabelo*” translates as the leadership taking responsibility for the project on behalf of the community. In other words, the power is bestowed to the coordinating team to make decisions that would benefit the community through the TS. The word “*bo-tlameha*” means that one is “obliged to”, so in this context the coordinating team is entitled and obliged to take decisions on behalf of the community. This implies that if there is no coordinating team there will be no leadership dedicated to steering the TS to its determined objectives and goals.

The speaker goes on to say that the coordinating team is “obliged to” report constantly about the project “*bo tlameha ho fana ka repoto kgafetsa hore setjhaba se dule se tseba ho re ho etsahalang*”. This highlights an important feature that if the coordinating team does not report to the community the community will not be informed about the progress of the implementation of the tutor system. This also implies that the TS will not be monitored and it could be rendered aimless (Selinger, 1997:3) if there is no elected coordinating team. If this happens the project could be at risk of not reaching its pre-determined goals, and therefore threatened with failure.

The participation of the community in electing its leadership of the TS is empowering, and provides the best and most accurate information possible with regards to the TS. This is another way of garnering community support for the project and social change that leads to the betterment of the community at large (Jason *et al.*, 2004:1-9; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2010:1-544). It is also important to note that by providing the community or the stakeholders with regular feedback is consistent with the view that the power over the TS continues to rest with the community.

In Malaysia; Namibia and Nigeria, for instance, the local communities were encouraged to participate in the planning, establishment and implementation of the community learning centres for teaching and learning and other student support services (Abas, 2009:527-537; Adewumi, Dooga, Dakas, Yakmut & Mafwil, 2011:261-268; Aderinoye, Ojokheta & Olojede, 2007:1-7).

Mr Thabane said:

Re tlameha re dule re le baemedi le ba buelle ba morero ona hobane bonyane boo re bo re khonneng ho atleha kabona sechaba setlameha ho bo tseba le hoba motlotlo ka bona. (We should always be the ambassadors of this project because the little that has already been achieved the community see it and appreciates it).

The above statement also indicates the importance of advocacy (Davidoff, 1965:331-338; Stein & Mankowski, 2004:23) regarding the progress made by the coordinating team and challenges encountered about the TS. It is important constantly to give feedback or report to the entire community so as to avoid disengagement from the project at hand. In the study quarterly meetings were held in which the coordinating team gave feedback to the community, approached in such a way that the participants were treated with respect, humility and made to understand every issue that was reported, building trust in the coordinating team. The participants were allowed freely to give inputs or ask questions, giving them hope for success (Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:35). This is also in line with PAR, in which the parties that identify a problem are encouraged to approach the others in order to resolve the emerging challenge, concern or problem (Dworski-Riggs & Langout, 2011:218). Lessons learnt from other countries such as Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Namibia are that insufficient advocacy and inconstant feedback by the coordinating

team led to the people on the ground to think that such interventions were imposed on them and therefore they do not own them (Davidoff, 1965:331-338; Khwaja, 2004:427-436). This feeling of not owning the initiative by the community or the beneficiaries leads to disengagement and disempowerment, thus the support and participation in a project is minimal. The involvement of the participants in the formulation for the TS is also critical because it gives a common view of what they need to accomplish.

4.5.2 Formulation of vision

The vision represents idealised future states for the project or the organisation (Yoeli & Katz, 2010:451-467) and an ideological goal that the organisation or community project members can feel morally satisfied in pursuing. It is therefore a guide to what the tutor system that is community-based should become rather than a description of what it is (James & Lahti, 2011:108-120). When members of the coordinating team that was elected by community have a shared vision they tend to know and are enthusiastic about what the community is trying to accomplish (Allen & Allen, 1987:40-47). In community planning, a vision stimulates public involvement by describing specific, concrete outcomes that are important to citizens (Helling, 2007:335-349). The members of the coordinating team begin to have a common view about the general mechanisms by which those goals can be achieved (Allen & Allen, 1987:40-47), thus visioning usually implies a commitment to collaboration, also called 'consensus building' (Gray, 1989:5).

The term 'vision', rather than the more commonly used word 'objective', is normally chosen because it suggests that the goals be capable of inspiring participation (Allen & Allen, 1987:40-47). A vision is capable of bringing together people with divergent views in a commonly agreed upon and sustained effort. Since shared vision emerges when people have a chance to integrate their own personal goals approaches with those of the project, it offers them an opportunity to develop hope (Allen & Allen, 1987:40-47). The sense of community is engendered when people share an element of hope that enables them to work in a positive culture (Allen & Allen, 1987:40-47; Heilling, 2007:335-349; Gray, 1989:5; Zuber-Skerrit, 2011:157-166).

A vision statement, therefore, is a broad statement of the future that the coordinating team wants to create for itself as their 'ideal' situation (Gregory & Brierley, 2010:468-478; Zuber-Skerrit, 2011:157-166), and should inspire people to work towards the ideals that it expresses (Allen & Allen, 1987:40-47, Thompson, 2000:6; Zuber-Skerrit, 2011:157-166). In this case the vision that is formulated by the coordinating team clarifies the nature of the problem at hand, which is the implementation of the effective tutor system. It should be a unifying vision which fosters and deepens the coordinating team's understanding of all the challenges.

Allen and Allen (1987:40-47) observe that when there is no shared vision people often work at cross purposes and have little common agreement about what the coordinating team is trying to achieve: "It is as if there were insufficient liquid added to the flour in making bread. All the kneading in the world is not likely to help it to hold together and additional flour is not likely to make a positive difference" (Allen & Allen, 1987:40-47). For people to work together they need to have a common goal (Helling, 2007:335-349; Gray, 1989:5; Zuber-Skerrit, 2011:157-166).

The coordinating team looked at the positive contributions given by all stakeholders, including the teachers and principals, such as one from the local Adult Centre who said that:

Ha re no kgona ho tswella ka ntho ena e ntle ka ntle le ho utlwana le hoba le moelelo o le mong. ..batjha ba rona ba sebedisana ka matla ho ntshetsa pele maphelo a bona le ho bitsa ba bang hore le bona ba thuse ho lwantsha bofuma bo re phelang ka hara bona. (We won't be able to succeed about this good initiative if we do not pull together and have a common goal. We are very proud to see that the youth in this community is working hard to improve their lives and are recruiting others).

It is apparent from the above sentiments that the presence of a vision has the capacity to unify even the young people. In this study young people went to the extent of inviting others to contribute towards their own development. Conversely, it can be argued that the absence of vision poses a serious risk and threat to the development and implementation of the framework. The absence of a unifying vision is indicative of disunity and as such cannot be favourable to achieving equity and access (see chapter 2 paragraph 2.4.4).

In a study conducted by Gregory and Brierley in Project Twin Streams in New Zealand, it was concluded that community empowerment and restoration processes are key attributes comprising a vision, providing a strong sustainability focus. According to Gregory and Brierley (2010:468-478), the vision encapsulates the desire for broadened participation as community capacity is developed. The vision in Zimbabwe Namibia, Nigeria and Malaysia, for instance, was developed in anticipation that specific goals would change through time social and institutional systems change, and as the knowledge base broadens and deepens, creating a 'living vision'. Visions statements therefore translate goals and ambition into action.

It can also be argued that without shared vision, that is, when people are disunited, it would be difficult to successfully garner support from public institutions such as libraries and schools. This is because the principles which are geared towards cooperation and collaborative work are encouraged and prevail in instances such as where tutor systems are to be established. In the case of RSA the Constitution also supports and encourages them, for example, equity (DBE, 2011:4-5). Also it can be shown that in the absence of a unifying vision, power struggles and tensions amongst the participants thrive, posing a threat to the prevalence of the much desired unity of purpose in the formulation and implementation of effective TS through a community-based approach.

4.5.3 SWOT analysis

In this section, the risks and threats that may thwart the situational and contextual analysis for the development and implementation of the framework are considered. The inherent risks that may confront the SWOT analysis and in turn the development and implementation of the framework may be traced from the inability to identify aspects consistent with the relevant tutor system processes.

A SWOT analysis is a guiding framework that is generally used to systematically characterise a particular situation with regards to its internal strength and weaknesses as well as its external opportunities and threats (Lindsey & McGuinness, 1998:1106-1114), and allows for the identification of appropriate strategies for utilising the strengths, addressing the weaknesses, exploiting the

opportunities and mitigating the threats (Schroeder, Minocha & Schneidert, 2010:159-174). SWOT analysis in this study is conducted to assess the current status with regards to the community-based tutor system and to predict future trends in relation to this community development project (Čiagis & Gineitienė, 2007:113). It is also a management tool used for business and market planning (Sharma & Bhatia, 1996:455; Sabbaghi & Vaidyanathan, 2004:1-19), applied to the context of implementing the tutor system in the community as a community development project (Janssen, 2002:145-159). It therefore important to note that SWOT analysis is a planning tool that could help to answer pertinent questions by identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the community with regard to the implementation of the community-based tutor system (Laverack & Labonte, 2000:258; Čiagis & Gineitienė, 2007:113).

Discussion about situational analysis and the lack thereof was evident in the community's inability to explore other possibilities, efforts and solutions to address the challenge of implementing the community-based tutor system (Laverack & Labonte, 2000:258). The community could therefore not choose the best path, determine where change was possible or adjust and refine its plans to establish the community-based tutor system by employing SWOT analysis (Westhues, Lafrance & Schmidt, 2010:35-56). In short, there was no SWOT analysis which is generally associated with strategic planning (Mintzberg, 1994:1-458).

During the discussion about the challenges that the students were facing and how the tutors could be brought to the research site, Mme Mmampho commented that:

Re lokela ho ba sedi haholo ka dintlha tsa mantlha tseo re lokelang ho di lekodisisa e sere ra iphumana re sebeleditse le feela. Ke bona eka re lokela ho phenya-phenya ntho tse kang phumantsho ya dithutara haufi, mekgwa ya tshehetso e kenyelelang orientheishene, le boitekolo. (We have to be very careful about basic issues that we must reflect on, otherwise we will find ourselves having worked in vain. I think we need to reflect or investigate issues such as obtaining tutors from nearby places, working conditions which include orientation of new learners).

Mme Mampho recommended being "very careful" about what constituted basic aspects of the development and implementation of the framework. The apparent risk

that needed to be addressed timeously, according to Mme Mampho, was fruitless deployment of resources, or as “having worked in vain”. It would be socially unjust to fruitlessly use the scarce public resources (Hackman, 2005:103-109, 2007:1-9), thus risking the community and other social structures not showing respect or credibility for the envisaged effective TS. Her concerns invoked the contribution of another parent and mother of one of the learners in the project. Mr Tlhopheho reminded the meeting that:

... ho thata ho ya ka maemo a bophelo le moruo wa rona hore bana ba ye dibakeng tse hole ho ya ithuta. Hape maemo a boitshwaro a qephile ka kakaretso bakeng sa bana ba rona ha ba le hole. (...the conditions / situations of life / living make it difficult for us that our children should go to school in far off places. Also the moral fibre in our society has deteriorated [for our children to be away from parents]).

Mr Tlhopheho brought to light some of the risks that might derail the development and implementation of the framework for TS, confirming the importance of conducting situational and contextual analysis. In this particular instance, he was understood as having alerted the participants to the risks associated with studying in far-off places. The apparent social ills which might be addressed through the presence of a parent figure to instil discipline and guide children during their study periods were considered as pivotal.

In the context of this study, the said “moral fibre in our society [that has] deteriorated” would invariably be addressed by first having learners closer to their parents whilst at the same time pursuing their studies. Secondly, by grounding the TS in the CER principles the participants would be taught and trained to observe values of mutual respect, trust and humility (RSA, 1996:s16). These would be operationalised pursuant to achieving equitable access to resources for social justice and giving hope to the marginalised learners (Hackman, 2005:103-109). In view of their varying degrees of impacts the risks and threats need to be prioritised and mitigated against in order to solicit appropriate responsible persons and resources.

4.5.4 Prioritisation and priorities

This section deals with risks and threats that may hamper the process of prioritisation of critical issues or aspects for enhancing the effectiveness of the framework. For instance, identifying insignificant and or less important priorities before the most important high impact priorities, may pose a serious threat for the development and implementation of the effective TS.

Defining priorities and setting goals is regarded by Schaefer (1994:1-102) as one of the important activities that need community participation. Prioritisation can also be applied in the education sector (Uemra, 1999:1-36), particularly in the implementation of an effective tutor system that is community-based. According to Curran, Kerr, Peacock and Wallis (2004:1-42), prioritisation leads to the identification of desired inputs and outcomes and once issues have been identified and listed in the order of their importance they are prioritised (Anyaegbunam, Mefalopulos & Moetsabi, 2004:10; Wates, 2000:7; DHET, 2012a:15).

Community member, Mme Thinane during the discussion of mechanisms and or criteria that would be used to prioritise the identified resources and facilities relevant for the effective TS, stated:

Ha re sa behe taba tsa mantlha ka hodimo lenaneng la rona la dipraeorithi reka iphumana re sentse nako. Re kenyelletse dintho tse kang sebaka sa ho rutelwa se jwaloka sekolo kapa laeborari ya setjhaba, se nang le matlwana le motlakase mmoho le metsi. (If we do not put the basic and critical issues first on our priority list we may find ourselves having wasted time. We should consider things such as venue where teaching/tutoring will take place such as a school or a public library, a venue which has sanitation facilities and electricity as well as water).

The suggestion was understood to be that the mechanisms or criteria to be developed and/or used in prioritisation of resources should enable the study to prioritise first things first. She gave an example of resources (e.g., electricity, water and sanitation) and facilities (e.g., venue for tutoring like school or public library) which she considered as primary. Thus, the study considered the absence of mechanisms or criteria for prioritisation as an inherent risk that could derail the

development and implementation of effective TS. This was considered as such because without the appropriate mechanisms the basic physical infrastructure might not have been identified timeously or at all. In the same vein, Rethabile, one of the learners who were registered with the University and who was keen on the development and implementation of the framework for the effective TS, added:

Nna ke re re se lebale unibesithi e amehang le dithutara tse ka re thusang, re ntse re kenyeditse disebediswang tsa thuto jwaleka dikhomputara le stadi material (I say we should not forget the University which is affected, also considering/including the educational resources / facilities such as computers and study material).

Rethabile did not negate or contest the view expressed by Mme Thinane but added to the list of the primary resources and facilities, the curriculum related issues, student support, tutors and tutor training. The items that were not to be left out of the priority list were tutors, study material and computers. The coordinating team facilitated the discussion in a manner that enabled the identification of modes and strategies to be used to acquire the identified facilities. It was imperative to adopt at first the principles of consensus, and a combination of other strategies, such as nominal group and multi-voting techniques, to arrive at what was generally accepted as the priority list (Wates, 2007:1-7). It was from this exercise that the study identified the inherent risk of losing focus on the desired inputs and outcomes of the tutor system.

The principles of consensus adopted during the prioritisation process should be made possible by grounding it on the values of mutual respect and trust among the participants (Mahlomaholo, 2009:224-237). This practice tends to entrench, in the process, the culture of collaborative work and learning of the learners. In the event that the participants' views could not be reconciled, the coordinating team resorted to the purpose of prioritisation which was geared towards achieving equity and access to higher education resources (Bakare, 2012:283-294; Webber, 2002:261-290).

4.5.5 Collaborative planning for the effective tutor system

This section discusses the threats that impede the plan to implement the framework for the effective tutor system for sustainable learning environment. It is important to note that planning for the implementation of the effective tutor system will not be successful if the members of the team do not work collaboratively with an aim of realising one common vision. According to Gray (1989:227), collaborative planning is a process of joint decision-making among stakeholders to resolve planning problems or manage related issues to planning and development. A collaborative plan clearly sets out priorities that must be achieved and provides a systematic approach to achieve them. It is an effective way to achieve results from available resources (Wates, 2000:7-9). Thus, through the collaborative planning processes for an effective tutor system, the participants responded to the question of how to realise the said TS priorities (Bartle, 1998:6; Lawson, 2010:137). A collaborative plan also enhances community participation (Chickering & Gamson, 1989:140; DHET, 2012:17), which requires clear understanding of the attitudes of people in the community in which the TS is to be implemented. For Jamal and Getz (1995:186-204) there are three stages of collaborative planning, namely problem-setting, direction-setting and implementation of the community-based tutor system. In Namibia the committee assigned to establish the NAMCOL centres worked collaboratively to develop the vision, conduct situational analysis and prioritise issues that needed urgent consideration in establishing them around Namibia (Haufiku, n.d.:1).

In the area of this study there were no opportunities for joint decision-making amongst the community members, learners and relevant stakeholders regarding the problem of access to effective tutorial and other student support services needed by higher education students. As a result this problem could not be contextualised to the extent that it could have enabled and influenced potential stakeholders and participants to adopt a particular stance in an attempt to address it. There was little done collaboratively in an attempt to systematically address the problem or the need of the learners in this rural area to access appropriate and effective support. As a result, the coordinating team for the TS facilitated meetings during which a plan was drafted to progressively address this reality. In one such meeting, some of the

contributions of the participants were noted and used towards the development of the plan. For instance, Mme Mpate expressed her views regarding the immanent issues that needed to be taken care of during the process of planning:

E ka ba tlhakantshutshu feela ha re ka hloka moralo o ngotsweng ho phethahatsa lenane la dintho tsa bohlokwa bakeng sa TS. (If we do not ensure that our plan is written down, there might be confusion).

According to Mme Mpate, a plan for the development and implementation of TS should be written down and a proactive way of addressing the risk was associated with an unwritten plan, without which there would be confusion (*tlhakantshutshu*). Conversely, for orderliness to prevail, or for the activities of the tutor system to be implemented systematically, the plan had to be written. Mr Phoka corroborated Mme Mpate's sentiments:

Re ke re kgutlele polaneng kgafetsa ho netefatsa hore ha re ntse re e phethahatsa, re ntse re fihlela sepheo sa rona. Re boele re lekole maano, disebediswang, dinako, le karolelano ya mosebetsi hore di dumellane le ho ba motjheng. Ha re sa etse jwalo re tlo lahleha re be re kena kgathatsong. (We should revisit our plan regularly to ascertain that our implementation is geared toward our purpose. We should again check the alignment of our strategies/tasks, allocation of resources, time and persons responsible for activities/tasks. If we don't do that we might get lost and might even be in trouble).

Mr. Phoka identified items that should be considered during the planning process as having the potential to derail the planning and implementation processes if they were not given considerate attention. The plan should be revisited and its implementation processes assessed frequently, and he advised that such processes be considerate of the alignment of activities, resources allocated and responsible persons (i.e., accountability). The reasons for these were cited by Phoka as to avoid being 'lost', understood as 'missing the target' or failing to achieve the goal. Another reason cited was that of being in trouble, interpreted in the context of the study as indicative of potential risks inherent in the numerous engagements, and a responsibility in which the TS coordinating team was involved. For instance, in an agreement to use the school computer laboratory and computers, the risks pertaining to maintenance of

software, building and other resources had such potential. It became evident that there was a need to include a risk plan as part of the collaborative plan of the framework.

There are many stakeholders and social structures involved in the establishment of TS, with numerous inherent risks. These are generally borne from the inherent power struggles amongst the participants and in turn may result from different cultural, ideological, and socio-economic backgrounds. They can best be considered when the participants share a common vision, principles and values. In this study the plan and the planning process were value-driven, with mutual respect and trust. The principles to which the participants aspired were a tutor system that is effective, equitable, and accessible to educational resources for freedom and hope.

4.5.6 Policy provisions

In this section I consider policy imperatives that could derail the process of policy formulation and/or distract subsequent activities of the development and implementation of a framework for effective TS. These may include issues such as purpose, values, principles, related legislative and public mandates as well as specific aspects relevant to the TS (DHET, 2012a:9; Ajadi *et al.*, 2008:61-70; Haufiku, (n.d.); Jegede, 2002; Nel, 2009:46; Ng & Kong, 2009:363-379) (also see chapter 2 paragraf 2.4).

Irvin and Stansbury (2004:55) observe that when community participation in policy formulation takes place dissent is rare, and that it is difficult to envision anything but positive outcomes from citizens joining the policy process, collaborating with others and reaching consensus to bring about positive social and environmental change. For Bullock (2001:25), "Good policy-making depends on high quality information and evidence. Modern policy making calls for the need to improve Departments' capacity to make use of evidence, and the need to improve the accessibility of evidence available to policy makers."

There was no policy for the formulation of the framework for effective TS on the research site, thus the implementation of the framework for a tutor system could not be realised. The students who had recently completed matric or grade 12 and who

had financial constraints were stuck because they could not pursue their studies through residential educational institutions or distance education institutions.

In an attempt to address the problem through legal means the coordinating team discussed the matter with the learners, parents and members of the community. It was apparent that some sections were not aware of the legal basis for the establishment of the TS, but the study coordinator helped with relevant information, based on which one participant was sceptical about the issues of involving legal imperative in the affairs of the TS. Me Morongwe expressed her views rhetorically:

Molao o teng, raet. Hobaneng re tlameha ho etsa o mong? Ha re o lateleng ono o teng he. Hona hobaneng re sokola empa re na le tshehetso ya molao. Feela haeba re lokela ho etsa pholisi, e tla lokela e ikamahanye le molao mme le rona re etse jwalo (There is the law right. Why are we supposed to formulate another law? [be formulating policy for TS]. Let us just follow the law that is available. Again, why do we struggle when we have the support of/from the law. However, if we have to develop policy, it will have to be in line with the existing law and we also have to abide by the law).

The risk that Mme Morongwe brought to the attention of the participants related to the lack of consistency of the policy with the relevant legislation. She alerted the meeting to the inconsistencies with the law that might lead to conflict with the TS, which she not unnaturally considered undesirable. Both the policy for TS and the participants should abide by the law, but since not all members were aware of the legal provisions regarding the access to education there was a possibility of going ahead without referring to the legal imperatives. That would be risky as it would threaten the existence and sustenance of the envisaged community-based TS.

In response to some of the issues raised by Mme Morongwe, Thabiso, one of the learners and a youth leader at a church highlighted the differences between policy and the legislation drawn by Parliament:

Pholisi ke molawana o itshetlehang le ho ntshetsapele molao. E etswa ke batho ba morerong o itseng feela o le molaong. Sepheo ke ho netefatsa hore ba phethahatsa ditumellano tsa bona. Ka hoo pholisi e lokela ho kenyeletsa ntho tse kang maikemisetso, boitshwaro, kgalemo, mapetjo, le tse ding tse ka

kopanyang ba amehang. (The policy is the legislation that supports the law. It is formulated by the people who are on a common project that is lawful. The aim is to make sure that they achieve their common objective. That is why the policy needs to include the aims, conduct, vision and other issues that unite the members).

The study benefited from another contribution of Thabiso, as he outlined the structure of the policy for the framework for the effective TS, alerting the participants that policy must be made consistent with the law. It is evident that a poorly formulated policy can lead to the failure. For instance, policy, according to Thabiso, should help members address their differences amicably. For this to be achieved such policy should be based on quality information that has evidence, and must have been formulated through a participatory processes. Conflicts and diverse views of the participants in the collaborative and participatory policy formulation process are inevitable, thus it was imperative to ground policy formulation processes in CER by adopting the principles and values thereof.

4.5.7 The tutor training

Tutor support is regarded as critical to the educational process and the students' learning experience. According to Denis, Watland, Pirotte and Verday (2004:5-7), in the current technology-mediated learning environment practical reasons include reduction of dropout rates, theoretical reasons include mitigating student isolation, and moral reasons include the obligation to help students succeed (Lentell, 2003:64-76; Simpson, 2002:1-237). For Bennett and Mash (2002:14-20), for a tutor to be effective in face-to-face or on-line tutoring, he or she must have the skills to facilitate learning. If tutoring is online it is not enough to send an e-mail for which Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) coding is required to insert an image on a web page. The tutor is expected to facilitate and guide the learning of their students so that they gain knowledge and understanding. To achieve this, tutors should develop and practice a multitude of skills and facilitation strategies that would enhance their trade.

Lentell (2003:64-67) lists the typical duties of a tutor as ensuring students have grounding in the subject, providing them with academic support in the subject matter,

assisting students in exploring the links between different course modules and integrating work experience with academic knowledge. Simpson (2002:1-237) delineates two broad areas of tutor support as academic and non-academic. The former (or tutorial) deals with supporting students with the cognitive, intellectual and knowledge issues of specific courses, the later (or counselling) is the support of students in the affective and organisational aspects of their studies. According to Barker (2002:3-13) and O'Rourke (2004:33), pastoral care of students includes advising them about careers and course choices, marking assignments and coursework, providing feedback on submitted material, moderating conferences, acting as mentors to less-experienced colleagues, and performing quality control of other e-tutors' work. Ryan, Scott, Freeman and Patel (2000:110) write:

The main role of the online tutor is that of educational facilitator: to contribute specialist knowledge and insight, focus the discussion on the critical points, to ask questions and respond to student's contributions, weave together disparate comments and synthesise the points made to foster emerging themes.

Ryan *et al.* (2000:1-204) add that tutors also needs skills for nurturing online collaboration, creating an atmosphere of openness, assuring all participants their contributions are valued and welcome, and building rapport within the group to help members to explore ideas, different perspectives and to take ownership of their learning.

Rogers (1951:427) argues for student-centred teaching rather than a teacher-centred teaching whereby a tutor supplies motivation, information and organisation of the material, and uses examinations at every turn to coerce the student into the desired activates. Students are trusted and the role of the teacher is to create a climate of respect and acceptance which is accepting of the emotionalised situation of educational or group experience. The tutors see themselves as members of a learning group, rather than an authority, making available learning resources, relying on the basis of continuing experience and recognising that any course is a beginning and not the end of learning (Denis *et al.*, 2004:1-8). Lastly, relying upon the students to assess their progress and having confidence in this atmosphere, which they have helped create, a type of learning takes place, which is personally meaningful and supports the self-development of the individual as well as the subject knowledge. In

short, Rogers is opposed to the trend that views a student as a 'customer' (Rogers, 1951:427)

In the area of this study, the tutor system was not effective and so affected negatively the prospective higher education learners. This is evident from the sentiments expressed by some of the learner participants with regard to the perceived unacceptable or poor teaching approaches used by the tutors. The learners' perceptions or experiences of ineffective tutoring strategies discouraged them from attending tutorial sessions (see paragraph 4.2.7), thus the poor quality of tutoring poses a threat and is an inherent risk for the success of the implementation and sustenance of the TS. During a discussion that sought to identify the risks and to find the mitigating factors organised by the coordinating team, Mme Thuso advised that:

Ho bohlokwa hore thuthara di be le boikarabelo bo totobatseng hore ba etsa eng hore baithuti ba atlehe dithutong tsa bona. Sena se tla etsa hore kwetliso eo ba e fuwang e be ntle. (It is important that tutors account clearly about what they do to assist learners to perform well in their studies. This will influence the quality and nature of their training to be improved).

According to Mme Thuso, it is risky not to make tutors accountable for the performance of the learners. They tutors should be supported with appropriate training that would capacitate them to use diverse tutoring approaches that would enable learners to comprehend the material to be able to solve their problems, collaboratively with other learners, and to be self-regulated learners who could collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information (Carmichael & Stacy, 2006:2; SAQA, 2001). As part of and central to such training would be the creation of conditions conducive to collaborative and active learning (Bruffee, 1995:12-18; Rahman, Rahman, 2000, 2009:1-27). Tutors would have to be trained in ways to create and manage sustainable learning environments that are learning-centred and problem-based (Cornelius-White, 2007:113-143).

It is evident that the use of learners' immediate backgrounds and integrating them or relating experiences derived from those at macro-level is inescapable (Jonassen, 1985:26-34; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:44-61). The central tenet in this regard is to foster a "progressive and developmental" approach that is premised on the principle of

from the known to the unknown and from the simple to the complex (Jonassen, 1991:5-14; Vygotsky, 1978:34-40). In this regard, the learners' background and what they generally know is imperative, an approach that enriches the coordination and integration of TS with the community.

4.5.8 Learner support

According to Kember (1989:278-301), learner support services concern interactions that facilitate the learning process and may include face-to-face tutorials, telephone tutorials, outreach visits, on-campus study schools, as well as written correspondence, possibly through assignments (Sewart, 1993:3-12). Although a classroom lecture is useful for delivering information efficiently, there is however a growing belief that viewing a learner primarily as a receiver of information tends to encourage inactivity rather than thinking (Ahern, Peck, & Lacock, 1992:3; Grabinger, 1996). Passive learning limits learners and causes them to mirror the presented knowledge rather than allowing them to grow their own expertise. It is meaningful thinking that arises out of a collaborative and reflective thought process that engages the learner and promotes the kind of learning necessary for present and future work preparation (Jonassen & Reeves, 1996:403-437). According to Chickering and Gamson, (1987:1-7), students should be encouraged to work together in teams or groups because community of learners provides social reinforcement and information exchange.

Learners who work together asynchronously and synchronously become successful because they are supported academically, intellectually and gain interpersonal skills (Moller, 1998:115-122). Other types of support services associated with learning at a distance are administrative support, for example, enrolment advice and counselling. The equitable provision of learner support services to the students is crucial to the throughput or success rate of students in higher education, irrespective of their geographical location (Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:44-61, Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Kangai, Rupande & Rugonye, 2011:12-32). However, most of the institutions in developing countries are unable to provide these services to students living in remote rural areas, leaving them to feel isolated with high attrition or dropout rates (Qakisa-

Makoe, 2005:44-61, Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Kangai, Rupande & Rugonye, 2011:12-32).

In the area of this study, there was limited learner support provided at the area of residence(s) of the learners who registered with the University. The coordinating team facilitated a discussion relating to the risks associated with the learner support that could hamper or derail its provision for the framework of effective TS. During one of the meetings that considered this matter, one learner, Modiehi indicated that:

Ha hona hore re tla tswella kantle ho thuso leha ekaba tataiso ya boithuti, diqholotso tse ka bang teng, le ka tshebetso ya rona ho ya ka matshwao ao re a fumaneng. Re hloka thuso jwaleka bana ba bang hore re atlehe dithutong tsa rona. (There is no way we can progress without the [learner] support which may be guidance on issues of learning [academic], challenges that may be pertinent to the study, and learner performance as indicated by the marks allocated. We need support like other children [learners] so that we can succeed with our studies).

According to Modiehi, without learner support, the learners would not perform well in their studies. She uses an emphatic phrase as an indication of the seriousness of learner support, “there is no way we can progress [with our studies]”, and enumerate the types of learner support services imperative for the effective TS, namely, guidance on academic matters, counselling with respect to *inter alia* social challenges that might affect learning, and learners’ assignment feedback. Modiehi had a sense of desolation when she made reference to and compared herself and her colleagues with other children in other parts of the country who enjoyed the benefits of learner support. Thus, the risk embedded in the absence of learner support is the unhappiness with which learners in rural areas would have to contend throughout their learning. This is in addition to the threat posed by the absence of learner support which Modiehi identified, namely, lack of progress with one’s studies. In support of Modiehi, Thabiso emphasised the importance of being cared for by the institution at which they registered:

Re baithuti ba yunivesithi ena bohle ha re sekeng ra kgeswa, feela hobane re le tulong e nyane, esere ra iphumana re tlohetse jwaloka ba bangata ba tlileng pele ho rona. (We are all the students of this university, let us not be sidelined,

simply because we stay in a small place [town / residential area], lest we find ourselves having dropped out of school like many who came before us).

Thabiso had identified further risks and threats to the framework for the TS, associated with the absence of learner support service, including creating “a feeling of being disregarded or uncared for’ and ‘increased chances of leaving studies prematurely.” The reason for the perception that the learners in rural areas were not cared for related to socio-economic factors, because of the differences in the social aspects and the economic status of the areas of residence of the children under consideration in this study. Social structures and facilities that supported distance education were better funded in urban than rural areas.

The tensions in the discussion in this respect were indicative of the prevalence of embedded power relations struggles, traced to socio-economic imbalances which in turn had been lingering from the learners’ past (Adger, 2003:387-404). There was a need to level off the prevalent imbalances by reverting to the aim and objectives of developing and implementing a framework for effective TS through community-based approaches. The processes of developing the framework is grounded in the principles of CER for the enhancement of establishing relationships of mutual trust, respect and humility among the participants (Mahlomaholo, 2009:224-237; Mahlomaholo & Netshandama, 2012:42-44). The communicative spaces which were created through the processes engaged the affected learners, parents, community members and mediators in the processes of developing and implementing solutions to their problems (Kemmis, 2008:127-128; Wicks & Reason, 2009:245).

4.5.9 Appropriate facilities, infrastructure / resources and media

The learner support system, according to Garrison and Bayton (1987:7), comprises both resources the learner can access in order to carry out learning process and resources which relate to the mediation of the communication process. The resources of the learning process apply to both distance and on-campus students and include the availability of and access to courses, teachers or facilitators, learning materials, library facilities, media equipment and community experts (Asun, 2004:1-13; Dillon *et al.*, 1992:29-45). From the above one can deduce that in order for the

community-based tutor system to be successful, appropriate and suitable facilities, infrastructure/resources, and media equipment are required. These facilities and resources range from old modes of delivery to modern modes of delivery (Amba-Uva, 2007:73; Ng & Kong, 2009:92-106, Santos & Okada, 2007:2; Haufiku, n.d.:1-8).

Some developing countries, such as RSA, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria still use print, radio, television, audio and video cassettes to deliver and expand the reach to the students who stay far from the University regional centres for the off-campus students (Ajadi *et al.*, 2008:61-70; Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:47; Ng & Kong, 2009:366-369). There are however new technologies such as video and computer conferencing facilities and mobile devices in some of the countries that are used to expand educational opportunities to remote students, but these are unaffordable to most of the population (Dzakaria, 2005:1-14; Potashnik & Capper, 1998:1-45; Pfukwa & Matipano, 2006:61; Santos & Okada, 2007:2). The students who are off-campus or who stay in remote areas are linked to the providing institution with an impressive range of technologies that enable the teachers and learners to communicate with each other in real time (synchronous) and delayed time (asynchronous) (Dzakaria, 2005:1-14). These developments offer a radically new direction for teachers and learners alike, incorporating flexible and open learning methods as well as modified and specially created learning resources.

The learners in the area of this study could not have access to the flexible and open learning methods because there were no facilities and resources made available for them. This could be a serious threat to the existence and sustenance of the framework for implementation of the TS if not attended to timeously and effectively. As a result, the coordinating team considered the aspects and issues that must be taken care of in order to enhance optimal use of the facilities and resources identified and availed for the implementation. During the meeting in which risks and threats were considered, Mr Tlholo, one of the municipality workers and a public librarian said:

Disebediswang bakeng sa ho ithuta le ho ruta kajeno, di sebedisa motlakase mme di hlokolosi hore di ka utsuwa. Di hloka tlhokomelo e kgolo le boiphihleo ba ho di sebedisa hore o se senyetse basebedise ba bang nako. (The learning support resources / facilities today use electricity, are sensitive and sought after

[by thieves] to be stolen. They need to be extremely cared for and also require some level of competency from their users in order not to waste others' time).

Mr Tlholo advised the TS coordinating team members to make sure that facilities made available for use by the TS would help towards the achievement of their intended purpose. For instance, it was apparent that some facilities (buildings and/or computers) might be available but electricity not. Such facilities could not be used at night and/or for operating electronic equipment, posing a threat to the attendance of tutorials and/or delivery or receipt of lectures through for instance, video conferencing (Sweet, 1986:205; Mafa, Mpofu & Chimhenga, 2013:11-17). Mr Tlholo also warned the meeting that resources could be damaged or stolen, under tutors' care and TS should therefore address such risks.

One of the coordinating team members, Ntate Thabane corroborated the sentiments expressed by Mr Tlholo and added:

Ho bolelang hore, tumellano le ba re thusang di lokela ho ba sedi ho kenyeletsa dintho tsohle ho seng jwalo re ka iphumana re na le disebediswang feela di sa re tswele molemo feela hobane re sa tsebe ho di sebedisa. (Which means that our agreements [TS'] with owners of facilities will have to be meticulous, otherwise we will find ourselves having resources which will not be beneficial to us simply because we do not have the skills to use them).

Mr Thabane added that if the TS coordinating team members were not careful they might not be able to detect serious threats or risks associated with the resources and facilities. The issue of appropriateness of and accessibility of resources and facilities was considered critical, thus calling for a need to apply those principles to the deployment of people skills, experiences and competencies (Wang, 2005:8). Thus, the lack of appropriate skills, competencies and experience that could enhance the effective use of resources (human and physical) was conceived as potentially risky to the development and implementation of the framework.

The study considered the deployment of appropriately competent, skilful and experienced persons (human resources) capable of addressing the acquisition of the physical resources and facilities for the TS. The inherent challenge and risk in that

regard was “the achievement of the said deployments without discriminating others who may be perceived as having inappropriate skills or competencies” (Laverack, 2003:99-106). Emphasis was placed on achieving equitable access to tutorial and other student support services in higher education through the creation of communicative engagements whereby the contributions of all participants were considered equally (Kemmis, 2008:127-128; Wicks & Reason, 2009:245). That opened it up for the support and engagement of other competent persons and social structures such as schools, the University, and local municipality through the local public library. The deliberations in the communicative spaces thus created were imbued with values of mutual respect and trust, geared towards achieving a common vision which was in turn based on the principles of equitable access to education for social justice.

4.5.10 Monitoring and reflection

Community monitoring and evaluation is an approach rather than a specific technique to involve citizens in gathering evidence of performance of the community-based project (McDonald & Aid, 2008:1-12). Much of this focus on conducting monitoring and evaluation, according to McDonald and Aid (2008:1-12), does not only uses the communities for data but also encourages them to voice and express their concerns, realities and the extent to which a given project has impacted on and improved their lives. In order for the plan to be sustainable, monitoring and evaluation are critical (Shediac-Rizkallah & Bone, 1998:87-108).

In the area of this study there was no monitoring and evaluation of the extent to which the learners accessed tutorial or other student support services in higher education. Nor were there reflection sessions to establish how the learner support programmes, facilities and resources, or tutor training contributed to the performance of the learners. This posed a serious risk and threat to the development and implementation of the framework because there was no information gathered or analysis of contextual changes conducted with a view to improve the learning programmes in the rural area (Bemberger *et al.*, 1986:6; UNESCO, 2009:10) (see chapter 2 paragraph 2.4).

This also became clear during the TS meeting in which those issues of risks and threats emanating from the lack of monitoring and reflection were considered. As shown in chapter 4.2.1, the learners did not have anyone to support them and there were issues that led some to abandon their studies. This could pose a serious threat for the development and implementation of the framework for the effective TS, which should be detected timeously through processes of monitoring and reflection and addressed decisively. In the meeting in which the issues pertaining to risks and threats were discussed, one of the parents Mr Pule commented:

Bothata boo re ka bang le bona ke hore ha re na tsebo e keneletseng ya mabaka ao re sa fumanthweng thuso ka oona. Sena se ama tswelopele ya rona. (The problem that confronts us is the lack of sufficient [information] knowledge of the reasons we are not supported. This [lack of information] affects our progress).

The view here is that lack of sufficient information regarding a matter, such as the tutor system, can derail progress in matters that affect it. The information that is sufficient was also understood to be detailed enough and relevant to the issues under consideration. In the same vein, progress (*tswelopele*) was understood as having been possible to determine from indicators of success which could also be measured (Clarke, 1999:139-145). As such, the meeting established that it was imperative to ensure that the meetings that were held also served as reflection and monitoring sessions. The reason was to avert the problem and risks that might befall the TS due to lack of sufficient and relevant information.

It was on the basis of the discussion on gathering relevant and sufficient information on the nature, extent, activities and programmes of the effective TS that the study found critical reflection sessions imperative (Agger, 1991:119; Molee *et al.*, 2009:591-593). The reason for that was that through the process, all aspects of the TS were interrogated in order to establish their respective contribution in the development and implementation of TS. It was also found to be relevant to CER, the theoretical framework grounding the study, and consistent with the values and principles of equity and access which the study aspired to achieve through operationalisation of the effective TS through a community-based approach. Thus, the processes of critical reflection would be considerate of the diverse views of the

participants which have to be subjected to robust debate and discussion. Through this process, the most logical view was to be followed and operationalised.

4.6 EVIDENCE OF APPLICABILITY OF THE FRAMEWORK

This section considers the evidence for the applicability of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches and includes the extent to which each of the components of the effective TS has been achieved. These are considered in line with the priorities of the tutor system found to be prominent in the literature. The priorities being referred to include the envisaged learner, student support services (counselling, guidance, administrative and academic support), tutor training and support.

Literature has shown that community participation and involvement in a project is one of the key elements of PAR because it ensures community ownership of the project, suits the local circumstances and increases the sustainability of the project (Munt, 2002:3). On the research site the community members who were mostly affected by the ineffective tutorial support were involved in most of the initial deliberations about the possible establishment of the framework.

Although maintaining the participation of all the stakeholders was a challenge, the selection of the coordinating team whose majority membership was made up of those students directly affected by the lack of tutorial or academic support helped in maintenance of participation. The coordinating team was involved in the planning of the project, the development of the action plan, establishing working groups, conducting contextual analysis and prioritisation of what to do, including providing reflections or feedback about the implementation of the project strategy from a project recipient's point of view (Munt, 2002:3).

4.6.1 The positive role of a dedicated team for the effective tutor system

Community organising is important because residents must organise around trusted and capable leadership, taking stock of their social capital and other assets. Leadership, according to Hyman (2010:196-202), is the first component of community organisation because community expression needs a centre around

which to revolve: “Someone or something must ‘stand point’ as a receptacle for community sentiments, a fulcrum for community energies, and an interpreter and transmitter of community will.” For Barker (1997:343-362) and Hyman (2010:196-202), an immediate concern for the success of the community building is whether there is an ample supply of competent and approachable leadership around which the community can organise. This highlights the importance of selecting a dedicated team of people who will lead the process of formulating and establishing a framework that would enhance the effectiveness of a tutor system through community-based approach on the research site. Barker (1997:343-362) adds that community development approach emphasises self-help, democratic process, and leadership in community revitalisation, whilst Gamble and Weil (1995:210-222) point out that community participation in social work refers to the active voluntary engagement of individuals and groups to change problematic conditions and to influence policies and programmes that affect the quality of their lives or the lives of others. This could be achieved, according to Aref (2010:1-4), if stakeholders have an active role in the preliminary discussion process in which they identify information needs and design the terms of reference, rather than merely having passive roles as objects and mere sources of data. Other authors (Čiagis & Gineitienė, 2008:107-117; Israel, Schultz, Parker, & Becker, 2001: 182-197) argue that the representatives of the key parties must participate in the deliberation of the formulation and implementation of the framework for an effective tutor system, and only the representatives who are selected by the community should participate.

The establishment of the coordinating team on the research site had important outcomes because it assisted in identification of the stakeholders who were keen to establish the effective and efficient tutor system through the community-based approach. It was able to approach the University to provide services such as mobile registration, counselling, study skills, financial aid and other services that would not have been brought to the research site. Together with the University officials it encouraged individuals and the organisation to sponsor and mentor students and motivate them to form study groups for collaborative learning which included peer teaching/tutoring and resulted in an increase in the pass-rate of first-time registered students. The coordinating team negotiated the access to resources such as the libraries and study space solely for the distance education students on the research

site, including the availability of the school computer laboratory for basic computer training and access to the Internet as the research site did not have a Multi-Purpose Community Centre (MPCC).

The coordinating team members' views from a number of sessions highlight the role and responsibilities executed by the team. For instance, Mr Matsu, a committee member said:

Ha ho ka mokgwa oo re neng re ka fihlela ntho tse ngata tseo re difihletseng ha ene e se ka baka la batho ba kgethetsweng ho etalla pele morero oo wa setjhaba wa. Jwale re monyetleng re le setjhaba wa ho ba lenanehong la selemo la yunibesithi. (There was no way that we could have achieved so much if it was not the people who were chosen by the community to try to implement the tutor system on its behalf. Now our community is now a privileged community to be on the yearly university programme).

In the same vein, Mme Hlomuka added:

Re na le tshehetso ya baithuti mabapi le khanseling, mekgwa ya ho ithuta, boitokisetso bakeng sa dihlahlobo le boingodiso ba simesta. Dibaka tse ngata tse kgolo ho sa rona ha dina monyetla o jwalo. Leha re so ka re eba le tshehetso tse kang 'feisthofeis' dithutong tsedeng feela bana ba rona ba shebala ba kgontshitswe ho thusana le ho tshehetsana ka ho rutana le ho sebetsa mmoho. (We have counselling, study skills, examination preparation and registration session every semester for the students here. Many bigger towns than us do not have this privilege. Some of our students even though they do not have a face-to face tutorial for some subjects so far, but are empowered with skills such peer-teaching and collaborative learning skills.)

Mr Tsoang also reminded the coordinating team that:

Bana ba na le sebaka moo ba ithutelang teng motshehare le bosiu sekolong le laeboraring enngwe ya lehae. Haufinyane ba tla kgona ho ya ditlilaseng tsa ho sebedisa dikhomputha, ho sebedisa inthanete, ho nehelana le ho amohela di asaenmente ka mokgwa o tshepehang ntle le tefello. (They have the study space that is available during the day and night in our local school and the Library. Very soon they will be able to attend computer training skills course right

here in our town. They will soon be able to access Internet and submit and receive assignment electronically which is a free of charge and the most reliable service).

It was crucial for the community to identify the people or organisations to be involved in the establishment of the tutor system on the research site, and state what their involvement would mean to the project and achievement of its goals.

Firstly, the community identified the coordinating team and those 'who it was for', the people who were affected by project (Wadsworth, 1997). The project partners of the coordinating were local churches, schools and SGBs, local municipality manager/s, teachers, social workers, police, the district and provincial education department and Higher Education Institutions. Those outside networks, organisations, service providers and community-based structures had an interest in the project and were willing to contribute in some ways, if not necessarily directly involved in the decision-making processes (Munt, 2002:4).

Having a diverse stakeholder base was important as it reflected a "project reference and working group that effectively represented community interest" (Munt, 2002:4). This had positively influenced the buy-in and active participation of relevant stakeholders such as the University, local public schools and the public library. The involvement of such diverse groups made it possible to collect ideas and perceptions and pool resources such as school laboratories and classroom for study purposes (Schusler, Decker & Pfeffer, 2003:309–326). It also made it possible for other partners to be involved in mentoring and sponsoring of students and to offer workplace training opportunities, bursaries and loans for some of the students (Kramer, 2003).

4.6.2 The impact of the vision

A vision can be defined as a mental image that a leader evokes to portray an idealised future for an organisation (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999:345-373), and it is articulated to mobilise followers to pursue (Conger & Kanungo, 1988:78-97). According to Bogler and Nir (2001:135-144) it focuses the energy within the organisation and increases its effectiveness. Wang, Luxhoj and Johansen

(2004:735-744) argue that a shared vision provides vigour and focus to organisational learning, unites people around the image of the desired future and generates mutual commitment among the people (Senge, 1990:231-232). Some researchers, according to Yoeli and Berkvich (2010: 451-467), describe vision as an organisational compass that points in the direction the organisation should aim (Levy, 2000:5-20), and it includes organisational goals strategies for achieving them. According to Katz (1999:133-146), successful organisational vision establishes principles and values that guide the daily routine of the organisation and construct its meaning. Landau, Drori and Porras (2006:177-181) stress that vision plays an important role in creating distinct organisational identity by uniting members of the organisation and promoting their sense of commitment and belonging.

A vision is perceived as directing the organisation and its members to unified values and standards, as well as encouraging commitment at all levels of the organisation (Garcia, Llorens-Montes & Verdu-Jover, 2006:518-536). It functions as “glue” holding together different organisational units and activities (Katz, 1999:133-146), and enables every member of the organisation to integrate his or her desires and needs into the organisation’s goals and future development paths. It therefore plays an important role in increasing the motivation of the members (Yoeli & Berkvich, 2010:451-467), and a futuristic vision, worthy and attainable, pushes the organisation to excel and succeed better in the long term (Nanus, 1992:1-20). A compelling vision according to James and Lahti (2011:108-120) is capable of providing a sense of meaning to members of the organisation that motivates them to accept and implement the project’s goals.

The coordinating team of the effective tutor system and community of the research site had for the first time a vision that was accepted and collectively adopted as a compass with which the tutor system would be pursued. One member, Pastor said:

Re na le tjhebelopele bakeng sa thutha sistimi e entsweng ke rona le ba ratang ho ruta le ho ithuta. (We have our vision for the tutor system which was formulated by us and those who had versed interest in the learning and teaching).

This shows that the community was empowered for the first time after apartheid in that it independently envisioned what it wanted to be in relation to the education of its

youth. The community formulated a vision that would enable synergy of efforts of the participants and give it the impetus to face future challenges as they had learned that doing things together is more powerful than when individuals do things on their own. The issue of unity which is brought about by the vision was aptly stated by Tsoang:

Sena se nthutile hore ho ba le ponelopele e kopanetsweng ho na le matla a ho boelanya batho. Ponelopele e re kopantseng ho tea mohlala e bile ho rala le ho phethahatsa moralo wa thuthasistimi ya setjhaba e tshhetsang baithuti ba neng ba ke ke ba fumana tshetso ntle le yona. (This taught me that people are united by a common goal. The goal that united us for instance was to develop and implement a framework for community-based tutor system which aimed at supporting learners who otherwise would not have had that kind of support).

The affected members of the community have surpassed the university tutor system. For instance, in this case, it was the community members who initiated the establishment of the effective TS, determined its vision and mission, and decided on the approach it would take. This did not appear to be a top-down approach by which the top is the powerful higher education institution and the bottom is the powerless community members. The approach was PAR, marred by an excess of planning, reflection, implementation and re-planning meetings/sessions (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007:271-330). The cyclic and iterative processes of planning, implementation, and reflection are geared to achieving a common goal or vision. This is achievable when such vision is owned by the people (Helling, 2007:335-349). The shared vision compelled the participants to conduct situational analysis in an attempt to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that would enhance the effectiveness of the TS or hinder its progress. In this case, the purpose of the vision was to enhance the achievement of the vision for effective TS through a community-based approach.

4.6.3 The SWOT analysis for the framework

Through the use of SWOT analysis, the coordinating team could deal more effectively with the problems or challenges likely to emerge and look at the ways of converting the threats into opportunities, and off-setting the weaknesses against the

strengths (Johnson, Scholes & Sexty, 1989:345). It is designed to be used in the preliminary stages of decision-making and as a precursor to strategic planning (Srivastava *et al.*, 2005:531-537). Even though SWOT can also be performed by individuals, when used by groups it is effective in providing factors, major objectives, clarity and, therefore focus to all the discussions about strategy-formulation regarding any proposed community-based programme or project (Johnson *et al.*, 1989:345). This therefore means that in SWOT analysis, available resources and their potential utilisation are studied from the viewpoints of economic, ecological and social sustainability. Its main purpose in planning, however, is to obtain decision support for the choice of strategy to be followed (Srivastava *et al.*, 2005:531-537).

SWOT analysis is thus used for analysing internal and external environments in order to attain a systematic approach and support for a decisive situation. If used correctly it can provide a good basis for successful strategy formulation (Schmoldt & Peterson, 2000:62-75). It is also a basis for assessing core capabilities and competencies. The evidence for, and key to, change and success also provides a stimulus to participate in a group experience (Anselin, Meire & Anselin, 1989:215-229; Schmoldt & Peterson, 2000:62-75).

Through the joint analysis of the situation by the coordinating team it became obvious that there were facilities of which the community was not that could assist in the establishment of the effective tutor system through community-based approach. It is through the SWOT analysis that the community realised its strengths and weaknesses, thus it was able to match them in order to make informed decision about what to source from within and what to request externally which could assist it in the implementation of the tutor system. During one of the meetings convened by the coordinating team, Moutloatsi, a young persons in attendance said:

Ke hlokometse hore ho na le makgabane le dintho tse ngata tseo nna ke kgolwa le batho ba bang ba bangata, re ne re so hlokomele hore di teng re na le tsona. Ke hlokometse le hore le tseo ke neng ke nahana hore ha diyo, di ne di ka fumanwa ka mekgwa e itseng. (I realised that there were much resources and personal traits in our midst [that we had] and I suppose most of us were not aware of. I also noticed that even that which I thought was not available could

be acquired somehow. That gave me hope that the establishment of our vision was possible).

The sentiments expressed by Moutloatsi confirm that situational analysis helped the study to unearth critical features of the framework for the effective TS, resources the TS required, the resources and facilities that were made available and those that were yet to be sought. The situational analysis process was apparently an important learning exercise for many participants, including Moutloatsi. It can thus be said that the process of conducting SWOT analysis may have influenced some of the participants to continue their participation in the study as a result of the learning opportunity it offered the participants. This is also evident from the sentiments expressed by Maipato, one of the learners, who said:

Pele ho ketsahalo ena ya ho lekola, le ho hlopholla maemo, ke ne ke na le mohopolo o lerotho wa thuthasistimi ho re ke feela hoba le motho ya o rutang...ke hlokometsehore re hloka bathusi bahlwahlwa [tutor] le disebediswang tse hantle tse ka thusang ho ntlafatsa ho ithuta. (Before the process of situational analysis was done; I had a vague idea of the tutor system; that it is all about having somebody who would be teaching you... I realised that we needed the effective tutors and the suitable facilities that would enhance learning).

Maipato also commended the learning experience she acquired from or through the SWOT analysis processes, as evident from her improved idea or understanding of what tutor system was, that is, about providing not only a tutor but also support in other forms. The misconception about the tutor system that Maipato had before was apparently addressed in the process. It was important to note that her misconception formed part of her new idea/knowledge of a tutor system through a process of developing and implementing a framework for effective TS through community-based approach (Schusler, Decker & Pfeffer, 2003:309–326). This is noted with the conception that effective TS that is community-based and a tutor system as it was practiced tend to have *inter alia* different approaches, namely bottom-up and top-down respectively.

The member of the SGB of Bopanang High School said:

We received a letter from the district education department that gave us a permission to use our school as a satellite for its activities. This therefore tells us that we do have the support of the department but more importantly we could start thinking of establishing a Community Learning Centre in Bopanang High School.

It could be shown from the above data that through the processes of conducting situational analysis the study was able to reflect on the issues and realities pertinent to the development and implementation of the framework for the effective TS. For instance, the data provided had numerous inherent capabilities or personal traits as well as resources that were available to support the TS. These capabilities appeared served as opportunities and strengths for the enhancement of processes towards achieving the vision of effective TS. The other opportunities and strengths included the capable leadership of the coordinating team as well as such resources as the local school and public library that were availed (see chapter 3.3.5.2). The success with which the coordinating team managed to avert inherent power struggles and ideological differences may not be overemphasised (Bourdieu, 1989:14-25; Foucault, 1982:777-795). The coordinating team also led the study towards successfully prioritising and matching the activities of pertinence to an effective TS that is community-based.

4.6.4 Prioritisation and priorities

Prioritisation requires all critical stakeholders to negotiate the relative priority of requirements through a meeting in the same place at the same time (Park, Port & Boehm, 1999:560-563). It is important for stakeholders to participate in the process because stakeholder participation occurs when all individuals, organisations and groups whose lives are affected by TS development play at least some part in determining the nature of the developmental direction selected (Simpson, 2010:3-41).

Civic participation refers to the socially oriented individual's action for the production of a collective good (Dodescu, Hatos, 2004). The theme of civic participation can be found in the one regarding civil society, being complementary to political participation

of citizens. It is most often measured (Badescu, 2001; Uslaner, 2003; Voicu, 2006) as involvement in classical civil society forms, for instance NGOs. The associative rates are the most common indicator of civic participation, even if for the production of collective goods other forms and mechanisms can work as well. Collective actions, social movements as well as grassroots movements are aspects of the same theme, yet less operational.

According to Saveanu (2008:429-433), in order to stimulate the involvement of citizens there is needed a proper formal education which has to transmit all the important information for engagement (civic competencies, duties, legislation), complementary to family education and personal examples given by leaders of local initiatives, namely the promotion of civic values, social responsibility, and the creation of a civic consciousness. He adds that mass media can be an important factor in the process of social learning of active citizenship through dissemination of information regarding existent initiatives and information regarding decisions of local authorities, leading to awareness towards civic problems. Another aspect derived to some extent from this promotion is the increased awareness of local problems, the prioritisation of these problems and thus the increased identification of citizens with these problems which can be by mass media, websites, leaflets, public debates or personal communication.

There are numerous tools and techniques that can be used to prioritise the Delphi technique, Multi-voting Technique (MvT) and Nominal Group Technique (NGT) and Distributed Collaboration and Prioritisation Tool (DCPT) (Cline, 1998:1-3; Park *et al.*, 1999:560-563). Some of the principles of these techniques were used in the study to facilitate the processes of deciding on critical issues from the list of items identified by the participants during brain storming sessions. Firstly, the participants identified issues they considered critical in enhancing the development and implementation of the framework. The issues were listed but not debated so that an exhaustive list could be compiled. During the brainstorming session the participants were free to suggest and the coordinating team compiled the list, but it appeared messy, prompting one of the learners to enquire how the items were to be ordered. In response, Mr. Matsu recalled what participants did when they prioritised the items and issues raised during the brainstorming sessions:

Re ile ra hlopha dintlha tse tsamaellanang mmoho ka ho di lotomanya tlasa sehlopha se le seng. Ntho tse kang, laeborari, computa leb, sekolo kapa tlelase re ile ra di bitsa sebaka sa ho ithuta. (We placed the items and facilities with similar functions under the same class by listing them under the same main distinguishing name. Things like library, computer laboratory, school or classroom; we classified them under a common class of venue for learning/studying).

It is evident that after the brainstorming session the coordinating team facilitated a process of deciding on the main categories according to which the identified items were classified, as “under the same class”, which in this sense is described as a list of items performing the same or similar functions. This is explained further by Mutsi by giving an example in listing items of a class which became known as venues and accommodation for studying and learning. The other ‘classes’ which the participants agreed upon were recalled by Montsheng:

Re bile ra dumellana hore ka ha dintho tse ding ha di thulane, re ile ra re dihlopha tseo re dumellaneng ka tsona tsohle, jwaleka sebaka sa ho ithuta, tsa theknologi ho thusa ho ithuta, tse amang dithutara, re etse hore re di fihlella tsohle. (We even agreed that some of the things do not clash, we then said all those categories that we agreed upon, such as place/venue for studying, technology to support learning, issues pertaining to tutors, we should attend them all.) (Also see chapter 3 paragraph 3.3.7)

Ms. Montsheng reminded the coordinating team and other participants that the other categories that were agreed upon were issues that pertained to tutors, tutoring, venues for studying, technology to support learning, and strategies for learning. Also, the study had specifically attended to the immanent clashes that might have threatened the realisation of all its priorities. The coordinating team was transparent and opened up for support and contributions from the participants and other members of the public. This had helped the study to address the clashes effectively in that the workload was lessened and the activities were executed by the persons who had the requisite and relevant competencies, experience and skills. The other critical aspect of the prioritisation process was recalled by another coordinating team member. Mr Thabane:

Re bile ra re, tse na tsohle di boloke le ho hlompha maemo le dinako tse beilweng tse seng taolong ya rona leha di le morerong oo re leng ho oona. Jwaleka nako e beilweng ke di yunibesithe bakeng sa boingodiso, ho ngolwa ha dihlahlobo, le tse ding. (We also said that all these should be done in a manner that will keep and respect the conditions and time/periods that have already been set and which are not under the control of the coordinating team [study] whilst they are consistent with our purpose. These include the time/period for registration of students as decided upon by the University, writing of examinations and others).

According to Mr, Thabane, it is clear that the coordinating team respected and submitted to the programmes and schedules of the other affected social structures, such as the University. Thus the study's consideration of programmes and schedules of other prospective social partners was pivotal to the prioritisation process. The coordinating team members' respect for the roles and responsibilities of the University had strengthened the chances of their collaboration in the development and implementation of the framework for effective TS (see paragraph 4.6.1). It can thus be argued that the coordinating team members and other participants were empowered to the extent of gaining access to the University support of the envisaged effective TS (Biesta, 2010:39-59).

4.6.5 Collaborative planning

Collaborative planning, according to according to Innes and Booher (1999:412-423) is effective because it shows convergence, alignment and synergy of thoughts among participants. It also important to note that planning improves performance and facilitates decision-making. Collaborative planning generates commitment to commonly accepted objectives and fosters commitment to implementation (Margerum, 2002:179-193), bringing together major stakeholders to address controversial issues and building consensus rather than using majority rule (Healey, 1992:143-162; Innes & Booher, 1999:412-423). The collaborative planning by a wide range of stakeholders exposes complex, controversial and interrelated issues based on which the participants identify and commit to achieving mutually accepted objectives and goals (Julian, 1994:3-13; Selin & Chavez, 1995:189-195; Susskind &

Cruikshank, 1987). Through the processes of sharing information and interacting the participants generate new ideas and approaches that lead to creative solutions (Innes & Booher, 1999:9-26). This PAR-oriented approach is likely to achieve high-quality outcomes (Innes & Booher, 1999:412-423).

Consensus building processes are not only about producing agreements and plans but also about experimentation learning, change, and building shared meaning. Fisher and Ury (1981:1-72) write that although there are many kinds of activities that fall under the rubric of consensus building, they refer to an array of practices in which stakeholders, selected to represent different interests, come together for face-to-face, long-term dialogue to address a policy issue of common concern:

They seek consensus rather than use majority rule, and employ methods to assure that all are heard and respected and that discussions are based on stakeholder interest and not simply on arguments about predetermined positions.

Innes and Booher (1999:412-423) assert that consensus-building has the potential to break logjams created by intransigent position taking, to incorporate many interests, and to find solutions offering mutual gain. The participants bring to the dialogue the experiences, ideas, methods, and scenarios that they can imagine then jointly piece them together to create a strategy on which all can agree. The process itself is foremost one of learning, which transforms participants' previously held convictions and helps them to develop new shared meanings, purposes, and innovative approaches to otherwise intractable issues.

Modiehi highlighted the processes which the coordinating team facilitated with the participants to develop a collaborative plan for the development and implementation of the framework for effective TS. These highlights were given during one of the reflection sessions:

*Morero wa **rona** o moholo wa ho etsa foreimweke **re** o fihletse ka ho o roba ka diqonwana e leng dihlopha tsane tsa diporayorithi. Yaba **re** buisana le ho manolla hore na mehato kapa maano bakeng sa ho phethahatsa e nngwe le e nngwe ke afe. Ke thabisitswe ke boqhetseke le bokgoni **tseo re bileng le tsona** karolong ena. (Our main purpose of developing a framework was*

achieved by breaking it into chunks which were our priority areas. We then discussed and analysed strategies and activities for achieving each of the priority areas. I was thrilled by the excellent manner and the capacity which the participants had / displayed in this respect).

In the same vein, Mme Mompoti emphasised that:

Re entse moralo bakeng sa e nngwe le enngwe ya dintlha tseo re di lotomantseng, ra hlwayana ka ho dumellana ka bao ba ka phethahatsang ntlha ka nngwe, ra ba ra akanya dinako tsa tsona, ra dumellana le ka hore na ho hlokehang hore re fihlele dintlha tsa rona. (We developed a plan for each of the priority areas we agreed upon, we delegated / deployed responsible persons through consensus [for each activity and or priority area] taking cognisance of what was needed to achieve our priority areas).

The data provided above clearly shows and confirms that the collaborative plan of the framework for the TS evolved from the concerted efforts of the participants and members of the community. This is evident in the use of language that tended to include others by both Modiehi and Mme Mompoti. For instance, plural pronouns which they used included 'we' ('re' and 'ra') as well as phrases such as '...by **those who** can...' (...ka bao ba ka...) and '...which we had...' (tseo re bileng le tsona). Modiehi, had owned up even the competencies which she did not necessarily possess personally. These are clear from Modiehi's expression of appreciation of the excellent manner in which they apparently cooperated with the diverse participants when drawing up the plan. She also appreciated the capacity which they had in respect of the development of the framework. These could not have happened without the mutual respect and trust that prevailed amongst the participants (Lander, Purvis, McCray & Leigh, 2004:509-528). Also it appeared that the participants would not have contributed with their skills freely if they did not buy in and owned up to the vision of developing a framework for CBTS (Leach & Sabatier, 2005: 223–258; Williams & Ronan, 2013:22).

4.6.6 The importance of policy provision

The concept 'policy', is defined by the South Africa Pocket Oxford English Dictionary 3rd Ed (2002: 688), as a course of action adopted or proposed by an organization or person. According to Taylor, Rizv, Lingard, & Henry, (2013:1-197) policy means 'plan of action' or 'statement of aims of ideas'. In everyday language the word may refer to the promises made to ourselves. Private sector policies or activities are largely motivated by profit, while public sector policies exist to ensure that education occurs in the public interest (Anyon, 2014:1-223; Taylor *et al.*, 2013:1-197). Public policies in education thus have two functions: to provide an account of those cultural norms considered by the state as desirable in education; and to institute a mechanism of accountability against which student and teacher performance can be measured. Educational policies do not emerge in a vacuum but reflect compromises between competing interests of capitalism on the one hand and the oppositional interest of various social movements on the other. Recent educational policy initiatives may thus be viewed as responses to the struggle over particular constructions of social, political, economic and cultural changes. Taylor *et al.* (2013:3-5) note that people are no longer prepared to leave policy-making to politicians and bureaucrats. They wish to be involved in the steering of policy processes. Powerful social movements have developed over the past decades which demand democratic engagement in policy processes. These movements form alliances to pressure systems and organisations to change ensure that policymakers do not ignore their voice (Cooper, Levin, & Campbell, 2009:159-171; Hogwood, 1983:1): "Policies are rarely written on tabula rasa but rather on a well-occupied and even crowded tablet of existing laws, organisations and clients" (Hogwood, 1983:1)

It is against this background that having a policy that supports the tutor system is crucial because it gives the coordinating team a foundation, guideline and direction for the implementation of the effective tutor system through a community-based approach (Deb, 2012:3; Jegede, 2002; Ajadi *et al.*, 2008:61-70). Policy acknowledges the importance of the universities supporting students who are off-campus and expanding their operations. This therefore means that the coordinating team for the TS is indirectly given the mandate to establish the effective tutor system on the research site.

Even the developing countries such as RSA, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Nigeria are trying to improve their provision of educational opportunities and student support through distance education by means of information technology. These countries have policies that support the provision of education to their citizens though they are still constrained by budgetary constraints (Benza *et al.*, 1-7; Deb, 2012:3; Jegede, 2002; Ajadi *et al.*, 2008:61-70; Ngara & Ngwarai, 2013:42-54, SADC, 2006:1-29). One of the major objectives of Nigerian National Policy on Education, according to Ali (1999:1-6), was the provision of equal educational opportunities to all citizens at different levels of education. This policy also encouraged the provision of higher education by tertiary institutions in which there was an increase in the number of universities offering distance learning and the number of undergraduate distance learning programmes offered between 1982 to 1997. The same can be said about RSA, where the provision of higher education is supported by a white paper for post-school education and training (DHET, 2013:1-75).

It is therefore critical to note that educational policy-making in particular is not only the prerogative of the bureaucrats in the democratic countries but also a right of the people on the ground who want their voices to be heard during that process. Bullock (2001:25) thus wrote that good policy-making depends on high quality information and evidence. Modern policy-making calls for the need to improve the organization's capacity to make use of evidence, and the need to improve the accessibility of evidence available to policymakers, and that other powerful social movements demand democratic engagement in policy-making processes (Anyon, 2014:1-223; Hogwood, 1983:1; Taylor *et al.*, 2013:3-5).

Community engagement is one of the important components of establishing the effective tutor system through a community-based approach (DHET, 2013:39) and has become a part of the work of universities in South Africa. The forms of community engagement that emerge in South Africa are socially responsive research, partnerships with civil society organisations, and formal learning programmes that engage students in community work as a formal part of their academic programmes.

Mme Mponeng said:

Nna ke fumane morolo le ho mamella ho nka karolo ke ho tseba hore molao o kgothaletsa phumantsho ya menyetla ya thuto ka ho leka-lekana maemong a fapaneng. Ka utlwisisa feela hore ho hlokeha ke eme ka maoto ke kenye letsoho bakeng sa rona hae mona. (My enthusiasm and longer stay with the study was as a result of the information I got that the policy encourages provision of educational opportunities equitably. I understood that as compelling on my part to stand on my feet and extend my hand for all of us here at home).

The effect that the policy had on Mme Mponeng had been significant in that her knowledge of the policy on equitable access to education compelled her to stay on the project longer. The knowledge of policy that Mme Mponeng received through the TS spurred her to contribute meaningfully to the development of her community. Her contribution was in the form of her efforts, skills and knowledge towards the development and implementation of a framework for the effective TS that is driven by the community-based approach. It appeared that Mme Mponeng derived her strength and power to be stern from the policy that supported the equitable provision of educational facilities. It could be argued that she considered herself as having had the same responsibility as the persons who may have been employed and appointed to oversee the implementation of laws of the country.

In the same vein, Mr Thaba reflected on the agreements the TS coordinating team facilitated the development of framework in order to harmonise the efforts of the parties involved (Björkman & Svenson, 2007:12). One such agreement related to the priority on the venues for study purposes for the TS. In this regard Mr Thaba, who was also a member of the SGB of the school affected in the agreement, said:

Tumellano eo re e entseng le sekolo e ile ya re thusa ho fokotsa kgula-kgulano e neng e ka ba teng pakeng tsa rona TS le sekolo. Hape ho bile bo bebe ho SGB ya sekolo ho ananela tshebetso mmoho ya rona ka ha molao wa naha le pholisi ya sekolo di kgothaletsa kopano e kang ena ya rona. (The agreement entered into between the school and us [the TS] helped us to curb possible conflict that might occur between us. Again it became easy for the SGB to accept to collaborate with the TS because the law and the school policy were consistent with the working together as was in our case.)

According to Mr Thaba, a mutually agreed upon policy has the capacity to curb potentially disruptive conflicts which may be embedded in the diverse beliefs, cultures and ideologies of the affected persons. The concept '*kgula-kgulano*' translates as 'pulling and be pulled' as in the case of two people holding onto an object which they both wish to own. In this situation there is no talk of sharing or collaborative use of the object that is being pulled. The contestants hold tightly to the object to the extent that the stronger one or the most powerful ends up pulling the object with his or her opponent. Thus, Mr Thaba is understood as saying the policy or agreement between the TS's coordinating team and the school minimised the chances of the prevalence of contestations. It can thus be said that the agreements contributed towards levelling of inherent power relation struggles. The capacity of the policy to bring about harmony is evident in the statements by both Thaba and Mponeng (Sayed, 2002:35-46).

4.6.7 Effects of the tutor training

Tutor training activities are a process of continuous improvement of tutor-specific competencies or skills in areas such as academic support, guidance and administrative support (Marchais & Chaput, 1997:66-73; O'Rourke, 2004:54; Ray & Barnett, 2009:1898-1902). These skills and competencies are important for the tutors to acquire because through them the tutor is able to help learners develop confidence, acquire knowledge, enhance learning skills, and find ways to resolve content, logistical or administrative issues that may impede their learning (Marchais & Chaput, 1997:66-73; O'Rourke, 2004:54). High-quality training for tutors, according to Bixby *et al.* (2011:34), is one of the key elements that contribute to the success of the tutor system mainly because the tutors receive structured, comprehensive training as well as continuing support and feedback. It is therefore essential for a tutorial programme to provide an initial training that covers an introduction to the curriculum and fundamental tutoring strategies and skills (Bixby *et al.*, 2011:34; Schultz & Mueller, 2007:2).

According to Schultz and Mueller (2007:2), less training is needed in highly structured programmes that use step-by-step materials and emphasises basic skills, whereas more training is needed in programmes of higher level activities and require

tutors to use informed judgement. Some training programmes require the skills and prior knowledge of the tutor and provide training to support diverse student needs (Bixby *et al.*, 2011:34; Schultz & Meuller, 2007:2). Moss, Swartz, Obeidallah, Stewart & Greene (2001:3) posit that successful tutor training programmes offer training prior to and during the course of tutoring. Training topics should be shaped by the changing needs of students and also by the evolving skills of the tutors who work with them (Bixby *et al.*, 2011:34; Moss *et al.*; Schultz & Meuller, 2007:2). Regular meetings between supervisors and tutors can provide the information needed to advise the frequency and content of continuous training.

In addition to formal training sessions, according to Bixby *et al.*, (2011:34), workshops and group meetings are valuable ways to share information and encourage discussion and problem-solving among tutors. Regular site visits and tutoring session observations by supervisors and fellow tutors can be helpful ways to provide feedback on skills development (Bixby *et al.*, 2011:34; Koralek & Collins, 1997; O'Rourke, 2004:33-55).

4.6.8 The effects of learner support for effective tutor system

Hodgson (1986:56-61) observed that in order to effectively analyse teaching and learning experience it is through the analysis of the learner support system because it contributes to success of the course, as do the learning materials. Dillon, Gunawardena and Parker (1992:29-45) and Rae (1989) noted that the support systems are developed with the recognition that the student needs help, that learners will become competent and self-confident in learning, whilst social interactions and self-evaluation are critical. This is supported by Garrison and Baynton (1987:7), for whom learner support comprises the resources that learners can access in order to carry out the learning process. These resources could be either human or non-human to guide and facilitate educational transactions. In a study conducted by Fast (1995:8) on instruction the remote site students disliked the lack of opportunity to interact one-on-one with their instructor or tutors. Kamau (2007:6) asserts:

Without an effective learner support services system that provides on-site face-to-face tutorials, timely feedback on student performance and access to library services, student achievement will inevitably be undermined and dropout rates and procrastination will increase, while the advantages of distance education including cost effectiveness, will be whittled away.

According to Floyd and Casey-Powell (2004:55-64), during the learner support phase, students learn self-development strategies so that they can accept responsibility for developing their own skills. They add that the key support services during the learner support phase are academic advice, instructional support and tutoring, library and bookstore services, disability services, and networking. In a study conducted by Ukpo (2005:253-261), Nigeria showed that failure rate was largely attributable to receiving study material late and engagement of students in other economic activities. The most important factor behind this failure rate was poor-quality learner support services, especially where the study centres are under-resourced and overstretched. This sentiment was corroborated by Qakisa-Makoe (2005:44-61), who points out that the main purpose of supporting learners is to provide an environment that improves students' commitment and motivation to learn. This is particularly relevant in South Africa where the National Plan for Higher Education (2001) states that higher education institutions must increase access to disadvantaged people in order to redress past inequalities.

The feedback on learner support obtained from the learners during one of the reflective sessions shows that the effective TS needs to be sustained. One of the learners, Dineo confided to the meeting:

Tsatsing la ho qetela la boingodiso, ke ne ke na le tjhelete e lekaneng ho ingodisetsa di mojulu tse nne tseo ke neng ke batla ho di etsa lemong se hlahlamang. Ke ne ke se na tjhelete ya transpoto le dijo tsa tseleng ho ya senthareng e haufi. Ke bile lehlohonolo ka hore boingodiso bo etsetswe hae mona hona mona sekolong se re ballang ho sona. (On the last day of registration, I had the money that was enough to register to study four modules in the following academic year. I did not have money for transport and provision/food to the nearest centre where I could register. I was fortunate to

have had registration services brought to our area through the efforts of the TS coordinating team).

Five other learners also indicated having been in similar situations, saying they were happy to have spent the little money they had on tuition rather than on travelling and subsistence. Dineo and other learners in a situation similar to hers had benefitted optimally from the registration initiatives of the effective TS that is community-based. They spent the little money they had on what can be referred to as the main issue for them, namely learning. It can be argued that by bringing the services closer to the learners their economic situations were enhanced in kind. It could also be demonstrated that the act of bringing registration services closer shortened the learners' study periods. For instance, a programme that required 20 modules and which a learner could complete in ten years when he or she took and passed two modules per annum, could then be completed in five years at a rate of four modules per annum.

It could also be argued that the University staff members were somehow impelled to 'depower' to come to a rural town to register the learners, including those from predominantly economically disadvantaged families (Larson, & Murray, 2008:175-196). The University staff had the administrative power travelled to the remote and rural place, and left their comfortable spaces of employment to engage and assist learners who had been marginalised (Jones, Coetzee, Bailey & Wickham, 2008).

Another learner, Pontsho commended the TS for having been able to secure the University's orientation services on site:

Ke kgothaditswe haholo ke ho fumana tlhakisetso ka tsa university leha re ne re se khempaseng ke ithutile ho lekane seatla ka hore tshebeletso tsa laeborari nka di fumana jwang ke ntse ke le mona, mmoho le di lektjhara tse fapaneng. (I was encouraged by the clarifications about the University even if we were not on campus I learnt enough about the library services and how to access them whilst still here, I also learnt how to contact the lecturers)

According to Pontsho, to be oriented on the University services and to be shown some of the sections of the University has a motivational effect. This is the case because she actually experienced that motivation. The orientation was in the form of

mobile pictures or DVDs and orientated the learners in order for them not to struggle when visiting the campus of the concerned university. This experience confirmed that some services that the University provided learners could still be provided effectively without learners having to travel to the campus. The universities are thus challenged to be public institutions that engage with the public they purport to serve (DHET, 2013:1-75).

Nnuku also reflected on the services they were provided as learners and which they found to have been helpful. Nnuku's reflection was on the study methods and learning strategies sessions organised for them by the University. That was part of what was referred to as the post-registration orientation

Re rutuwe ho ithlopha ka dihlopha tsa ho ithuta le ho rutana e ntse e le rona, ra ba ra elelliswa hore re ka itokisetsa di asaenmente le dihlahlobo ka mekgwa e jwang. (We were taught to organise ourselves in study teams and to teach each other, we were even advised on how to prepare for the writing of assignments and examinations).

The evidence given by Nnuku, attests to the success of collaborative learning. According to Nnuku the learners were helped to organise study teams in which they also assumed the functions of tutoring one another (peer tutoring) instead of peer teaching (Barron, & Foot, 2006:74-185; Heron, Villareal, Yao, Christianson & Heron, 2006:27-45). It could further be shown that peer tutoring was imbued with power relations struggles because in peer tutoring the students who are more advanced are tutoring those who at a lower level. The less assertive and more reserved learners needed to be motivated to participate as equals with those who may have derived their powerful status from diverse sources, such as being at a higher level than their peers. The training of learners into peer tutoring processes should therefore be considerate of issues of power relations differences, ideological and cultural differences among the learners. Peer teaching was instead encouraged on the research site because the students who were on the same level and doing similar modules were teaching each other and this levelled the power imbalances among the students. This was one of the ways in which students were motivated to work effectively with other fellow students for collaborative problem solving, acquire critical and creative thinking skills, organise and manage themselves and their activities

(Rochelle & Teasely, 1995:69-97; SAQA, 2001) and develop reciprocity and cooperation among themselves (Chickering, 1987:1-7).

4.6.9 The significance of appropriate facilities, resources/resources and media

Dillon *et al.* (1992) point out that the resources directly related to learning include access to courses and interaction, whilst Benza *et al.* (1999:1-7) observed that in order for the Zimbabwe Open University to provide the students with high quality university education the need for good and sound infrastructure and appropriate facilities were paramount. This issue is also emphasised by the DHET (2012:1-33), for which sharing of facilities by the institutions of higher learning was encouraged. Use of facilities such as local school buildings for provision and expansion of educational opportunities was also supported (DHET, 2012:1-33).

On the research site the initial community meetings and students' information sessions were conducted in a small local Dutch Reformed Church because of the unavailability of the community hall. When this issue was raised in one of the initial meetings, the community members were enraged and subsequently instructed a few of its members to inform the municipal manager that the community hall belonged to the community and therefore should be made available to the community for their initiatives: "*Holo ena keya sechaba*" (This Hall belongs to the community).

This was communicated to the manager who complied without any resistance because the community's voice was clearly articulated to him. The political intolerance that was initially cited as the basis for refusing the community to access the community hall was not mentioned after that because all sectors of the community, including members of different political parties, were represented in the delegation sent to the municipal manager. The removal of barriers to the use of the community facilities and services was important for the tutor system driven through community-based approach. Nettles (1991:379) asserts that community involvement entails the allocation of resources in order to eliminate disadvantages in students' access to resources.

Mr Thabana reflected on the moment when the underutilised community hall could not be made available for use by the partisans and the TS's coordinating team. An investigation of the matter by the participants revealed the cause as having been the different party political affiliations of some or one of the participants and those of some or one manager responsible for safe keeping of the public hall. The participants in the study decided to send a delegation comprising members who represented various sectors of the community to the manager to explain the situation with the TS. Mr Thabana reflected:

Re ile ra kgona ho susumetsa motsamaisi hore a se eme tseleng ya ntshetsopele ya setjhaba ka ho hana ka thepa ya setjhaba e sebediswang molemong wa setjhaba. Baemedi ba TS ba ile ba kgona ho tshwaetsa motsamaisi ho fetola kutlwisiso le ntlhakemo ya hae ho ikokobeletsa setjhaba. (We were able to influence the manager not to stand in the way against development of the community by refusing to release public resource for public good. The representatives of the TS were able to influence the manager to change his understanding and stance against the use of the community hall).

The participants in the development and implementation of the framework for the TS had empowered themselves with the relevant knowledge. The passion they had for their project bestowed in them the confidence to confront barriers and hindrances in their way. For instance, they visited the manager at the local municipality responsible for the public hall, to ask him to release the hall for purposes of conducting activities for the TS. The understanding of the participants of the TS was that the manager had no power to deny community members use of its own property, namely the community hall, for their own good.

The problem of being denied access to the public hall had not barred the coordinating team members and the participants from contacting other community structures for help, as stated by Mrs Moletsane:

Re ile ra kopa e nngwe ya dikereke tsa lehae mme ya re thusa nakong eo re ntseng re qhwebishana le ho sebedisa holo ya setjhaba. Re sebedisitse kereke eo ho tshwarela dikopano tsa rona qalong. (We asked one of the local churches to help us at a time of our struggle against being denied access to

use the community hall. We used the church building as a venue where we held our initial public meetings).

The concept used by Mrs Moletsane, '*qhwebishana*' indicates a conflict of two or more individuals or parties in disagreement. In such situations the parties tend to passionately defend their respective stances or positions about the matter at hand. In this instance, the participants in the development of the effective TS have transcended the conflict and sought support from other community structures. They arranged time during which they dealt with the issue effectively and successfully, as explained by Mr Thabana.

The conflict between in the TS and the responsible manager for the community hall was resolved amicably. The parties to the conflict realised the importance of being respectful of each other and the community they represented, evidenced by both the manager and the TS team members showing remorse in admitting that they might have misunderstood each other. The community hall was subsequently released for use by the TS team, as evident in Mr Thabane's reflection of the matter:

Motsamaisi ya ikarabelang holong ya setjhaba o ile a kopa tshwarelo, mme le rona ra ikoba ra re a re tshwarele re ne re sa lwane. Mme a ba a tshepisa hore o tla hlophisa hore holo e fumanehe ka nako tsohle ha re e hloka, feela re hlophisetseng tshebediso ya yona mmoho le ditho tse ding jwaleka ba di penshene. (The manager apologised to the TS members and we also became humble and brought to his attention that we were not fighting. He then promised to avail the hall to us whenever we needed to use it, however we were to organise for the use of the hall by all stakeholders [in a manner that will minimise clashes and conflicts]).

It was apparent that the parties involved in the use of the community hall needed to work together to develop a schedule of dates on which they would use it. Those already identified were the local municipality, the Department of Social Development and the TS team. The other regular users of the community hall were to be identified and invited to be engaged in the development of the schedule of dates and the agreement of use. Also to be noted from the data given by Mr Thabane above is the effective manner in which the parties' humility and mutual respect helped to level off the power relations struggles among them. It would also appear that had the parties

not observed these values they would have not successfully addressed their conflict (Mahlomaholo, 2009:224-237; Hickling-Hudson, 2006:201-218). The Pastor reminded the meeting that the hall was to be used mainly as an examination centre and for orientation and registration sessions. The majority of the learners who registered with the University were closer to this community hall, whilst their current examination centre was too distant. They had to walk relatively long distances to go to write examinations and transport was expensive.

The coordinating team together with the researcher negotiated with the University's Examination Section and the Provincial Library Directorate of the Free State Department of Sports, Arts and Culture to use the local Library Hall as a new examination centre. Permission was then granted by the Examination Section to relocate the examination centre after the Provincial Library Directorate gave permission to use the library hall. The University was requested to supply the Library with tables and chairs. Although there was some resistance by the local Chief-examiner and other white students to move the new venue, citing their concern regarding their safety in the township, they were nevertheless encouraged to comply.

The Chief Invigilator, ethnically White, was more concerned about the safety (of Whites) when the examination centre moved to the new venue (in the residential area for Blacks). The Chief invigilator was reported to have indicated that, "our cars and our lives will not be safe in the township, with "our" referring to Whites. This was a typical manifestation of the effects of apartheid which racially divided society on the much desired harmony for the implementation of effective TS (Moodley & Adam, 2000:51-69). This meant that Whites felt comfortable only if those services were offered in their neighbourhoods. The Chief Invigilator seemed to have no trust on the black people (Moodley & Adam, 2000:51-69). They felt threatened to move to the township for the examination even though the majority of University students on the research site were Black. That Examination centre was relocated to the township Library and there were no incidents of intimidation or violence reported since.

The Bopanang High School Principal and the SGB freely allocated a classroom to be used specifically by local University students daily during school hours until the evening for study purposes. Such a gesture by that school made it possible for students to have a quiet and suitable place to study and hold group discussions. The

Library, on the other hand, also made available its study space and the Internet connected computers to be used by the community and students. Those computers were used to access the Internet and to submit assignments provided the students made prior bookings in order to use them. The Principal of this school said:

As a school we feel that we have to contribute to the upliftment of this community by allocating a classroom that will be used daily by these students for study purposes.

4.6.10 Monitoring and reflection

Monitoring is a type of evaluation performed while a project is being implemented, with the aim of improving the design and functioning while in action and an internal project activity designed to provide constant feedback on the progress of the project, the problems it is facing, and the efficiency with which it is being implemented (Bamberger & Hewitt, 1986:1-7). Participatory monitoring, on the other hand, involves local beneficiaries in measuring, recording, collecting, processing and communicating information to assist local development project extension workers and local group members in decision-making (McDonald & Aid, 2012:1-13). Monitoring ensures that inputs are ready in time, work plans are followed closely, adjustments made and corrective action taken as and when necessary. The people who need to know are kept informed, constraints and bottlenecks are found, and resources are used efficiently.

An evaluation studies the outcomes of a project with the aim of informing the design of the future projects, whilst evaluation is mainly used to help in the selection and design of future projects:

Evaluation studies can assess the extent to which the project produced the intended impacts and the distribution of the benefits between different groups, and can evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the project as compared with other options (Bamberger & Hewitt, 1986:1-7).

Participatory evaluation helps in adjusting and redefining objectives, reorganising institutional arrangements and re-allocating resources as necessary (McDonal & Aid,

2012:1-13). A monitoring and evaluation system allows continuous surveillance in order to assess the local development project's impact on intended beneficiaries.

According to Tedano, Sajous, Mayor, Tarou, Bakuzakundi, Neighbor, Ryan, and Sani (2002:1-48), involving local people in project evaluation is one of the learning objectives of participatory management. Apart from the project's impact on the lives of the people, monitoring is also worthwhile to evaluate attitudinal changes in the local community about their role and sense of responsibility (Fernandez-Gimenez, Ballard & Sturtevant, 2008:1-22). It is also critical to evaluate participants' confidence in their ability to undertake new activities and the extent to which they take on participation and community responsibilities (Fernandez-Gimenez *et al.*, 2005b:89-92; Kusel *et al.*, 2000).

Ostrom (1997:153-181), Adger (2003:387-404), Leach and Sabatier (2005:223-258) observe that monitoring provides an opportunity for the project implementation committee to assess deficiencies in the project design, if objectives and work plan were realistic, if local funding was adequate and whether the project was actually owned by the people. Answers to these questions indicate future precautions and modifications in the method and approach. This in itself is an achievement in capacity building at the local level (Shediac-Rizkallah & Bone, 1998:87-108).

Tedano *et al.* (2002:1-48) write that if communities cannot critically re-assess their development one cannot say that they have truly facilitated their 'empowerment', thus it is important for the community or the coordinating team to set their own community development goals and to achieve them. Thus, the Moré proverb of Burkina Faso: "The one who sleeps on a borrowed mat should realise that he is sleeping on cold, cold ground". Tedano *et al.* (2002:1-48) defined the community-based monitoring and evaluation as: "Monitoring and evaluation of community development by an interested community, so that the community can make independent choice about its own development."

Community-based monitoring is not formal monitoring and evaluation that aims to make a statement about the impact of the effective tutor system, but rather a tool for building communities' capacity to direct their development. It is therefore evident from the above that for the effective tutor system to be successful, monitoring and evaluation must make certain that the goals that were set and developed are

achieved. Monitoring the strategic plan was mainly to make sure that the establishment of the effective tutor system would go as planned and within the timeframes jointly set by the coordinating team. The feedback that was received from the task teams constantly reminded the team where the project was and what to do when it encountered challenges. The meetings of the coordinating team considered the plan and reflected on each item, activity and resources allocated as to the extent to which they assisted and or derailed the achievement of the objectives of the study. The plan was adjusted every time feedback was given or not given, in order to enhance the achievement of the activities on the plan.

That was why the issue of political intolerance was solved so fast when it was obvious that it would derail the whole project. It is evident that the team knew what it needed to achieve when it approached the SGB of Tlholo High School regarding the computer laboratory and explained its importance not only for the benefit of the school but also for the entire community. During the one meeting which reflected on the plan for the development of the framework for TS, Mr Thabane indicated that:

Dintlha tse neng di hloka hore di etsuwe re di entse ka nako hobane re ne re na le moralo oo re neng re sa rate ha o ka sitiseha. Re entse tsohle ka tsela e entseng hore batho ba utlwisise hore re ne re se dipoho empa re le batho ba ikemiseditseng ho sebeletsa setjhaba. (Issues that needed to be addressed in the community were tackled timely because we had a plan therefore we did not want it to be derailed. We did all these in a way that made the people understand that we were not bullies but people who were determined to make a positive contribution in our community).

Mr Thabana had been aware of the principles that underpinned the deliberations of the TS. The claim that “we were not bullies” indicates that the members of the coordinating team did not suppress the views of the other participants (Margerum, 2002:237-253). It would appear that the members did however act decisively in their determination to achieve what they were mandated to achieve. It is apparent that the team members’ decisive actions were considerate of the understanding of the participants. The coordinating team members had been successful in what they were doing and that could be related to their focus on the objectives and/or the plan which was continually reviewed and readjusted in conjunction with the participants. This

showed that the TS coordinating team members maintained their respect for and relationship of trust with the other participants (Leach, & Sabatier, 2005:223–258; Lewicki, & Bunker, 1996:114-139).

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has focused on analysis of data collected in relation to the development and implementation of the framework for community-based tutor system. The socio-cognitive model of Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis was used to analyse data. The texts were analysed and their meanings embedded therein were analysed in relation to power, cultural and historical imperatives.

The chapter firstly analysed the data relating to the challenges facing the tutor system on the research site and thereafter possible solutions. The components of the solution of the implementation of the tutor system were identified, including conditions conducive to the successful formulation and implementation of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of tutor system and the inherent risks and threats that could make it impossible for the framework to be implemented and executed successfully.

The next chapter discusses guidelines or the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches.

CHAPTER 5

THE FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE TUTOR SYSTEM

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study seeks to formulate a framework for the enhancement of the effectiveness of a tutor system through community-based approaches at a distance education institution. This chapter presents the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system used on the research site. It describes the actions and processes followed to formulate an effective tutor system through community-based approach on the research site from the initial phase of gaining entry through to the planning and implementation phases of the framework. The conceptualisation of the framework occurred during the initial entry phase, when the current conditions on the research site were articulated by the affected stakeholders (the students) and later by the greater participation of other stakeholders in the community who were invited to further brainstorm the issue at hand. It is therefore during this initial entry phase that the preparation for the framework was initiated and the coordinating team selected.

The planning phase in this chapter discusses how the framework was put into practice through a series of events and activities in which situational and contextual analysis was conducted in order to advance the objectives of the study. It is in this phase that setting of priorities, creation of vision, formation of task teams and collaborative planning for the formulation of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor systems were discussed. It is important to note that these processes were aligned to the principles of Critical Emancipatory Research (CER) and Participatory Action Research (PAR) which encourage the engagement of the affected participants from the initial gaining entry phase, planning, implementation and evaluation and monitoring phases.

Lastly, the chapter discusses the implementation phase when delivery plans and strategic plans were executed by the coordinating team through the formation of the tasks teams and how possible solutions to the identified problems were drawn up, including setting the way to monitor the strategic plan. It will conclude with the

formulation of the framework to enhance the effectiveness the tutor system through the community-based approach.

5.2 GAINING ENTRY

It is during the project identification and preparation or gaining entry that identification and validation of needs are fully discussed and interacted with (Reed, 2008:2417-2431; Munt, 2002:1-5). It is at this stage where the presence of the key informants is important, mainly because they are the ones who have more knowledge about the problem at hand and who could initiate and make it possible for the research team to gain access to the research site. Vollman, Anderson and McFarlane (2004:129) assert in par 3.3.1 that key informants in a community have much to offer a research team because they have in-depth knowledge about their status quo and therefore could provide invaluable information more than any other method to the team. It at this stage that conceptualisation of the project takes place.

Gaining entry in this study began when the local distance education students on the research site approached the study coordinator about the challenges that they experienced with regards to the limited and ineffective student support on the research site. They were mainly concerned with the lack of effective academic support such as the tutor system and mentioned other student support activities, such as counselling, orientation of students, study skills and administrative support. They indicated that they felt marginalised and isolated because they were staying in a remote semi-rural area where there were no other opportunities to further their studies, therefore the only option for them was to study through distance learning. They indicated that they struggled with their distance education studies because there was no assistance provided for them by institution of higher learning through which they studied. They also indicated that the students who lived in the vicinity of the regional centres provided by the institution for which the study coordinator was employed were enjoying a variety of support services, including a tutorial support system.

5.2.1 Building trust for open communication

The notion of trust generally is associated with one party having confidence in another and this often implies some degree of alignment between relevant value systems (Blois, 1999:197; Costigan, Ilter, & Berman, 1998:3-18). Trust contributes to the ability of the team members to work collaboratively (Costigan *et al.*, 1998:3-18) and it is necessary for cooperation, which is in turn the social lubricant that allows autonomous but interdependent group members to achieve common goals (Ring & Van de Ven, 1992:483-498) among the stakeholders in the community-based project such as this one. The higher order of trust is identification-based which is developed according when one party has fully internalised the other's preferences (Shapiro, Sheppard & Cheraskin, 1992:365-377). It therefore means trust exists because the parties effectively understand and appreciate the other's wants, and this mutual understanding is developed to the point that each can effectively act for the other (Lander, Purvis, McCray & Leigh, 2004:509-528).

That the students approached me without fear of rejection and confidence that I would listen made me realise that they had trust in me. As the head of facilitation of learning in the region, I realised that it took courage on their part to raise their concerns to the University by approaching me. I therefore listened attentively to their challenges of lack of support and the frustrations they came across in trying to obtain tutorial support and access to other student support services. I asked them whether it was possible to have another meeting in which other students could be invited to voice their concerns. They volunteered to organise a meeting in their area and I promised to attend it personally. My willingness to meet other students in their area and my request to set the date on which we could meet further indicated to them that I trusted them, therefore it built mutual confidence and trust.

We exchanged contact numbers and communicated about the developments with regards to their organising of the meeting. I believe those telephone interaction showed them how serious and honest I was in meeting the entire student body in that area. I believe this enhanced trust between us, which according to Liwick and Bunker (1996:114-139) and Diallo and Thuillier (2005:237-252) is the lowest form of trust, referred to as 'deterrence-based trust'. This form of trust exists when both parties can be trusted to keep their word.

On the day of the meeting I travelled together with a colleague to attend the meeting which was organised by the students in their township on the date and time decided by them. In this meeting different experiences of students with regards to the lack of tutorial support in their area were strongly and openly voiced out, without fear (see par. 4.2.8 and 4.2.9), because the students had confidence that I also sympathised with their plight and the challenges. In this meeting communication was frank and their views were not taken for granted because we agreed that there was a need for a scribe to take notes of the proceedings. One of the students volunteered to take notes which were later used as the assessment data about all the issues that were raised. My colleague also recorded the discussion by taking notes. Some of the issues raised were socio-economic issues that affected the students and the entire community. It was against such deliberations that another meeting was suggested in which other stakeholders, community-based organisations and other interested people in the community would be invited to discuss the lack of tutor system and other related issues that affected teaching and learning on the research site. This was decided because the students felt that many people in the community, especially parents and other out-of-school youths who were not furthering their studies would benefit. Most did not have information regarding the distance education provisioning that was offered by the institutions or how some of the related socio-economic challenges could be addressed.

Diallo and Thuiller (2005:237-252) write that trust speeds up the negotiation process and in most cases cuts transaction costs, thus the students in this case organised the community voluntarily because trust is a prerequisite for autonomy. The students voluntarily and enthusiastically organised the broader community meeting to which as many people as possible were invited. It was in this spirit of trust that the students were allowed to organise such a meeting as they were the most affected people with regards to the lack of tutorial support in their areas. Their willingness and enthusiasm to organise such a large community meeting revealed that the students had confidence that I would not disappoint them and would attend the community meeting. This kind of trust, referred to as 'knowledge-based trust' emerges through communication in which each player implicitly reveals to the other his or her values, expertise, integrity, consistency, loyalty, sense of justice and predictability (Hosmer, 1995:379-403; Victor & Cullen, 1988:101-105). Our face-to-face discussions and the

way we listened to each other respectfully created an atmosphere that allowed each one of us to speak out openly and freely, and our participation was underpinned by a philosophy of empowerment, equity, trust and willingness to learn from one another (Reed, 2008:2417-2431).

5.2.2 Create opportunities for frank and informed discussion

It is important to create an environment in which people are given a platform on which to voice the issues that concern them freely and without fear. By doing so one is creating opportunities for frank and informed discussion among the participants. This kind of atmosphere is created not by a top-down approach but rather by a bottom up approach that is more empowering. Using strategic and participatory planning approaches is critical because they allow the involvement of the participants and help to resolve conflict that may arise later during the implementation and evaluation phases.

In order to work with such students who feel marginalised it is important to clearly understand what marginalisation is and how “objective material powerlessness often leads to internalised psychological powerlessness” (Laverack & Labonte, 2000:255-262). Marginalised people are those who are most in need, not able to meet their own needs, with limited access to resources or who exist outside power structures. It is therefore important to note that such people are less likely to participate in programmes if they are not actively involved in the initial stages of design and implementation of the project and their involvement is not supported.

It is during these face-to-face and interactive meetings that participants were informed on how the tutor system was to be established and what were the basic requirements, which included the number of students in an area, facilities and infrastructure required to establish the effective tutorial support system. These discussions were frank and the students’ questions and opinions were sought. This showed them that they were respected and their views seriously taken into consideration. If there were misconceptions on their part regarding the tutor system they were respectfully informed in a way that was not patronising. We were patient because we wanted them to have a clear understanding of how the tutor system’s

processes and procedures worked and when they began to think deeper on how to solve their problems they would have been provided with the necessary information.

My understanding of these students in relation to being the most affected by the lack of support and their willingness to seek more information in order to come up with better solutions regarding the tutor system, was humbling and made me empathise with them. It was also with this understanding of the background that I appreciated their courage to approach me in this regard and I, on the other hand, urged them to be actively involved in this project as they were the most affected people with regards to the lack of effective tutor system in their area. These students' courage to approach the University was in contrast with what the literature calls "the paradoxes of the empowerment approaches" (Laverack and Labonte, 2000:255-262). According to Laverack and Labonte (2000:255-262), the paradoxes of the empowerment approach is that the most marginalised populations are often unable to articulate their needs or interests and in most cases are excluded from those development programmes. As in this case the students had the courage to take a stand and approach me with this issue, it galvanised my resolve to look deeper into this challenge. It became apparent that this issue could be considered as a future research project.

5.2.3 Invitation of all stakeholders who can deal with the issue at hand

It was important to invite as many stakeholders as possible because their participation reduces the likelihood that those on the periphery of the decision-making context or society are marginalised (Laverack & Labonte, 2000:255-262; Reed, 2008:2417-2431). The invitation can promote active citizenship with benefits for wider society (Martin & Sherington, 1997:195-216), increase public trust in decisions if participatory processes are perceived to be transparent and accommodate conflicting claims and views (Richard, Blackstock & Carter, 2004:3).

It was also important to open the communicative space for all the stakeholders to be allowed to put forward their views freely, irrespective of their backgrounds and social standing. All the views were respected and taken into consideration, following Reed's (2008:2417-2431) argument that when stakeholders participate freely they

are empowered through co-generation of knowledge with the researchers and are capable of using such knowledge for their benefit.

As indicated in par. 5.2.1, the meeting of all community stakeholders was suggested, then the date was set for this meeting and the students took the leading role in organising it. They sent written invitation to as many community organisations as possible, including the local churches, schools, local businesses, government departments and the local municipality. They identified and approached individual members of the community whom they thought would be interested and concerned about the lack of effective tutor system on the research site and who might influence the outcome of the meeting.

During that meeting discussions about the tutor system were conducted openly with the students reiterating their challenges and frustrations to the entire community. Many people, especially the parents, freely raised their aspirations, hopes and challenges brought about by the socio-economic factors which they believed to have led their youth to be involved in the social ills that did not benefit them. The communicative space was opened, as participants freely debated and discussed issues and respectfully learned from each other. This was evident when students who organised the meeting answered some of the questions posed by other participants in the community meeting. It showed that they were also empowered by the knowledge they had gathered during the initial meetings and therefore used it to respond to some of the questions. They also explained or clarified some of the misconceptions that were raised by other participants in the meeting. As Reed argues, it is through co-generation of knowledge with the researcher that participants are empowered and enabled to use that knowledge for their benefit.

Social learning was also promoted in the sense that the stakeholders and wider society on the research site were learning from each other during those deliberations. The respect that they gave each other was indicative of new relationships developing and “adversarial relationships [being] transformed as individuals learn about each other’s trustworthiness and learn to appreciate the legitimacy of each other’s views” (Stringer, Prell, Reed, Hubacek, Fraser & Dougill, 2006:1).

The discussions were planned in such way that the possible solutions were sought from the participants after it was explained what the tutor system is, and how it operated at the University, including the requirements such as facilities and infrastructure. This assisted the proceedings because during the question and answer sessions which resulted in social learning, possible practical solutions to the questions raised with regards to the lack of tutorial support were openly discussed. The appreciation of each other's viewpoints and the improvement in the relationships among participants showed that participants were willing to work together which gradually led to a feeling that there was a sense of ownership over the process and its outcomes.

The participants were then given the opportunity to decide on the way forward with regards to the lack of effective tutor system which, according to Chase, Decker and Lauber (2004:629-639) and Tippett, Handley and Ravetz (2007:9-98) ensured that participants have the power to influence decisions to formulate the framework. It was then jointly decided that the coordinating team that would take this project forward should be selected among the participants. Initially some were ready to elect the coordinating team but participants decided that those who volunteered should first do so. The reason put forward for voluntarism was that when people offer to serve the community they are likely to stay on during the entire term of the project because they have community interest at heart and therefore would want to come up with a lasting solution to the problem at hand.

5.2.4 Creation of the coordination

As mentioned in paragraph 5.2.3, during the broader community meeting it was suggested that people who want to be part of the coordinating team should volunteer, and 15 did. Others were elected in absentia by some of the participants who thought they could also contribute to the coordinating team. Those who volunteered met for the first time after the community meeting was adjourned and in that first meeting they met. They were given the opportunity to introduce themselves to the entire group. Although from the same area they had different backgrounds, experiences and interest in the issue at hand of formulating a framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system on the research site. They were given a brief

overview of the project and the roles they were supposed to undertake were briefly discussed because it was already late in the afternoon. It was decided to have another meeting in which all of the team members, including those elected in absentia, would be present so as to begin to have thorough brainstorming session/s through which all the team-members would be versed with the project and its objectives.

The team members were also informed that the second meeting would deal with the planning phase, as Kelly (2005:65-73) and MacDonald (2012:34-50) note that the next step of PAR following entry is the planning cycle. According to Kelly (2005:69) it involves a balance between presenting ideas developed from a formal community assessment and working with community groups on the creation of priorities or strategies. After this had been discussed the date for the formal planning cycle was decided.

Before the meeting was adjourned and the date for the following meeting set, the issues raised during the brainstorming session and broader community meeting were highlighted so as to make sure all the participants were well informed about the aims and objectives of the study. This process was aimed at fostering common understanding about all aspects related to the tutor system and how its absence on the research site affected local distance education students.

The coordinating team members were asked to begin to think about those issues that were raised by the community members during the broader community meeting. This was critical because it was a preparatory or reflective process for the following meeting, which was the beginning of planning session in which those issues were going to be thoroughly addressed in order to come up with possible solutions.

The formulation of joint impelling vision followed after the identification and selection of the coordinating team members. The processes of formulation of the vision were facilitated by the coordinating team, which was given the mandate by the community members to volunteer to conduct a situational analysis in order to have an in-depth understanding of what the community had and what it did not have in relation the tutor system. The team was expected to identify the political and socio-economic challenges that the community faced and overcome in order to implement a successful and effective tutor system that would transform the status quo on the

research site. As indicated above, some of the coordinating team's important functions were to foster those agreed upon shared vision and mission within the community and identify areas that need to be prioritised and acted upon in order to make the vision a reality. The coordinating team together with all the identified partners were to plan together and make sure that the processes to be followed were done properly as planned and were evaluated and monitored in order to establish the framework for the effective tutor system.

5.3 THE PLANNING PHASE

As indicated in paragraph 5.2.4 the coordinating team members were briefed about the project and its intentions, then initiated and facilitated the planning phase processes. In this phase the team needed to begin a sustained conversation around the current tutor system on the research site by having brainstorming sessions in order to understand the prevailing state of affairs. In this meeting the assessment data gathered during the previous meetings with the students and the broader community needed to be on the agenda. This data included issues to be given attention so as not to lose sight of those identified issues raised previously by other people during the previous meetings. This, according to Kelly (2005:65-73), helps to develop ideas about the potential solution to the problem at hand, and it is important to present the developed ideas in a simple format so as to enable discussion to take place. Assessing the need and desire for action is the overall goal of the presentation, as stressing assets and strengths conveys a more positive tone than focusing on problems (Kelly, 2005:65-73). This emphasis also provides the opportunity for suggestions and activities to address problem areas such as the formulation of the vision, conducting a SWOT analysis, and setting priorities for the effective tutor system through community-based approach. The coordinating team together with the identified partners were to plan together and make sure that the processes to be followed were varied out as planned and were evaluated and monitored to establish the envisaged tutor system.

5.3.1 The first formal meeting of the coordinating team for situational analysis

This session is important because it initiates the teambuilding process. The participants needed to understand each other and how they would work collaboratively as one team. In this first formal meeting of the coordinating team the issues on the agenda were discussed and members requested to suggest other pertinent issues that they thought needed to be addressed before the meeting began. This served as an ice-breaker because the participants freely engaged with each other and the atmosphere was jovial. During this session members were encouraged to ask questions so as to make sure that they all understood what the community-based tutor system was and the objectives of the project were highlighted. Minutes or notes from the meetings (assessment data) were distributed to each member so as to ensure that each was on par with what had been discussed and what was expected of them. They have been given a mandate by the community to come up with the solutions to the challenges of the project at hand.

After all resent had settled down the reflection and planning process began, with identification of pertinent issues regarding the tutor system. The participants were encouraged to raise as many issues as possible so that all could understand the status quo, especially those team members who were not exposed to distance education. These open discussions and clarity-seeking questions created opportunities to explore the boundary crises by opening communicative space among members of the coordinating team or participants and other people who were affected (Kemmis, 2008:130). Debates were generated as the members were engaged in issues related not only to the ineffectiveness of the current tutor system but also administrative challenges that students encountered before they were fully registered. This debate encouraged active participation of the students who were the most affected (Laverack & Labonte, 2000:255-262) and prospective students, parents and other community members who were also the members of the coordinating team.

Participants were actively involved with problem definition, problem assessment, intervention planning, implementation, and evaluation, which according to Dworski-Riggs and Langhout (2010:216) is what participatory action research project

involves. Participants understood that they were co-researchers therefore their participation was crucial and the community showed confidence and trust in them. Dworki-Riggs and Langhout (2010:216) states that "Participation means having a say in the process". During this meeting thorough brainstorming was conducted around the issue of the framework to enhance effectiveness of the tutor system through the community-based approach. Different perspectives arose with parents having a different perspective because their concern was that of parenthood, and teachers, students and out-of-school youth having theirs. Such diversity of perspectives enhanced learning toward inter-subjectivity, and as Kemmis (2008:128-129) observes, the "communicative space opened by communicative action, and participatory action undertaken as a kind of process of communicative action, is an inter-subjective space that exists between and beyond individual participants".

Besides the debates and different perspectives, all the issues raised culminated in issues that were concerned with the framework for an effective tutor system. Some of the issues which were on the policy of the institution advocated online delivery. The distance education learners in the remote areas indicated however that they did not have the facilities through which they could access an online service. The inter-subjectivity also needed CDA as an analytical tool appropriate in relation to cognitive analysis (Van Dijk, 2008:85-86). As the discussion ensued, nothing was taken for granted, and the discourse was subjected to CDA to derive deeper meaning of the discussions.

These kind of meetings were difficult for the study coordinator because most of the issues and questions were directed to me as an employee of the University concerned. I was expected of me to provide most answers or to clarify issues raised that were predominantly related to student academic services, such as lack of student orientation, unavailability of study materials and textbooks, and delayed feedback on assignments. This process is crucial because collective identification of problems leads collaborative assessment to devise with intervention mechanisms and solutions that emanate from the participants. As Dworski-Riggs and Langhout (2010:216) argue, this process is in line with PAR principles and it was at this stage that the actual need find solutions was raised, it being a process that warranted thorough planning, implementation and evaluation. It was decided by the

coordinating team that the following meeting would deal with issues of planning and role clarification because the issues at hand required us to know who would be involved and what role they would play in the activities during the research process. The agenda for the next meeting was mainly the formulation of the task teams and different roles they would play after all the issues were tabled and prioritised, and the planning action drafted.

It is important to collectively decide on performance agreement and delivery plans to enable coordinating team members to adhere to the agreed timeframes and envisioned deliverables after each has been allocated the tasks and roles to play. The reflection period of what had been discussed has to be agreed upon, which serves as a way of giving the team an opportunity to stand back from time to time to reflect on how the research project was proceeding and what milestones had been achieved. This, according to Pain, Whitman and Milledge (2011:8), underlines the importance of building reflection into the research cycle. Thus, Walters *et al.* (2009:146-173) assert that PAR is essentially applied research which rather than taking a standard linear model of research is cyclical, working its way through iterations of planning, acting, observing and reflecting: "The cyclical nature of PAR is its fundamental process feature (Wadsworth, 1998:324).

5.3.2 Formulation of vision for the formulation of the framework

In this section the compelling vision is discussed, which is one of the important components for the formulation of the framework. The coordinating team with full understanding of what was expected of them would be able to formulate the common vision for the establishment of an effective tutor system (Awamleh & Gardner, 1999:345-373; Conger & Kanungo, 1988:78-97). It would be emphasised that the exercise of formulating a vision is very important because it serves as the foundation for unified project commitment (Bogler & Nir, 2001:135-144). The vision requires consensus and all coordination team members to have a mission for the community achieving of the common goal. It includes where the team wants to be and must reflect the commonly held values of the community, guiding the team during the whole process of establishing the effective tutor system (Yoeli & Berkovich, 2010:451-467).

The coordinating team must be driven by what to achieve as positive change to the community, with the vision presented as a simple statement written in the present tense to encourage positive affirmation and motivation. It must emphasise that the processes of working together towards the unifying vision is critical at this stage because it fosters and deepens the participants' understanding of the challenges and complexities behind the problem they face. In order to come up with the vision the coordinating team looked at all issues raised during the broader community meeting and the challenges identified with regards to the TS. They discussed all the contextual issues regarding the TS and the consequences of its ineffectiveness on the research site. Submissions were put forward about the vision and mission (see par. 3.3.2), debated until consensus was reached about the choice of the vision and mission to unify the coordinating team's efforts and clarify the nature of the problem that brought the team together.

5.3.3 Conducting SWOT analysis for formulation of the framework

A SWOT analysis emanates from an extensive situational and contextual analysis in which all issues that relate to the formulation of the framework for the effective TS are discussed and analysed. It enhances the interpretation and understanding of the complexities, challenges and numerous other factors identified during the situational analysis (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007:273). Both internal and external factors and their impact on the TS were considered in order to make informed decisions regarding the framework and the implementation of the effective TS on the research site. For instance, internal factors included issues related to appropriate learning support strategies, systems and processes for enhancing learning and training and support for tutors. The external factors included policies that guide the establishment of the effective TS and other socio-economic and cultural/political factors or realities that may affect the TS (Aref, 2010:2-5).

In this study the coordinating team through SWOT analysis matched the strengths and opportunities to the weaknesses and threats so as to minimise the negative impact and influences of the threats and to develop an action plan in order to eliminate or minimise the risks and threats (Howell, Williams & Lindsay, 2003:1). One of the strengths was that the DHET policy supported the provision of learner

support to all students, including those who live in remote and rural areas. This was matched with the threat by local political formations that wanted to distract the processes of the formulation of the effective TS by insinuating that some of the coordinating team members who were involved had political motives other than community development.

The SWOT analysis also helped the coordinating team identify factors that needed urgent attention so as to make sure that those issues could be dealt with urgently. Thus, the exercise of setting priorities was critical to the whole process.

5.3.4 Setting priorities for the formulation of the framework

One of the critical aspects of the formulation of the framework was to identify issues that needed to be taken into consideration urgently. Prioritisation leads to the identification of desired inputs and outcomes and those issues or priorities that are identified need to be listed in order of importance because most are competing (Curran *et al.*, 2004:1-42). The coordinating team, after analysing the situation and conducting the SWOT analyses, listed all the competing issues (priorities) in order to address them. This process needed to be democratically performed so as to be able to reach consensus among all the coordinating members. As the participants needed to agree on the prioritisation criteria, so I suggested that we use a combination of Multi-voting Technique and Nominal Group Technique (NGT). These techniques are used in democratic processes and afford the participants equal say or voice irrespective of their position in the coordinating team. NGT is used to brainstorm ideas and to create a broad list of possibilities whilst Multi-voting technique is used to narrow the list to pinpoint the top priorities (Leake, Oculito, Ramones & Caagbay, 2010:237-241; Wates, 2000:2-131). All present were therefore given a chance to submit the five issues that he or she thought the most important, thus creating a broad list of priorities and using Multi-voting to help in narrowing down the list and identifying the top priorities.

These priorities were agreed upon because the members of the coordinating team felt that they were democratically identified, therefore the consensus reached was first to concentrate on them (see par. 4.3.4). Other issues identified but not included

in the top five would, the team agreed, be attended to as the project unfolded. The top priorities were assigned to the task teams to further investigate and deal with pertinent issues around them. They were given certain timeframes to provide feedback to the entire coordinating team to track progress.

5.3.4.1 *Formation of the task teams to attend to priorities*

The task teams were groups selected from members of the coordination team who were assigned the responsibility for each of the five top priorities. Task Team A dealt with tutorial support strategies; B with technology enhanced learning; C with tutorial venues and study space; D with computer laboratories and Internet connectivity; and E tutor recruitment and training. The coordinators of these teams were selected by the coordinating team members and the other members given the option to decide which team they would like to be part of. This process was facilitated by the coordinating team and made easy because the coordinators had specific knowledge, skills and experience in particular areas. For instance, I was chosen as coordinator of Task Team A (Tutorial Support Strategies) mainly because the team thought that I might have had relevant experience as Head: Facilitation of Learning at the University, and I had access to the relevant data that could be beneficial to the strategic plan.

5.3.4.2 *Opportunities for providing feedback*

The task teams were mandated to investigate within each priority issue and expected to report back within an agreed timeframe. Each was given a chance to develop its work plan as a reference that showed the expected time of each activity and which member of the team was responsible for its execution. This division of work among the coordinating members made it possible for the team to gather as much information as possible about each prioritised issue and the required activities to be performed. The tasks team were given opportunities to go out and research, investigate and draft reports within specific timeframes. Then they were expected to give feedback to the entire coordinating team, recording each activity's success or achievements, challenges and possible solutions. This was a period of reflection and

the coordinating team was expected to seriously consider each report in order to give advice or suggest a possible solution. In some instances other members of other teams would volunteer to assist the other teams if they encountered challenges.

For instance, Task Team D, which dealt with computer laboratories, encountered a challenge in a certain school in which the principal was not prepared to talk to members about the computer laboratory that was well equipped but not optimally utilised. A member of Task Team C, also a member of that school's SGB volunteered to accompany the coordinator of Task Team D to meet the principal and they secured a meeting with entire SGB to discuss the matter.

5.3.5 Collaborative strategic planning for the formulation of the framework

Collaborative planning equitably involves all partners and the coordinating team in the planning and recognises the unique strengths, skills and experiences that each person brings to it. The purpose of planning collaboratively is to combine knowledge of all participants for social change to improve community access to educational opportunities and to eliminate educational disparities (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003:4). It was therefore expected that the level of participation by the coordinating team members in the planning process be as high as possible and critical for joint decision making. The collaborative strategic planning empowered the coordinating team members to solve possible conflicts and misunderstandings that arose during the planning phase Cope (1987:35), and it would be helpful for the future in relation to the formulation of the framework for the effective TS through community-based approach.

In this study the collaborative strategic planning was performed by members of the coordinating team who had worked closely together to develop the action plan. On the research site there was no action plan before the coordinator and the community met to brainstorm about the problems that they encountered with regards to the absence of the community-based tutor system. The action plan was drawn up after the task teams were formulated and their findings collated to form one strategic plan. It was important for the coordinating team to know which priorities to tackle first, thus

improving understanding of the strengths of the community and the weaknesses to be addressed. By planning collaboratively the coordinating team was able to achieve the positive results from the resources at the disposal of the community. For instance, it was able to approach the Department of Arts and Culture in the province with regards to utilisation of the local library as an official University examination centre, the study space and the place where students could access computers that were Internet connected. The strategic plan revealed the salient strengths that the community had which needed to be exposed (Cope, 1987:35; Simpson, 2010:3-41) and utilised in order to leverage or enhance the effectiveness of the framework. The community had a school with numerous classrooms that were not being used, mainly because the number of learners were fewer on account of rationalisation. The coordinating team approached the principal regarding the need to have venues for tutorials, discussion groups and collaborative learning. The principal agreed to the arrangement.

Many students were not orientated to studying through the distance mode and they did not have skills to cope with the demands of this mode of delivery. The coordinating team, through its collaborative strategic plan, was able to persuade the University to conduct pre- and post- registration orientations at the research site. Other services that were offered by the institution were study skills workshops, basic computer skills workshops, and career and personal counselling, including administrative functions such as application and mobile registration visits that take place every semester on the research site.

It must be noted that for the coordinating team to initiate the process of negotiating with the concerned institution the team was briefed about other services provided by the institution and which the team identified as critical to the formulation of the effective TS in their vicinity.

5.3.5.1 Tutorial support strategies

Peer teaching is a form of tutoring in which students who are on the same level or studying similar module/s and take turns to teach each other in a group (Reiserer *et al.*, 2002:380). Those on a higher level or senior students in a particular discipline

facilitate learning to those on a lower level (Barron & Foot, 2006:174-185; Goodlad & Hirst, 1991:710-725). The challenge that the coordinating team faced on the research site was that the popular modules for which the students enrolled could not be assigned to locally based tutors for face-to-face tutoring mainly because there were no suitably qualified people to tutor them. In other instances there were few students who enrolled for particular modules which seemed not to be cost-effective for the institution to appoint tutors on the research site. Another challenge was that the online tutoring that could have been used to deliver tutorials to those learners as an alternative to face-to-face tutoring was not yet widely introduced in the institution deliver mode for most of its modules. That, coupled with the unavailability of bandwidth, access to computers and other synchronous and asynchronous devices such as studio-based videoconferencing, desktop videoconferencing, television, and videotapes led the coordinating team to opt for peer teaching, peer tutoring and collaborative learning.

Peer teaching and peer tutoring, as explained in par. 3.3.7.1, were seen as a viable option under those circumstances and were encouraged as an alternative by the students on the research site. The students were workshopped by the institution's Study Skills Facilitator on how the teaching could be used as an effective strategy for facilitation of learning, then grouped according to the similarity of modules and their levels in their study programmes. Another strategy that was encouraged was collaborative learning in which students who were taking the same modules worked together by forming groups to meet regularly to discuss the content of their modules and work on the self-assessment exercises or tasks.

Peer tutoring, teaching and collaborative learning as the forms of support needed venues in which students could work together in large or small groups and dyads. The coordinating team managed to secure unused but well-furnished classrooms in one of the schools with fewer learners. After the principal received permission from the Provincial Department of Education District Manager to provide study space to those students, the school provided the students with their venues but asked them not to be disruptive to the school proceedings during school hours. One of the students was given the responsibility to collect the keys and to ensure the venues were cleaned and furniture kept orderly after the students had used it.

5.3.5.2 *Technology Enhanced Learning*

As indicated above, the coordinating team looked at different options that could be used to facilitate learning effectively to the remote students on the research site. The use of technology was seen as the best option, as it was cost effective and could solve the problem of not having suitably qualified face-to-face tutors for most of the modules. The coordinating team considered videoconferencing as a synchronous and unique method of providing real-time face-to-face interaction between the tutor and students. It enables immediate peer and teacher interaction and feedback which could minimise feelings of isolation and provide for a richer learning experience for students and staff at geographically separated sites (Andrews & Klease, 1998:81). For the research site, it was more important in tele-learning environments than the asynchronous, text-based computer-mediated communication. Videoconferencing is said to facilitate cooperation tasks that require highly frequent and continuous coordination found in *peer teaching* settings, cooperative and collaborative learning outcomes. These outcomes are achieved by a joint solution of the given cooperation task because it enables synchronous forms of collaborative distance learning and frequent complex interactions in both teaching and learning.

In spite of the advantages that videoconferencing could bring to the research site it was found to be unaffordable without the coordinating team raising funds to acquire equipment. It was therefore decided that while the funding proposals were being drawn up by the coordinating team to source possible funders the use of *Skype*, which was cheaper to install and download, would be considered. A student counsellor and the students experimented, followed by a tutor and students on the research site. Although this seemed to be a good alternative, because it worked during the experimentation there was however intermittent breaking of reception between the tutor and the students said to be caused by low bandwidth on the research site. Another challenge, besides the interrupted reception, was how to broadcast the tutorial to a larger group of students on the research site. In order to solve it the coordinating team was advised that a *Skype* classroom could be acquired more cheaply, but a problem would be bandwidth.

Another medium recommended by the coordinating team was DVDs, which although not interactive like video-conference, would give students an opportunity to order the

DVDs freely from the University's regional learning centre for pre-recorded tutorials. The students could watch them in small groups in their homes or individually, thus helping them to participate fully during their group discussions, peer teaching and peer tutoring.

Many students on the research site were unable to access the institution's Learning and Management System (LMS) because of limited Internet connected computers on the research site and lack of training on how to access this system. The coordinating team however negotiated with both public libraries which had three Internet connected computers, each to be used to access information, subject discussion forums and other important student support resources, such as examinations guidelines and previous examination papers. The coordinating team requested the institution's regional learning centre coordinator to include training on how to access and use the institution's LMS during the post-registration orientations which were conducted every semester after the coordinating team approached the institution to provide pre- and post-registration orientation regularly on the research site.

The students were also encouraged to use social media such as *Twitter*, *Facebook* and *WhatsApp*, which could also be accessed through mobile telephones and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) for teaching and learning purposes. They were encouraged to form discussion groups using these social media platforms among themselves and other students taking the same modules in other locations. This initiative and encouragement to the students made their discussions robust and effective as these devices were ubiquitous in the region, and therefore an alternative and mostly accessible learning tool.

5.3.5.3 *Computer laboratories and Internet connectivity (E-learning/ Online Learning)*

The coordinating team observed that the challenge of students not having access to computers with Internet connection is the main cause of students dropping out of their studies, especially because the University introduced e-learning or online learning. Many households in South Africa, especially those in the impoverished

communities such as the research site, do not have personal computers or Internet access that could facilitate access to higher education courses that had previously been unobtainable. Nevertheless, this University, like many others, were beginning to offer online courses mainly because there was an increasing demand for them to become more accountable to student needs, and provide educational resources and opportunities to the largest percentage of the population (Halsne & Gatta, 2002; Ramsden, 1998). The University therefore introduced online technologies to appeal to a larger student base that is probably advantaged by providing courses to those students who would not otherwise be served by traditional face-to-face tutoring and on-campus provision.

Unfortunately, the online learning experience has not been a positive one for a substantial number of students, especially those living in remote areas such as the research site. Many students, even in countries such as the USA, have dropped out of online courses because of demographic and institutional variables that have been found significant in student retention (Kemp, 2002:65-81; Wojciechowski & Palmer, 2005:1-20). According to Berge and Huang (2004:3), three main variables for retention of online contact are personal, institutional and circumstantial. Circumstantial variables were the most cited by students in the research because they include factors such as socio-economic status, lack of support and student engagement, motivation, computer skills and the ability to access and use the Internet. As indicated, the students on the research site are from impoverished families which could not afford to buy electronic devices for their children, let alone having the means to acquire and maintain the availability of Internet in their households.

The coordinating team therefore initiated the discussion with a local school that had a complete and functioning computer laboratory for use by local students as the University who were willing to lease it to other providers, such as the Multipurpose Community Centres (MPCCs), FET Colleges and schools for the purpose of access and future computer basic training to its students. Local business people were also engaged and persuaded to view the establishment of Internet kiosks or cybercafés as viable businesses in locations such as the research site where there were no government sponsored MPCCs. The coordinating team also initiated negotiations

with the Department of Communications to establish Multi-Purpose Community Centres which had tele-centres for the community to access the Internet. One of the key components of an MPCC is the ICT infrastructure, and in order to provide fast, efficient and effective services, there is a need to have appropriate information and communication technology infrastructure at the MPCC, as “This will help people in rural areas to have access to technologies, thus enabling them to participate meaningfully in the global economy” (Jacobs & Herselman, 2006:1).

While the issue of MPCCs or tele-centres were not going to be realised in the immediate future on the research site, the coordinating team was encouraged by a recently published DHET policy document, ‘White Paper for Post-School Education and Training’ that aimed to improve access by developing an integrated ICT plan that will provide strategic direction to the DHET for the improvement of equitable access to and use of appropriate technology across the post-school education and training systems (DHET, 2013:53). It also intends to facilitate the shared establishment and management of ICT-enabled, networked learning support centres in areas where home-based provision is likely to be difficult in the short to medium term, and it will be engaging stakeholders to negotiate easier access to and reduced cost for Internet-enabled devices (DHET, 2013:53).

The above policy by the DHET gave the coordinating team impetus to continue investigating possible avenues within and outside the research site in order to make it possible for the students to gain access to computers and Internet. One of the issues that the coordinating team hastened to accomplish was to negotiate with the Provincial Department of Arts and Culture to avail their Internet-connected computers housed in the community libraries to be used by the local distance education students on the research site for surfing the net and to submit their assignments electronically. The coordinating team also negotiated with the department of communication to add more computers in the local libraries as there was no tele-centre or MPCC as yet on the research site. These discussions have been escalated to the higher level within the Department of Communications and there is a strong possibility that there could be positive outcomes as the DHET is also engaging its sister departments at the national level.

5.3.5.4 *Tutor recruitment, training and retention*

The recruitment of tutors is critical because it creates a structure for how the effective tutor system attracts, selects and cultivates quality tutors. The development of the formal tutor recruitment plan makes recruitment effective because the plan will include an annual recruitment goal with benchmarks, along with strategies to reach those goals. In many instances the recruitment strategy that is the most effective is so-called 'head-hunting', which according to Toppe, Kirsch and Michel (2001:1) is important because 71% percent of tutors are approached or asked by someone they know to pursue the tutoring opportunity, while only 29% did so when not asked by a personal contact.

High-quality tutors are an essential component of a best practice tutoring system therefore it is crucial for the envisaged TS to identify the best tutors for its participants based on the needs of the student target groups. According to Wasik and Slavin (1993:178-200), certified teachers are the most effective tutors, however, there is evidence that tutors with an academic background can be successful in making gains with the students. On the research site the recruitment of tutors was a challenge in that the number of people who could be suitable to tutor the University students in some critical disciplines such as engineering and commerce was very low.

Recruitment was therefore initially conducted by advertising the possible tutor position within the research site and later in the neighbouring towns and villages. The coordinating team together with the University regional centre drafted flyers and posters that were distributed to local schools, businesses, government departments and local libraries. The issue of 'head-hunting' was also embarked on, especially in local schools, because the participants knew some of the local teachers and other professionals whom they thought would be good and effective in tutoring. Although this exercise resulted in receiving few applications, most of the tutor positions could not be filled because applicants did not meet the requirements of those advertised positions. The few applicants who were eligible were inducted on how the tutor system within the institutions functioned, and later invited to a tutor development workshop at the nearby University regional centre.

Tutor training is regarded as the most important component for an effective tutor system because the tutors, whether novice or experienced, need to be up to date with current teaching and learning facilitation strategies and versed in modern technologies that are utilised to enhance teaching and learning (Chickering & Gamson, 1987:1-7; Geasser *et al.*, 1995:495-522). This therefore means that continuous training of tutors is critical to the success of an effective TS, and that tutors need to be assessed regularly and given feedback as promptly as possible after assessment, so as to be able to improve where they are lacking in the facilitation skills or utilisation of technologies for teaching and learning. Feedback also highlighted a shortfall in the training programme offered to the tutors, therefore encouraging constant improvement in the tutor training programme.

As indicated above, tutor training is critical to the success of an effective tutor system that is community-based. The coordinating team suggested that tutors be supervised by a certified specialist supervisor because the required quality tutor-supervision is a catalyst for the successful tutor system. They also pointed out that another contributory factor to successful TS is that the supervisor constantly provide feedback to the tutor on their sessions. It was therefore suggested that the TS team hire a supervisor who is a specialist and who will supervise the tutors so that they feel supported by a person who has the expertise to offer substantive and helpful input. As Wasik (1998:562-570) argues, without the supervision of a specialist, tutors are unlikely to have the necessary guidance or skills to tutor effectively.

The coordinating team was concerned about the retention of quality tutors because they thought that the TS's success and continuation would rely on retaining the tutors. Their concern was that the research site, as a poorly-resourced community with high unemployment rate and minimal future prospects, might not attract the required tutors or retain them once they were provided with better opportunities elsewhere in more affluent towns and cities. They therefore suggested that retention strategies be developed that would "prevent high rates of turnover which could hinder the programme from providing high-quality services over time" (Skoglund, 2006:217-220). The coordinating team realised that the high levels of tutor turnover could impede students' academic progress and cause difficulties in organisational capacity, which means that there would be more resources devoted to orienting,

training and supervision of new tutors. Skoglund (2006:217-220) points out a number of factors to be considered that influence tutor retention, including the quality of the initial training experience, the effectiveness of the tutor management and supervision, and the level of satisfaction that the tutor feels in his or her role.

The abovementioned factors and others, such as recognition of tutors, play a critical role in retention, especially when there is support for the tutorial programme and raising awareness of tutoring work in the community. The coordinating team suggested organising events and activities in which the work and efforts of the tutors would be acknowledged while connecting them to the larger cause or mission of the effective TS on the research site. They thought that such events within the community would help tutors to realise the impact of their work and make them feel part of the a greater mission of the effective TS, that is to make educational opportunities accessible to the most marginalised people in remote and rural areas.

5.3.6 Monitoring and reflection

Monitoring and reflection, according to Björkman and Svensson (2007:1-64) and Shortell *et al.* (2002:49-91) are critical for sustaining the tutor system. It is therefore important to assess progress against a well-specified and articulated vision of what is supposed to be achieved. Bemberger *et al.* (1986:6) and UNESCO (2009:10) observe that monitoring and reflection serve to systematically collect data, provide information, gather feedback, analyse contextual changes, and provide early warning systems of potential challenges to stakeholders and the participants on a continuous basis.

This study has shown that a cornerstone of a community-based development initiative such as effective TS is active involvement of the most affected members of the defined community in project design, implementation and monitoring. This section therefore discusses the importance of collaborative monitoring and reflection on the benefits, outcomes and challenges of this exercise. Monitoring and reflection would show how data was systematically and continuously collected in order to provide relevant and valuable information and potential challenges or risks that the participants might encounter. The participants and stakeholders were encouraged to

become accountable and to make effective use of resources and information throughout the process of the implementation of the collaborative plan. Their involvement in the monitoring enhanced the participants' understanding and learning of how the tutorial system operates, and how it empowered the community and built trust and credibility among the participants.

For social learning, trust and community-building to occur, effective collaborative monitoring and reflection by the coordinating team, the stakeholders and other partners was made a continuous process. The information collected from this process provided a context for the coordinating team and partnership planning aimed at improving the quality of the TS that was envisaged (Molee *et al.*, 2010:140-141). The coordinating team used the evidence collected through collaborative monitoring and reflection to report to the community and other stakeholders regularly on progress made towards achieving targets and improving the quality of services provided through the TS.

In this study, after identifying priority issues and assigning them as tasks to be investigated and researched by the respective task teams, the coordinating team expected the tasks teams to collect information, analyse it and provide feedback on a regular basis. This exercise gave the coordinating team an opportunity to reflect on and monitor the progress of each task team in relation to expected outcomes drawn from the work plans. The coordinating team jointly analysed the submissions and reports and gave advice when necessary, helping the task team to strategize for the next assignment or activity. Those reflection and monitoring sessions were seen not as threats by the task teams but as bottom-up instead of top-down strategies that were sensitive to local context, cultures and knowledge, requiring long-term instead of hasty evaluations and judgments (Lusthaus, Adrien & Perstinger, 1999:1-21). This process helped the team to plan further and develop risk assessment strategies in order to avoid issues that could derail or hinder the implementation of the strategic plan for the formulation of the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system through a community-based approach.

The monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan developed by the coordinating team for the framework was seen as a driving force in helping the team to plan for achieving and assessing desired outcomes. The coordinating team saw the

development of the framework as a way of planning and monitoring progress of the local tutor system, and it may even be implemented nationally if successfully implemented on the research site. The coordinating team jointly identified the key success factors and indicators for each task team so as to contribute to the entire project. Through those identified success factors the coordinating team was able to inspect the TS internally, whilst other stakeholders such as the University inspected it externally. Curran *et al.* (2004:1-44) advise that the regular inspection of the TS must be conducted in order to evaluate the quality of the services provided and report the findings for improvement purposes. The main purpose of inspections is to promote quality through external evaluation, give an account of the quality of services in the area inspected, and identify and share good practice. The task teams were given an opportunity to benchmark the services of the tutor system in order to come up with best practices and to share their findings for the sake of advice and improving the quality of the services that were to be provided with by their tutor system.

It is important to note that the contributions of the tasks teams comprising a few individuals had a great impact on the entire collaborative planning, implementation and monitoring of the effective tutor system. The power relations that could have emerged because of diversity and different backgrounds of the participants were dealt with by the inherent network power in collaborative planning. Network power, according to Booher and Innes (2002:221-236), can be thought of as flow of power in which participants all share. It is most effective when three conditions govern the relation of the participants in the collaborative network, namely diversity, interdependence and authentic dialogue, as participants held lengthy face-to face discussions among themselves which enabled them to assess each other's sincerity. The participants were equally provided with information about the issues and the problems for them to effectively assess their own interest and the accuracy of each other's statements.

Joint fact-finding to which the task team members were assigned to perform was important for this exercise because it was also based on consensus-building principles. In the authentic dialogue, speakers had legitimacy to tell others what they did, and it was crucial that they suspended judgment and the meaning being

presented by another participant without necessarily accepting it. Another issue that was critical during the collaborative monitoring and reflection was listening skills, seen by Bickford (1996:1-204) as an important aspect of reflexivity and essential to seeking understanding. The participants were constantly reminded to listen productively, which meant that they maintain their own perspective as a background while focusing on the situation and opinions of another. Participants were encouraged to provide feedback, whether positive or not, because that from other team members was needed to build the sense of shared identity:

The combination of collaboration among diverse, interdependent stakeholders, dialogue, building share meaning, and developing new heuristics feeds back into more cooperative action and more discovery of interdependence, it is this process that generates the cumulative and growing effect of network power (Booher & Innes, 2002:221-236).

5.3.6.1 *The Benefits of collaborative monitoring and reflection in the research*

Some of the benefits and challenges of collaborative monitoring and reflection that we experienced in the formation of the framework for effective tutor system are highlighted here.

(i) Understanding of the tutor system and social learning: The participants acknowledged that they had begun to have a broader understanding of the tutor system as it was currently practiced by the institution. They began to understand the rationale for implementing the tutor system in the distance education institution and how it would be implemented and managed. They began to identify the gaps in the implementation of the tutor system and how it was important to expand it to the most affected students in rural areas. The participants who thought that monitoring of the processes of TS was difficult and that it was supposed to be done by a 'chosen few' realised that engaging the local people in monitoring their project advanced their understanding. This was expressed by one of the participants:

We thought the tutor system is all about face to face tutors teaching the students but we found out that it was more that. By being involved as a

community, we were able to learn together about how we can jointly monitor the process and how this project can be implemented to benefit of all us.

The collaborative process was beneficial to the entire community more than when conducted by the one person or a few people. This process of collaborative assessment, monitoring and reflection helped in clarifying divergent and conflicting views which made it possible for broad consensus to be reached, and it increased knowledge among the participants.

(ii) *Community empowerment and trust:* Sending of tasks teams to gather information and carry out collaborative monitoring enhanced cooperation among participants who may have had divergent opinions, views and perceptions about the tutor system. This cooperation was instrumental in coming up with strategies that were jointly implemented and owned by all the participants, because they all contributed their views and opinions to the strategy. This was a result of going out as a coordinating team and working together on assessment, prioritising and formulation of the framework for the project, rather than each having his or her individual assessment and data-gathering tools. In this case the coordinating team learned together in the community that they were dedicated to and interested in its development. Through this exercise the community was reconnected to its environment and its socio-economic and political realities, and made conscious of the challenges it faced and its ability to face those challenges with greater determination and confidence. This was good for the young people who were involved because they were empowered to take responsibility for tackling issues that face them in a mature manner and at an early stage of their lives.

The collaborative monitoring and reflection by the coordinating team developed trust, respect and understanding among people with diverse backgrounds who were jointly participating in this multiparty monitoring process. In their deliberations they respectfully debated, argued and agreed with each other, in spite of their backgrounds, gender, age and status in the community. Young people, together with the elders, the educated and the poor and the affluent sat around the table to discuss issues that affected them and came up with possible solutions as they

continued to assess and monitor the progress of the project. This process led to greater trust and credibility among the coordinating team members.

(iii) *Feedback to the community:* Feedback to the broader community lets it know about the achievements and challenges of the coordinating team. Without it the community would feel disengaged from the project. Although the communication of the progress or results of monitoring of the TS to the community did not happen regularly, the meetings were occasionally organised to communicate successes and challenges. They provided a platform from which the findings were communicated and in many instances the community gave direction and support to what the team had achieved. Public lectures could be given to the entire community about some of the aspects of the tutor system. In many instances I, the project coordinator, was not present in such meetings, but the feedback that I got gave me confidence that the coordinating team was empowered and understood the objectives of the project and how to achieve them. One team member commented that “In these community meetings we were encouraged and motivated to go on and given mandate to make the TS successful.”

As indicated above, the community meetings were not held regularly but monitoring results was also communicated informally by the coordinating team members with friends, neighbours, colleagues, fellow students and congregations in the respective churches. As indicated in par. 4.3.10, feedback was critical and many parents who were not members of the coordinating team received feedback from their children who attended the student meetings and orientation workshops organised by the University together with the coordinating team.

(iv) *Application of the monitoring results and knowledge gained:* The monitoring exercise empowered the coordinating team members with skills that could be used in other projects. For instance, one of the parents confessed formally that she had already advised her Stokvel Saving Scheme Organisation members on how to prioritise using the Multi-voting Technique and Nominal Group Technique (see par.2 4.2.4. and 4.3.4):

We used to argue and sometimes even fight when we were to decide which issues to prioritise. It was always stressful exercise which caused other members to resign from the Stokvel just because we couldn't reach consensus at all.

These and many other reports indicated that the coordinating members learned much from the project. There was strong evidence that community monitoring and assessment of data was going to be applied to other projects or settings in the community that were current or that may arise in the future. This is therefore a clear indication that the involvement of the participants and stakeholders in the collaborative assessment and monitoring would help ensure that monitoring results were used to complete the adaptive management cycle by altering future management actions based on new knowledge about the system.

5.3.6.2 *Challenges to collaborative monitoring and reflection on the research site*

Challenges to the collaborative monitoring on the research site included participation, communication, and technical assistance. By participation is meant that it was not always possible to have all the members of the coordinating team present in the meetings, therefore monitoring and reflection on some of the important issues was affected especially by an over-reliance on certain individuals who had specific knowledge on certain issues needed by the coordinating team. This did not happen all the time because we tried to synchronise our meeting in such a way that the majority of the coordinating team members were able to attend. That the task teams had their meetings prior to the broader coordinating meeting was beneficial because the report or feedback that was expected to be presented to the meeting had been drafted during the task team meeting. The difficulty in keeping all the key stakeholders involved all the time also affected communication of the results to all the coordinating team members, which affected discussions of the results and distribution thereof to the broader community.

Since the tutor system that is community-based adheres to principles of CER and is operationalised by PAR, it was critical for the data to be analysed collectively by the greater coordinating team. The lack of participation by the coordinating team

members made it difficult for analysis of data to be performed in such a way that members of the community felt that they owned and understood it. The credibility of the data depends on the involvement of all the stakeholders in order to avoid suspicions that somebody was making it up. It is also critical to note that some of the task team members had to handwrite their reports because they did not have a personal computer or the schools and libraries were closed in the evening and weekends.

Although the above the abovementioned challenges of participation, communication and technical assistance occurred during the collaborative monitoring and reflection of the tutor system, it is important to note that the broader community participated in the conceptualisation of an effective TS that is community-based, therefore they knew what they wanted to achieve by forming the coordinating team for this project. Another issue is that this project facilitated social learning, therefore collaborative monitoring and reflection promoted multiple-loop learning and helped in uniting people with diverse backgrounds by building trust among diverse participants. The trust and credibility built by collaborative monitoring provided the foundation for future projects in the community because of improved relationships and trust among the community members.

5.4 IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Operationalisation of the collaborative plan will be dealt with in this section by justifying the need for the formulation of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the community-based tutor system, and to determine the components of the implementation of the framework. In addition, the section will demonstrate the conditions conducive to the implementation of this framework and how the risks and threats were assessed and mitigated. It will conclude by presenting evidence of the applicability of the framework for community-based tutor system.

5.4.1 The need for designing the framework

The students and the broader community of the research site jointly analysed their situation with regards to the tutor system provided by the higher education institution.

The ineffectiveness of the tutor system and student support services on the research site necessitated intervention by the broader community mainly because the local students' success rate in their studies was low and many students dropped out before completion of their studies. The affected students developed a feeling of isolation and disengagement which resulted in them becoming demotivated and desperate because any support provided was minimal and ineffective. It was after such reviews and reflections that the community began to take action, and it was decided that there should be a dedicated team to coordinate the development of a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system through a community-based approach that would address issues that affected the students on the research site. The formulation of the team was important because it was impossible to implement the framework if nobody was accountable for the implementation.

The coordinating team realised that it was important to develop a vision to unify their efforts rather than individual members of the team advancing their isolated agendas and so derailing the implementation of the framework. The unifying vision was seen as critical because it clarified the nature of the problem that brought the team together and it would foster and deepen the coordinating team members' understanding of the inherent challenges of the implementation of the framework for the effective TS. The coordinating team therefore should mutually agree on the goal to which they would put their collective efforts in order to achieve and reach it. That common goal in this study was the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through a community-based approach, which was to enhance achievement of equity and access (DHET, 2012a:11), social justice and access to success (DHET, 2013:1-75). The effective TS vision thus recognises and seeks to (re)distribute the participants multiple skills and competencies to the benefit of the less advantaged learners and communities (Fraser, 1999:25-52; DHET, 2012a:30).

It was impossible for the learners, the parents and broader community to interact with the University with regards to the tutor system because there was no coordinating team in the community to facilitate such engagements. Thus, there was no shared vision that could initiate and facilitate the contextual analysis and SWOT analysis of the status quo in relation to the ineffectiveness of the tutor system on the research site. After the establishment of the coordinating team a SWOT analysis was

followed by formulation of the collaborative plan. The prioritisation of issues that needed urgent attention was carried out and the strategic activities to achieve those priority issues developed by the coordinating team.

The coordinating team had to monitor the implementation of the framework for the effective TS from the onset because without the monitoring and reflection the sustenance of a TS that is community-based would be impossible. Without monitoring and reflection the determination of the impact of the tutor system, whether positive or negative, would not be detected and the challenges that might derail it would not be identified on time. As indicated in 5.3.6, collaborative monitoring and reflection serve to collect data systematically, provide the required information and gather feedback in the form of Gantt charts used by the task teams. It also helps in analysing contextual changes and provides continuous warnings of potential challenges to the coordinating team about the implementation of the TS collaborative plan. It is thus evident that there is a need to develop the collaborative plan for TS because its absence would make the implementation of the TS framework unachievable.

5.4.2 Determining the components of the implementation of the framework

The components of the framework which are the solutions to the problems were identified above in par 5.4.1. These were the formulation of the vision, conducting a SWOT analysis, setting priorities, drawing up of the collaborative plan and monitoring and reflecting on the collaborative plan. These components were identified by the coordinating team members after conducting the SWOT analysis and prioritisation of issues. They also facilitated the development of the activities to address each priority.

The prioritised issues identified by the coordinating team for the framework for the effective TS were tutorial support strategies, technology enhanced learning, tutorial venues, study space and library facilities, computer laboratories and Internet connectivity, and tutor-recruitment and training. The activities that were developed for tutorial support strategies included the use of synchronous and asynchronous devices to deliver tutorials in the absence of the appointed face-to-face tutorials for

certain modules. It was also decided that students be trained on peer support strategies, such as peer teaching, peer tutoring, problem-based learning and collaborative learning in order to address the students' feeling of being isolated and unsupported. For the priority issue of technology-enhanced learning, the activities that were developed by the coordinating team were the utilisation of video-conferencing, *Skype*, DVDs and development of a mechanism for students to access the University's LMS. The use of social media such as *Twitter*, *Facebook* and *WhatsApp* to facilitate student engagements were also investigated. The use of Personal Digital Devices (PDAs) such as mobile telephones, tablets and laptops was also investigated for Mobile Learning purposes.

In order to acquire venues for study and tutorial purposes, local schools and libraries were approached to avail underutilised venues or space for the students to use for studying, tutorials and group discussions purposes. In order to address the issue of the lack of student access to computers with Internet connectivity, the local schools, tele-centres and MPCCs were identified and approached. This also included approaching the Provincial Department of Arts and Culture because the local libraries which belonged to the department had computers with Internet connectivity.

For recruitment and training of tutors, the flyers and posters for the tutor positions were drafted and distributed to schools, libraries, and the central business district and to the various government department offices. 'Headhunting' of qualified tutors was also encouraged because literature shows that the tutors who are approached by a person they know are more likely to accept that tutor position. The continuous tutor training, provision of timely feedback after assessment, effective tutor management and supervision are instrumental in tutor retention. In some cases the acknowledgement and publicising of tutors' efforts by organising events in which tutors are recognised go a long way in retaining the quality tutors.

5.4.3 Conditions conducive to the effective tutor system

This section determines the conditions conducive to the development, formulation and implementation of the framework. The components discussed in 5.4.2 will be

briefly documented as they facilitated the favourable conditions for the implementation the framework for the effective TS.

During the gaining entry phase, when the broader community brainstormed the need to develop the framework, it was evident that there was a need for a designated team that that would coordinate, guide and drive that process. It was then that the formation of the coordinating team took place, because the community members felt that it was important to nominate the people who would represent them. Although the community had the opportunity to nominate people, it was suggested that people be given the opportunity first to volunteer as that would show their commitment to the whole process. To the community this was the best way to find the dedicated people who were passionate about the formulation of the framework. The coordinating team were expected to provide leadership, direction, management and development of the mission and vision of TS. The willingness of the community to meet and decide to select a designated team to take this process forward was one of the most important conditions for the formulation of the framework. It gave the coordinating team the motivation to work hard because they had the support and backing of a community that gave them the mandate to develop the framework. Respect for the community that elected the team, and of others' opinions and views among the coordinating members was emphasised and practiced at all times. Any behaviour that showed disrespect was addressed immediately because teamwork was regarded as the best solution to tackle such a task on the research site.

The team had to discuss the challenges that needed to be addressed, such as issues of access to quality education and the formulation of a mission and vision that embraced the principles of social justice, equity and national cohesion. The coordinating team members also had a session in which the study coordinator explained at length the institution's rationale and objectives of the establishing the current tutor system and how it had been established. This background gave the team a good foundation and deeper understanding of what the tutor system is and how the institution conceptualised it. In addition, the team were given more information on how other countries in Africa and Asia established the tutor system in their respective contexts. It was after those sessions with the study coordinator that the coordinating team equally understood the current tutor system and the envisaged

effective tutor system that is community-based. It was then possible for the coordinating team to articulate a unifying vision because everybody was in line on the problem and the common goal to be achieved.

After the vision was articulated and agreed upon, the coordinating team conducted further brainstorming sessions in order to understand their context which had led to the identification of issues that needed to be prioritised. That situational analysis resulted in the identification of some issues, among all those brought to the fore that needed urgent attention in order to facilitate the development of the effective TS. It was therefore important to agree on the prioritisation technique(s) that would lead the coordinating team to consensus about those urgent issues in order to avoid future conflict among the members. The techniques that were agreed upon after the lengthy debates and discussions were the combination of Multi-voting Technique and Nominal Group Technique (NGT), believed to be democratic and affording participants equal say or voice, irrespective of their position and status in the community and coordinating team. This process was explained at length in paragraph 5.3.4. The coordinating team was briefly workshopped about these two techniques in order to understand how they operated, with members of the team empowered with knowledge that could be used elsewhere in their public or private endeavours.

Sharing of work was instrumental in the speedy achievement of the set objectives and timeframes set by the coordinating team. After prioritisation of issues was conducted, and the most pressing and urgent issues identified and agreed upon, the collaborative action was created whereby those priorities were divided among the participants by forming the task teams. Five were formed and each assigned a priority issue with work plans developed, each activity identified, and the responsible person assigned to perform it. These work plans were in forms of Gantt charts with timeframes for each activity displayed and the task teams expected to report back to the entire team the progress of each activity according to the timeframes agreed upon. This was the collaborative action plan that enshrined the principle of working together and learning from one another. A coordinating team was briefly trained on how the work plans were supposed to be used, therefore everyone understood how they were used and contributed to the entire implementation plan. Durlak (2008:5-

18) writes that good training is critical to good implementation because many successful programmes used a social learning training strategy, and emphasised opportunities for peer collaboration and problem-solving.

The main aim of this study is to formulate a framework to enhance the effectiveness of the community-based tutor system in order to create a sustainable learning environments, therefore all the members of the team were supposed to know the technical aspects of monitoring design and how data was analysed. In short, the members learned how monitoring was carried out, how the collected data was analysed and applied. Information was shared among the team members so they would know what was expected of them from the planning stages to the implementation phase of the project. This collective knowledge on the monitoring process by the members of the coordinating team facilitated collaborative monitoring which empowers the members of the team to respond swiftly and flexibly to new information or data that comes to the fore with regards to the implementation of the framework for CBTS on the research site. According to Fernandez-Gimenez, Ballard and Sturtevant (2008:1-22), this increased civic engagement, respect, trust, and appreciation of interdependent human and natural systems that collaborative monitoring fosters may instil some participants with greater sense of civic responsibility toward their community and environment. The collaborative monitoring that took place on the research site afforded the coordinating team members the opportunity to reflect and analyse the progress and the achievements of the implementation plan. Whenever gaps were identified the coordinating was able to take appropriate steps to fill them, readjust and amend the plan if necessary. Although the plan could be implemented it is important to identify the risks and threats that may affect or derail it.

5.4.4 Assessing and mitigating risks and threats facing implementation of the framework

This section highlights some of the issues that may have derailed or affected the formulation of the framework negatively. Risk is defined by Hohenemse, Kates and Slovic (1983:378-384) as the possibility that human actions or events lead to consequences that harm aspects of things that human beings value. This definition

implies that the severity of experienced harm depends on the causal relationship between a stimulus (human activity or event) and the consequences. Consequences can be altered either by modifying the initiating activity or event or by mitigating the aspects (Klinke & Renn, 2002:1071-1094). In this study issues such as the formation of the coordinating, the formation of the shared vision, SWOT analysis, prioritisation, collaborative strategic plan and collaborative monitoring and reflection were identified as critical to the success of the implementation of the framework for effective TS. There were however inherent risks and threats that needed to be identified and managed in order to make sure that the implementation of the strategic plan achieved its objectives.

The absence of the dedicated team would have meant that there was no leadership or management of the project, which therefore meant no one would have influenced the change of the status quo on the research site or determined the direction that the project should have taken. That could have been risky because the project could take any direction and the results been disastrous. One of the issues that could have made the formation of the coordinating unsuccessful would be a selective invitation of participants that ignored the most affected people, in this case students and the broader community. Failure to invite these to attend the brainstorming sessions and decide how the coordinating team was going to be selected would be counter-productive because they would not have had the opportunity to voice their genuine concern and views. Decisions taken on the behalf of marginalised and affected people which is against the principles of CER (Johnson & Morris, 2010:86) and PAR (Dworski-Riggs & Langhout, 2010:216). According to Vollman *et al.* (2004:129), the key informants in a community have much to offer a research team and their insights can be helpful in providing information that could not be captured by other methods. Turnbull *et al.* (1998:178-188) argue that the advantage of PAR is that it increases relevance of research to the concerned members of a community.

It is also important for the coordinating team to guard against disrespectful and statusconscious participants because they may suppress other people' views and so deny the team different perspectives and broader knowledge that the diverse group of people may bring to the fore. This could give the team skewed information which could lead to prioritisation of issues that might not sufficiently address the problems

that a team wants resolve. If the coordinating team were not given a comprehensive explanation of what the tutor system was and what were the objectives for the University to offer such a service the team would not have had a full understanding of where the problem lay or what to do to achieve the objectives of the envisaged TS.

One of the critical functions of the coordinating team was to formulate a unifying vision which clarified the nature of the problem and inculcated teamwork. It was important to have a vision that described the path which the team must follow and guide the team along the process of establishing the effective tutor system. On the research site the team spent time trying to articulate its vision until the team agreed on the vision that encompassed values and aspirations of the community. That process was taken seriously because that vision was supposed to be owned by all of them which therefore meant that their behaviour were supposed to be controlled by that compelling and unifying vision. It would therefore be too risky not to have a compelling vision that was shared and owned by the whole coordinating team assigned to formulate and implement the framework (Wang & Kreysa, 2006:1-25).

Without a SWOT analysis the coordinating team would not be able to interpret and understand the challenges and factors or devise appropriate strategies shaped and jointly agreed upon by all the team members. For instance, it would have been impossible for the coordinating to have been aware that there were useful facilities in their community suitable for the TS, such as a local school with a number of classrooms that were not utilised.

Situational analysis also facilitated the identification of numerous issues that were critical in order to draw the strategic plan by which the implementations of the framework were to be driven. Listing and prioritisation of issues was critical for this project, without which the implementation and monitoring of the strategy could have been conducted successfully. It could have been risky not to know which issues were to be given urgent attention and it could have been detrimental not to set up the monitoring and reflection mechanism in order to make sure that the strategy was kept on the track at all times. There was a time when the coordinating team was bombarded with new information and issues that were not initially prioritised. It was therefore unsure whether it should incorporate those new issues in the

implementation plan or keep them aside for a while. Since the prioritisation was made and important issues collectively agreed upon, the team was encouraged to first commit itself in putting its energy and effort on those priority issues until they were accomplished. They would look into other issues later in the process of implementation.

It is important to have a larger group of coordinating team members from the onset as it was conducted during the gaining entry phase of this study. The reason for this is that people may not be always committed or present all the time during all the stages of the collaborative strategic plan. In this study some of the coordinating team members did not attend the meetings regularly and others had prior commitments or employment outside the research site. It is risky to be strict with the number of coordinating members because the team may end up with very few or no original team members. New people who volunteered to join the team were welcome in this study and their contribution to the entire implementation process was significant.

It is also risky not to have a work plan for the entire team once the activities have been prioritised, because the team will not know the expected period allocated for each activity and those assigned to perform that particular activity. It could lead to chaos and the objective would not be achieved. The work plan is an important reference point for the coordinating team because it shows the expected timing of each activity and the task team responsible for it. The work plan is also useful for monitoring and reflection by both the coordinating team and the members of each task team. Among other things, the work plan, according to Meka (2009:1-81), ensures the resources and time are efficiently used throughout the life of the project, providing the basis for preparing the project budget and assisting in estimating any costs that will be incurred, taking into account the starting point and duration of each activity. It is therefore important that all the coordinating team members be trained on how to use a work plan and to know its importance for executing the TS strategic plan.

Lastly, the other risk that needed to be taken care of emanates from not constantly briefing the community about the project's achievements and challenges. If the community is not constantly informed about the project it will not be able to assist the coordinating team in meeting challenges that warrant its intervention. This is

because the community would be disengaged with the project and be in the dark about the project's progress. For instance, on the research site there was interference in acquiring venues such as community or library halls for the coordinating team to have meetings.

People from the local municipality who were members of a political party (A) that was in charge of the municipality did not want to avail those facilities to the team because some of the members of the coordinating team were from another political party (B). It was alleged that the political party member who was one of the active members in the coordinating team was going to use the effective TS project as a campaigning tool for the upcoming political elections. Since those allegations were unfounded and that the other members of coordinating team were also the members of political party (A), the coordinating team decided to report this challenge in one of the community briefing meetings. The members of the community who were in that meeting were enraged by that issue. They then sent a delegation to the local municipal manager who was sternly warned that those facilities belonged to the community, not to any political party, therefore they should avail them to the coordinating team with immediate effect. After that intervention by the community, the coordinating team did not struggle to find venues whenever they needed them for meetings. Quigley, Sanchez, Handy, Goble and George (2010:305-331) emphasise that community participation and involvement must be constantly required at all times and at all stages of the research process so that unethical behaviours and conflicts of interests are addressed swiftly.

5.4.5 Evidence of applicability of the framework

This section highlights the evidences of applicability of the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system, which includes the extent to which the components of the TS achieved during this study.

The formation of the coordinating team which took it upon itself to mediate between the institution of higher learning and the marginalised students in order to provide equitable access to effective tutorial support and learner support services, including suitable and appropriate facilities. The coordinating team inculcated the values of

mutual trust, respect and the principles of social justice, peace, equity and hope in the community whose youth felt neglected and isolated. The formation of a common vision was evidence that the broader community knew what it wanted to collaboratively achieve. The unifying vision was a guideline of the direction of the efforts of all members of the team towards the common goal. After the formulation of the compelling and unifying vision, the coordinating team started to analyse the situation in order to collaboratively identify issues that needed urgent attention. It agreed on the techniques that would facilitate the prioritisation of those issues identified in a democratic way in order to reach consensus. The collaborative plan was developed from the activities that were derived from the SWOT analysis, and shared among the task team that was given the responsibility to execute them and provide feedback about progress of each activity. It is evident therefore that in order to implement the TS through a community-based approach, the situational analysis must be conducted and priority given to the activities that will form the collaborative plan.

The coordinating team was familiar with policies for distance education that started with a Green Paper in 2012 to a White Paper that was approved by the Cabinet on November 2013. The White Paper for Post-School Education and Training called for the expansion of education provision to all the citizens of the country, including those living in remote, rural areas that are under-resourced. This policy gave coordinating team the impetus to drive forward the development of the framework for the effective tutor system in order to make educational opportunities, effective tutorial support, support services and facilities available to the affected and marginalised students in the remote areas of the country.

It is through the coordinating team that facilities such as libraries, computers with Internet, classrooms for study space and group discussions were made available to the learners on the research site. Services such as mobile registrations, pre- and post- registration orientations, study skills workshops, basic computer training and training sessions on how to access and use the University's LMS were all made available to the students on the research site on a regular basis throughout the year. Students were also trained in facilitation strategies such as peer teaching, peer tutoring, problem-based learning and cooperative and collaborative learning in order

not feel isolated. They could begin to work together and assist one another, which is one of the SAQA's Critical Cross-field Outcomes that are important. Lastly, local employers were approached to give students internship opportunities so as to acquire skills and experience in their respective fields. For instance, students who studied to be teachers were offered teaching positions as assistant teachers in some of the local schools and the schools paid for their tuition fee at the University as a form of remuneration and incentive to pursue teaching as a profession.

Other evidence for the applicability of the framework for an effective tutor system that is community-based was that the coordinating team constantly monitored the progress of the collaborative plan and where necessary corrective measures were taken in order to drive the plan to the attainment of its objectives. Constant monitoring and reflection helped ensure that the TS was successfully implemented so as to be sustainable. This was achieved because all the members of the coordinating team were involved in the monitoring, reflection and inspection to make sure that the services offered are of high quality.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the community-based tutor system for sustainable learning environments. It showed how the affected people could take a stand in order to change their status quo. We have seen how the students approached the study coordinator and held a meeting in which the broader community discussed the challenges that the young people faced on account of not having access to educational opportunities and the necessary support that could be realised by establishing a community-based tutor system on the research site. The coordinating team was formed in order to plan, implement and drive the collaborative plan in order to achieve the objectives of the framework. A vision was formed and the situational analysis was conducted in order to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that could make the vision realised or that could affect the implementation of the framework. The situational analysis was performed in order to interpret and understand the challenges and factors that could affect the tutor system. This chapter showed that without SWOT analysis it

would be impossible to come up with the strategies that could make the implementation of the framework for effective TS applicable.

The chapter also showed how activities were drawn from the SWOT analysis after prioritisation of urgent issues was conducted. Those activities formed part of the greater collaborative plan which made priorities that included counselling, guidance, administrative and academic support not present before the framework was formulated and implemented.

Monitoring of the collaborative plan and implementation of the framework for TS was critical because there was systematic collection of data, provision of important information, gathering of feedback from the task teams and analysis of the contextual changes critical to the substance of the effective tutor system. This chapter presented evidence in support of the argument that early identification of key success factors and indicators as a result of continuous monitoring and reflection process will render the implementation of the framework for the effective tutor system successful and sustainable. It also showed that there can be a community and university partnership if there is a will from both sides to change the lives of the marginalised and affected people, such as the learners who live in the rural and remote areas.

In this chapter the formulation of the framework towards the enhancement of the effectiveness of a tutor system through community-based approach was outlined. These guidelines were formulated in view of the distance education students who live in remote rural areas being deprived of an effective tutorial support system, student support services and facilities that could enhance teaching and learning. The framework that was outlined in this chapter addressed how the students could be supported through the effective tutor system that is community-based.

Chapter six will conclude the study by discussing the summary, presenting findings and making recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FRAMEWORK

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This study is aimed at formulating a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches at a distance education institution. This chapter discusses the findings and draws conclusions with a view to making recommendations for the enhancement of an effective tutor system. The discussion of the findings, conclusions and recommendations is organised according to the study objectives. The chapter further discusses the limitations of the study and makes suggestions for future research. In conclusion, it presents the value of the study.

6.2 FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This section summarises the findings on the need to formulate a framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through a community-based approach. The findings are presented according to the study objectives, the aim was to formulate a framework towards the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system.

6.2.1 The need to formulate a framework

This section considers the findings in respect of the need to formulate a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches.

6.2.1.1 *Establishment of the coordinating team*

The study found that there was a need to have a team of people who would coordinate all the activities that would make it possible to formulate the framework

for enhancing the effectiveness of the TS because the distance education students on the research site did not have an effective academic and administrative support from the institution concerned. This need for intervention emanated from the initial meeting organised by the concerned students who approached the study coordinator regarding the challenges they were facing with regards to lack of tutorial and administrative support provided by the institution. It was found that many students either dropped out or failed to complete their studies because there was no effective or efficient support provided to them. The situational analysis was critical in identifying the challenges that the community of the research site, the students and the institution had to overcome in order to implement an effective tutor system that would address challenges that the students in remote rural areas faced. As indicated above, the students on the research site were inefficiently supported, thus there was a high failure and drop-out rate. Literature indicates that a student support system is central to any higher education institution, particularly open distance education, and thus the students must be afforded an opportunity to connect with the institution and develop valuable learning experience. It was concluded that it was critical to devise means and ways to assist those students and others who might decide to study through the distance education mode.

It was recommended that a coordinating drawn from all sectors of the community, including the most affected, be established. The distance education students on the research site were included because they provide valuable information on the lack of effective tutorial support system.

6.2.1.2 Formulation of the shared vision

The understanding of the problems in relation to the tutor system would compel the participants and coordinating team to formulate plans that correspond with the nature and extent of complexities found (Zuber-Skeritt, 2011:157-166). This study showed that there was no vision for the TS on the research site mainly because the community did not have an idea of the extent of the problem. The absence of a contextual analysis and deeper understanding of the complexities and other factors made it impossible for the community and the coordinating team to formulate a unifying vision for the framework. It is therefore critical that such a unifying vision

that makes the nature of the problem clear to all concerned be jointly formulated by the participants and coordinating team (see chapter 4 paragraph 4.2.2).

It is necessary to know the context so as to articulate the vision and synergise the participants' diverse views, interests and aspirations. This could be done by allowing full participation and engagement of participants as equals in the deliberations, discussions and debates for the development of a unifying vision and mission of the effective TS, irrespective of individual participants' social standing or status within the community.

It is therefore recommended that the coordinating team and other stakeholders interact cordially and respectfully in the development of the vision, mission and values. The joint formulation of the vision would empower the participants to be aware of the challenges and possible solutions that the distance education students face. They will be able to own the problem and know that the possible solutions lie with all of them.

6.2.1.3 The situational analysis and contextual analysis (SWOT analysis)

The study found no analysis of the situation had been conducted on the research site with regards to the tutor system which could assist in understanding any underlying factors that could hinder the development of the framework. There was no access to basic information of, for instance, how the tutor system operates and how valuable it was to the success of the students studying through the distance education mode. Such information could assist the coordinating team to match the strengths and opportunities to the weaknesses and threats in relation to the TS in their familiar territory, the research site (Howell, Williams & Lindsay, 2003:1) (see chapter 4 paragraph 4.3.3).

The conclusion is that there was lack of contextual and situational analysis to inform the development of the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of tutor system using community-based approaches. This is inherently a key aspect of creating sustainable learning environments. It was therefore recommended that the situational analysis be conducted in order to enable the coordinating team to

minimise and counteract any negative factors that could threaten the development of the framework for the effective tutor system.

6.2.1.4 Prioritisation and priorities for the effective tutor system

The study confirmed the finding that prioritisation leads to the identification of desired inputs and outcomes as espoused by Curran *et al.* (2004:1-42). It is then concluded that it was critical for the coordinating team members and the other participants to be able to identify, list and put priority issues in the order of their importance. It was as such recommended that the participants engage in processes of prioritisation that would enable them to focus their attention on key issues. Prioritisation should be conducted democratically in order to maximise the extent of participation as well as the impact and the use of resources for the benefit of developing the collaborative plan for the effective tutor system (see chapter 4 paragraph 4.3.3).

6.2.1.5 Collaborative planning for effective tutor system

The study found that the collaborative plan was imperative in systematising the processes geared towards achieving the identified priorities. It was as such concluded that it was necessary to determine appropriate activities for each priority, to agree on resources to enhance the achievement of those identified activities as well as to set their respective timeframes. Furthermore, the study found out that it was imperative to build in a collaborative plan for the risks and threats as well as their respective mitigating mechanisms, thus it was concluded that the development of a collaborative plan can be enriched by engagement of the participants from diverse backgrounds who want to achieve a common goal. The study therefore recommended that the participants develop a collaborative plan with a focus on enhancing community participation, that is, the process towards its development should engender values of mutual respect, trust and understanding (see chapter 4 paragraph 4.3.5).

6.2.1.6 *Policy imperatives for effective tutor system*

The study found that the community was not versed in new policies for higher education and training which support the extensive provision of learner support to all students, particularly those studying in a distance education mode. According to the Department of Higher Education and Training's Draft Policy Framework for the Provision of Distance Education in South African Universities the "distance education provision thus needs to rise to the double challenge of providing greater access by doing so in ways that offer a reasonable expectation of turning access into success" (DHET, 2012:8). The emphasis of this policy is that institutions that provide distance education programmes must also provide learner support strategies that are effective and accessible to the students. Equity and access must be provided to students below university level, especially those learners in remote and rural areas of the country (DHET, 2012a:11, 2012b:8). The policy also emphasises that increased access to higher education would be possible if web technologies are used sufficiently and strategically. It therefore urges that institutions of higher learning place greater emphasis on development and use of well-designed learning resources and integrated, structured support (DHET, 2012a:33).

The effective tutor system is an initiative that seeks to contribute to addressing the challenges of turning access into success as well as equitable consideration for the underprivileged. DHET policy on post-school education favours underprivileged youth in under-resourced communities such as the research site, deprived of their right to access education and the opportunity to succeed in that regard because of a lack of effective and efficient support provided to them. It was evident that the coordinating team were unable to draw on its customised policy to support the establishment of the TS on the research site, having no basic knowledge of the DHET policy on higher education or what it espouses to achieve with regards to turning access into success. The study therefore recommends that the community of the research site be briefed about this DHET policy so that it can draw from it its own customised policy that will address issues related to tutorial support system and student support services that affect the community.

6.2.1.7 Monitoring and reflection of the effective tutor system

Monitoring, according to Curran *et al.* (2004:1-44), is the regular observation and recording of activities that are taking place in a project or programme and a process of routinely gathering information on all aspects of the programme. Monitoring and reflection is therefore critical for enhancing the sustenance of the tutor system, as the team collect data, provide information, gather feedback, analyse contextual changes, and provide early warning systems of potential challenges to stakeholders and the participants on continuous basis (Bamberger *et al.*, 1986:6; UNESCO, 2009:10). The study found that on the research site there was no monitoring and reflection conducted with the involvement of the affected participants, in this case the students. There were no key success factors identified or key success indicators to assess whether the factors that drive the implementation of the TS would be successful.

It is recommended that there be a well-articulated commonly defined vision of what needs to be achieved with regards to the TS and a concerted effort to monitor and reflect on issues that affect the design and implementation of the framework. It is also recommended that feedback be constantly provided on the progress of the effective TS and the related important information is reported regularly for decision-making purposes for the sake of improving the performance of the effective TS.

6.2.2 Components for the formulation of framework

Identification of the components for the formulation of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches was found to be critical. This section therefore documents the findings in respect of those components.

6.2.2.1 The establishment of the coordinating team

The study found that the establishment of the coordinating team was critical because its leadership could influence the social change by steering the TS towards the commonly envisioned goals. The coordinating team's function would be to lead, manage and give direction towards the successful implementation of the community-

based tutor system. In this research site there was no collective decision-making and sharing of ideas and power was non-existent. It was therefore critical to establish a dedicated team of people who would strive to bring together people of diverse backgrounds and status in order to create social consensus with regards to the formulation and implementation of the effective tutor system. The study found that the leadership and efforts of this team would translate the ministry of education's vision of making the provision of higher education accessible and equitable to even the remotest of students through the establishment of a tutor system through community-based approach on the research site and other under-resourced communities.

The distance education students on the research site who felt isolated and marginalised were brought in to be part of a team that worked to resolve the challenges that they felt, by collaboratively establishing the tutor system that was effective in their community (see chapter 4 paragraph 4.3.1). The study therefore recommends the establishment of a dedicated team that would facilitate the processes for the formulation and implementation of the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system. This team should ensure the provision of leadership and management which is underpinned by the democratic values and principles of social justice, peace, hope, equity and freedom. These should in turn enable the coordinating team to facilitate the processes of formulation of a vision successfully.

6.2.2.2 The common vision for the effective tutor system

The vision for the effective tutor system should be a unifying one that clarifies the nature of the problem, and fosters and deepens the coordinating team's understanding of the challenges of not having the tutor system that is effective on the research site. It is through such a vision as articulated by the coordinating team that the goal of the TS would be directed to the acquisition of learner support systems and processes that aim at enhancing the achievement of equity and access to effective teaching and learning opportunities to the affected students on the research site.

The study therefore recommends that the coordinating team formulate a clear, inspiring and common vision which will serve as a foundation for unity of purpose in the community with people of diverse backgrounds. The vision for the implementation of TS, when combined with the sense of community, should urge the community to achieve a common goal that will benefit all the residents of the community, in particular its youth. The coordinating team's vision that involved the relevant parties was essential in PAR because those parties were actively examining the current action or situation in order to change and improve it for the better by establishing the effective TS on the research site.

6.2.2.3 SWOT Analysis for the effective tutor system

Situational analysis is found to be critical in formulation and implementation of the effective tutor system because the consultative process is encouraged where the views and opinions of all the participants are earnestly sought. The coordinating team could, through the SWOT analysis, enhance the interpretation and understanding of challenges and factors that could positively or negatively affect the implementation of the effective tutor system. By matching strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats the coordinating team could minimise the impact of the threats to the implementation of TS. This could be done by planning for the risks and threats that could emerge during the implementation process of the TS. It is therefore important to emphasise that SWOT analysis is conducted to assess the current status quo with regards to the tutor system and to predict possible future occurrences and trends in relation to this community development project. Thus, the study concluded that the situational analysis was an important component when formulating and implementing the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system.

The recommendation was that the participation of the community members in analysing its situation was imperative and should be undertaken. This should help the community to know its present state, its capabilities and limitations with regard to the processes of development and implementation of a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system.

6.2.2.4 Prioritisation for the effective tutor system

Prioritisation leads to the identification of desired inputs and outcomes, when the identified issues are listed in their order of importance by the community or the coordinating team. It also helps the community to focus on key issues in order to maximise impact and use their resources as effectively as possible. In this case, the coordinating team used SWOT analysis to prioritise the competing issues that needed urgent attention. The coordinating team has to decide and agree on the technique(s) or process to be used to objectively rank those important issues in a democratic and consensus-building manner. The democratic manner or techniques used for prioritisation means that the process should enable all participants to be given equal opportunities to choose their preferred issues. The chosen process or technique would encourage consensus and guard against possible conflict among the participants, making the participants collectively own those priority issues.

6.2.2.5 Collaborative planning for the effective tutor system

The factors that were prioritised according to their importance were then grouped in order to be allocated to each task team. This was then the beginning of the planning process. Participation of all the coordinating team members in the planning process in this study was critical because planning strategically sets out what is to be achieved. It also provides the team with the systematic approach by which it would want to achieve its goals in relation to the implementation of the effective tutor system. The coordinating team, after prioritising those important and urgent factors or issues, drew up a strategy by which those factors were going to be approached and executed. This process was not carried out by certain individuals but by all the members of the coordinating team, thus a collaborative planning process.

It is therefore recommended that decision-making should be a joint effort of all the coordinating team members so that they are empowered to resolve any conflict that may emerge in the future in relation to the implementation of the TS. Sharing of views and ideas is encouraged because it is believed that when people plan together they produce a good plan that they own and therefore are galvanised to implement.

6.2.2.6 *Policy for the effective tutor system*

The study found that having a policy that supports the tutor system is important because it gives the coordinating team the guidelines and direction by which the implementation of the TS could be based. Recent DHET policies such as The White Paper on Post-School Education give the coordinating team members direction on how the government wants to expand educational opportunities to the remotest areas in the country and how the students need to be supported irrespective of their location. Policies, according to Nel (2006:46), are geared towards enabling people in the same space to find common ground and resolve inherent conflict. It is therefore through the backing of the policy that the coordinating team could implement the TS successfully without inhibitions, because the DHET policy acknowledges that it is critical that students be supported by the institutions concerned. It encourages the expansion of the higher education operations in order to reach and support the off-campus students.

This study recommends that the coordinating team interrogate the current government policies in order to articulate its own localised policy for TS that has a backing of the DHET policy. With such a policy, harmony and peace among the participants with diverse backgrounds and belief systems would be fostered.

6.2.2.7 *Tutor training for the effective tutor system*

Tutor training is one the important components of successful implementation of the framework of the effective TS because the best performing tutors are those who are trained, supervised and have a close collaboration with the subject lecturer or the faculty. A best practice tutoring programme provides initial and continuous training opportunities to build the capacity of tutors to best meet student needs (Bixby *et al.*, 2011:1-69). The appropriately trained tutors would enable learners to pursue their studies in a way that is appropriate for their circumstances, learning goals and styles. Such tutors would encourage active learning, problem-solving and critical thinking, and encourage cooperation and working together of students and self-regulated learning (SAQA, 2001).

This study therefore recommends that tutors appointed in the tutor system be trained in effective instructional strategies that engage students effectively as well as personally. It also encourages contact sessions between the tutors and the students to be conducted regularly in order to sustain, to contain, to support and to nourish the students' learning experience. Consistent contact helps learners feel that they are in a safe learning environment in which they are encouraged to ask questions freely in order to reveal their uncertainties, and explore new dimensions of their studies. The study also encourages tutors, besides being responsible for helping the students academically, to provide support with contextual issues that may affect learning, and administrative support where possible. They should also encourage contact between student and faculty because that is an important factor in student motivation.

6.2.2.8 Learner support for the effective tutor system

Learner support is defined by Garrison and Baynton (1987:3-15) as the resources that the learners can access in order to carry out a learning process. Literature also found that guidance, counselling, administrative support and assignment feedback are critical components of learner support that would in the case of the implementation of effective TS be invaluable, especially when the students are living far from the institution's regional centres. Services such as pre-registration counselling are seen as critical because they enhance students' choice of subjects as well as guidance and counselling which are seen as important when it comes to student retention and throughput.

Literature shows that remote students lack academic integration, counselling, libraries, tutorial support and administrative support, which includes admission procedures, registration process, delivery of study materials, the submission of assignments, provision of tutorial venues and issue of tutorial schedules. These students therefore are denied the basic components of learner support and their chance of success and completion of their study programmes is limited. It is critical according to this study for the TS to take cognisance of these important factors in order to incorporate them in the implementation plan of the framework for effective TS through a community-based approach on the research site. The study also

recommends that any tutorial support strategy, whether face-to-face tutorials, telephone support, online instructional support through e-mail, discussion boards or synchronous chats, be monitored.

This monitoring of tutor performance must be performed by academic or course coordinators who would visit the face-to-face tutorial sessions and review both the sample of marked assignments and student feedback on the tutorials and other services provided by the tutorial programme in the TS. This study therefore recommends that student support, both academic and administrative, be one of the cornerstones of the implementation of the framework for the effective tutor system on the research site.

6.2.2.9 Facilities, infrastructure/resources and media for the effective tutor system

The success of the effective tutor system requires human and non-human resources to guide and facilitate the educational provision. The facilities that are appropriate and suitable are infrastructure and media, which include libraries, various media and software programmes, the aim of which is to enhance effective achievement of the objectives that are geared towards a shared vision to bring the educational opportunities, effective tutorial support and efficient student services. Tutors play an important role in guiding and directing the students to achieve their goals and the use of appropriate resources, facilities and media is critical to the implementation of the successful and effective TS. There are real-time media such as interactive television, video and teleconferencing which when utilised correctly by the trained tutors play an important role in facilitating the learning process.

This study therefore recommends that the provision of the effective TS be achieved by collaboratively acquiring appropriate facilities, infrastructure and media in local schools, Churches, Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs), tele-centres and local libraries for access to computers and study space. These objectives would be achieved if the coordinating team were to work tirelessly in implementing the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system on the research site. The coordinating team should be aware that government encourages collaboration with

MPCCs, schools, colleges and university campuses to be used as centres of support for distance higher education students (DHET, 2013:1-40).

6.2.2.10 Monitoring and reflection for the effective tutor system

In order for the formulation and implementation of the framework for effective TS to be successful and sustainable, consistent monitoring and reflection are critical. It is through monitoring and reflection that progress could be assessed against the common and shared vision that the coordinating team had articulated. It needs to develop systems that could monitor, evaluate and track all the stages of the evolution of the TS in order to assess the sustainability and impact of its efforts over a certain timespan.

In this study the task teams were given the opportunity to perform certain activities and were expected to give feedback to the entire coordinating team about what had been achieved and what still needed to be done. All the teams had the work plans which stipulated the responsible person for each activity and the timeframes allocated for the accomplishment of the particular activity. These work plans were completed and put together by all the teams in order to be discussed and where possible advice was given to that team for the sake of progress. This process therefore meant that joint monitoring and reflection was conducted because the assessment of the activities and the suggested way forward was provided during that process by the coordinating team.

6.2.3 Conditions conducive to enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system

The determination of the conditions conducive to the implementation of the framework for effectiveness of the community-based tutor system is important. The following components were identified as conditions that could make possible the implementation of the framework.

6.2.3.1 *Dedicated team*

The democratic selection of the team assigned to direct, lead and manage the implementation of the framework is an important condition. The smooth running of the framework is possible because the dedicated team comprise like-minded people who have a common vision, even though they may have diverse backgrounds, experiences and expertise. This team mediate between the learners or participants and the institution of higher learning concerned and this process facilitates open expression of views, ideas and concerns of the learners who felt marginalised by lack of effective tutorials and efficient student support services in their area.

Besides the provision of leadership and management of the implementation of framework for effective TS, the coordinating team generates valuable data and information about the community's assets and opportunities that may be very useful to the success of the framework. This information together with clear understanding of the community's concerns and their priority issues helps the team to articulate and develop the vision and define the mission for the effective tutor system.

It also clear from the literature that choosing people not only by their status but also their skills, expertise and commitment and love of being of service to the community is paramount for community-based initiative such as this one (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2006:47; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:44-61, Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32). In Nigeria and Namibia (Ambe-Uva, 2007:73; Ali, 1999:1-6, Haufiku, n.d.:1) the formation of a committee to chart a way forward to establish learning centres in the distance education environment for the masses of the people who could for various reasons not attend full-time residential institution demonstrated the importance of selecting such a coordinating team.

In this study one of the important lessons learnt is that the community members must be given an opportunity to decide on the process and procedure to be followed in order to form such a coordinating team. The community of the research site therefore decided that people should first be given the opportunity to volunteer to be members of the coordinating team. The reason for this was drawn from the community's past experiences in which people who were selected were not dedicated and committed to the course for which they were selected in the service of the community. It was also learnt that the people should be given the opportunity to

freely voice their concerns and views in this regard, especially the most affected. If people are given the opportunity to address their challenges in an open communicative space they are therefore empowered to believe that they are capable of devising solutions to their problems. This is giving the people hope where they have not had before, summed up by Chrislip (1995:2) as follows: “If you bring the appropriate people together in constructive ways with good information, they will create authentic visions and strategies for addressing the shared concerns of the organisation and community.” In this case the inclusion of the students in the coordinating team was critical because they were most affected by the lack of effective TS in their community, hence their approaching the study coordinator to intervene.

6.2.3.2 *Unifying vision*

This study found that the formation of the unifying vision which clarifies the nature of the problem that brings together the community and the coordinating team was also a condition conducive to implementing the effective TS framework. This is because when the people work together towards achieving a unifying vision their understanding of all the complexities, challenges and other factors inherent in the issue at hand is deepened. Having one common goal unifies the community toward achieving that set goal and thus there is shared identity and reciprocity among the community members. That reciprocity, according to Shortell *et al.*, (2002:49-91), “is premised on a non-exploitative value system.”

In this study the formulation of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the TS was motivated by dire need to enhance learners’ equitable access to educational opportunities and tutorial and student support, a common phenomenon in countries such as Nigeria (Ajadi *et al.*, 2008:61-62); Namibia (Haufiku, n.d.:1) and Malaysia (Ng & Kong, 2009:363-364). These countries identified the need to expand educational opportunities to the masses of the population in remote areas who are poor, neglected and marginalised. They perceived that equitable access to tutorial and student support services including the appropriate educational resources was critical. As Mahlomaholo & Netshandama (2012:37) argue, such access to educational resources is a fundamental right that calls for social change for social

justice and hope. The coordinating team in this study developed the vision and mission for effective TS that clarifies the problem that the community and youth are experiencing. The students who were affected by the lack of tutorial support and other student support services were given the power and hope for being involved in the formulation of the vision for the TS on the research site. This involvement of the community and students has developed into the ownership and support of the vision which is the important foundation for the implementation of the framework for the envisioned TS that is effective. This is supported by Jason *et al.* (2004:2), who write that: “when people are involved in the planning and implementation of solutions to community issues, they will feel they own the process, and work to make it successful.”

It is therefore evident that the unifying vision is critical as a condition conducive to the implementation of the framework for the effective tutor system on the research site. In other words the implementation of the framework for the effective TS through community-based approach will thrive if there is the unifying vision. In order to deeply understand the problems and needs that would make the TS successful, it was imperative to analyse the context of TS on the research site.

6.2.3.3 *Situational analysis*

Contextual analysis enhances and deepens the understanding of the problem and engenders the development of mechanisms and plans for addressing the challenges inherent in the implementation of a TS framework. A SWOT analysis was therefore used to generate a list of issues that are feasible and likely to promote positive change with regards to the planning for implementation of the effective tutor system. Through a SWOT analysis resources were identified and their allocation to specific activities performed by the coordinating team through brainstorming sessions. Issues that were jointly identified were listed in the order of importance before prioritisation could take place.

Knowing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of one’s community is important for the implementation of the TS. The community or the coordinating team become empowered by analysing the situation, identifying the problems, and coming

up with actions to resolve those identified problems. By doing this the community or the coordinating team develop a sense of self-determination and capacity. Laverack and Labonte (2000:260) found a close connection between participation and leadership in the community-based project.

The process of SWOT analysis requires active participation and engagement of all the coordinating team members and other stakeholders without any discrimination or exclusion. The SWOT analysis should focus on the vision that was formulated earlier and conducted in an environment in which there is mutual respect and humility in order to encourage free contribution of views and suggestions from all the participants. SWOT analysis helped the coordinating team to minimise the negative impact of threats, such as the lack of insufficient number of students who study through the University on the research site, lack of qualified and well trained tutors, and lack of study space and Internet connected computers. The SWOT analysis enabled the team to plan for such risks and threats that could affect the implementation of the framework for the effective TS. The environmental scanning and analysis of the research site enabled the coordinating team to access valuable information by which it could circumvent some of the factors that could hinder or impede the implementation of the framework for the TS on the research site. SWOT analysis is therefore a condition conducive to prioritisation of the important and urgent issues and activities in relation to the implementation of framework for effective TS on the research site.

6.2.3.4 Prioritisation of priority

Prioritisation leads to the identification of desired inputs and outcomes and this is the process which is performed after the SWOT analysis has been conducted. It is through prioritisation that the communities according to UNESCO (2009:41) focus on key issues in order to maximise the impact and use of available resources.

The priorities in this study were the students, the availability of qualified and well-trained tutors, tutorial support and student support services, teaching and learning resources and infrastructure, student finances, effective teaching and learning strategies, media, recruitment of tutors and students, monitoring and evaluation

systems and processes. All these priorities were considered important for the implementation of the effective tutor system but were then re-prioritised by selecting those that the coordinating team felt and agreed required urgent attention. This process emphasises that prioritisation is a process that needs the involvement of the concerned community and must lead to consensus. In Africa many countries, such as RSA, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, have prioritised access to and expansion of higher education opportunities through the provision of distance education in order to address mass illiteracy, poverty, squalor and general low levels of development.

This study found that prioritisation is a condition conducive to the implementation of the framework for effective TS as it allows members of the coordinating team to interrogate the issues surrounding implementation. In this study those who felt marginalised were enabled to decide on which factors needed attention more than others in order to resolve the problems and issues that affected their studies. Nobody was allowed to decide for them what was right or wrong, but they as members of the community who were affected participated fully in the prioritisation process and gave invaluable inputs because they had first-hand experience of the current tutor system that was not effective.

6.2.3.5 *Collaborative planning*

In order for the framework for the effective TS to be successfully implemented, collaborative planning which is a systematic approach to effectively achieve the prioritised issues must be conducted. This collaborative planning occurs when the community or the coordinating team is involved in the allocation of resources that could enhance the implementation of the framework for TS on the research site. Community involvement is regarded as the most effective strategy for the success of local education development, especially the TS that is community-based because the broader community has a common goal for the educational development and appropriate support for its youth. Okitsu (2012:33) asserts that it is through community participation that the public accountability is improved. It is through collaborative planning and information sharing that the local coordinating team would begin to realise that they are empowered to make decisions that should assist the community they are serving with educational development initiatives, in this case the

implementation of effective TS through community-based approach. As Labonte and Laverack (2001:260) observed (see par 6.3.6.3 above) that the identification of problems, solutions to the problems and actions to resolve the problems are an indication of an empowered coordinating team and other stakeholders who have developed a sense of self-determination and capacity to perform the tasks that they are requested to accomplish on behalf of the community.

The conditions conducive to the implementation of the framework also depend on the collaborative planning as it is an approach that equitably involves all the coordinating team members and other stakeholders in the planning process, and it recognises the unique strengths that each brings about for social change. According to Minkler and Wallerstein, (2010:4), it makes the participants feel empowered to improve a community's need for accessing effective tutorial and student support services and educational opportunities so as to eliminate educational disparities. In the context of sustainable learning empowering environments the focus of inclusion of the community in planning for the implementation of the tutor system is crucial (Sonnekus *et al.*, 2005:50; Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:54).

This study tells the reader that in order to establish a framework for an effective tutor system there must be a consensus among the participants with regard to the need for such a system that is particularly expressed by the distance education students in the community. According to Baksh and Munro (2009:4-50) and Desai and Kulkarni (2008:255-270) learning for development must start from each community's identity and common purpose. Literature shows that not all community-based tutoring systems and other community-based initiatives have been successful, therefore it is critical that the need, vision, contextual analysis and planning be conducted in a collaborative manner whereby all the sectors of the community are allowed to be involved and fully participate in the whole process.

6.2.3.6 *Policy provisions*

As policy serves to give effect to the legislative imperatives which determine the direction of the institutions it in turn represents the will of the public, especially in a democratic country. Haufiku (n.d.:1) observes that institutions of higher education

around the world have been challenged to transform their policies and procedures to accommodate an ever-growing number of learners, especially those who cannot be absorbed by the conventional residential institutions. In order to do this they had to redesign their programmes and apply effective learner support services and systems. This transformation of policies is seen particularly in countries such as Namibia, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and many other developing countries, where the principles of social justice and equity inform policy and legislation (Ajadi *et al.*, 2008:63; Ali, 1999:1-6; DHET, 2012:5-11; RSA, 1996:s16).

Initially, on the research site the provisions of policy were not taken into consideration therefore there was no local policy regarding the TS. After the community and coordinating team were made aware of the DHET policy and what the Constitution says about education, they were galvanised to work together to bring in ideas in order to solve challenges such as lack of student services and student support in their community. They began to see that the policy of DHET (2012: 1-33) and DHET (2013:1-66) were showing them the direction which must be taken in order to make it possible for the youth to access educational opportunities and the necessary academic and administrative support within their community. Policy provision in this study thus played an important role in providing the coordinating team with the direction towards the implementation of the framework for community-based tutor system. Irvin and Stansbury (2004:55-65) also observe that where community participation takes place dissent is rare. It is therefore difficult to envision any negative issues from community members who have joined the policy process, collaborating with others and reaching consensus to bring about positive social and environmental change. Good policy-making, according Bullock *et al.*, (2001:25), depends on high quality information and evidence accessible to the policymakers.

6.2.3.7 *The tutor training*

The best performing tutors are those who are constantly trained in effective instructional strategies and have close collaboration with subject lecturer or the faculty (Moreno-López, Somacarrera-Pérez, Díaz-Rodríguez, Campo-Trapezo, & Cano- Sánchez, 2009:583-587; O'Rourke, 2003:18; Nagra & Ngwarai, 2013:42-54;

Musal *et al.*, 2009:4; Underhill & McDonald, 2010:91-106). The community-based tutoring therefore will thrive if the tutors are well trained not only on teaching methodologies but also on how new technologies are used for teaching and learning. Moss *et al.* (2001:1) also observe that the continuous training of tutors is critical to the success of a tutorial programme and consistent feedback to the tutors is good for their professional development.

This study therefore highlights that tutor training is a condition that must be seriously taken into consideration by the coordinating team as it is conducive to the implementation of the successful TS through community-based approach. It is important to have a pool of tutors who are well trained in facilitation strategies and the utilisation of teaching and learning technologies on the research site so as to produce outcomes that would benefit the students who are enrolled in the TS programme. Tutors who are trained encourage student participation, which according to the CER principles promotes critical thinking, self-reflection, and dialogue and raise consciousness (Biesta, 2012:39). Tutors who are well trained will make sure that the Critical Cross-fields Outcomes are included in the teaching and learning activities, and they would encourage active learning and collaborative problem solving and answering of questions. The tutors who are well trained would make the tutor system successful, therefore their involvement in the TS creates a condition conducive to the implementation of the framework for effective tutor system.

6.2.3.8 *Learner support*

Provision of learner support is critical because it is a process in which learners are provided with a range of services by also making use of technology for tutoring at a distance, contact tutoring, assignment tutoring, mentoring where appropriate, counselling (both remote and face-to-face), and the stimulation of peer support structures. Garrison and Baynton (1987:7) define learner support as the resources that learners can access in order to carry out the learning processes. It is provided in many developing countries in Africa and Asia mainly because these have large populations living in remote rural areas. Higher education in these countries has shifted from that which was accessible to the elites to that which is expanded to the

entire population, irrespective of status. This is a system that fosters democratic nation-building and social cohesion (Jones *et al.*, 200:5-6; Underhill & McDonald, 2010:93)

The provision of a tutor system that is community-based is part of learner support therefore it is critical for students to be provided with such support, especially those who are still new in the higher education environment (Asún, Ruiz, Aceituno, Venegas & Reinoso, 2012:321-338; Kramer, 2003:9). The student-centric institution according to Kramer (2003:9) and Lee (2003:183) is one in which the most important constituents are the students, and the ultimate criterion for success is the promotion of their learning.

Learner support is critical to student learning experience and it is in line with community-based tutor system in which the students are given an opportunity to connect with each other and for a special relationship to develop between them and the faculty or entire institution of higher learning. It is through learner support that student satisfaction increases, retention rates improve and the institution benefits in immeasurable ways (Kramer, 2003:61).

This study therefore shows that student support is critical to the implementation of the framework for community-based tutor system, thus it is regarded as a condition conducive to the successful and effective TS framework.

6.2.3.9 *Appropriate facilities, infrastructure/resources and media*

It is critical to have appropriate facilities, infrastructure, resources and media in order to efficiently and effectively implement a framework for the effective tutor system. The facilities and resources that are used to support, guide and facilitate education provision, according to Garrison and Baynton (1987:7) could be categorised as human and non-human. The human resources that are used to facilitate education provision include the tutor or facilitators who through their guidance and direction could make the learning experience of students enhanced and students' goals achievable. The non-human media that are dominant in teaching and learning are information technologies that range from radio, tape recorders, pre-recorded DVDs and computers. Other media utilised for facilitation of learning are video/desktop

conferencing facilities which are interactive and cell phones, IPADs and other new PDAs utilised for Mobile-learning purposes. There are new innovations that are rapidly emerging each day because of information technology and communication (ITC). These innovations are not only coming from the developed countries but also from the developing countries that have the challenges of having larger part of their population who live in the remote and under-resources areas.

Infrastructure such as electricity, bandwidth, telephones lines, network coverage, proper roads and airwaves are important for the successful and efficient expansion and of educational opportunities to as many people as possible. Some of the facilities, such as computer laboratories, libraries and study space are critical in order to support students, although some of the developing countries cannot afford to make them available on a larger scale because of their economic challenges. Despite significant progress in expanding basic ICT services and applications, the majority of the Zimbabwe Open University regional centres do not have telephone, fax, computers or Internet services. This lack of provision of services by the institution leads to inefficient service delivery and results in poor academic performance of the students (Mafa *et al.*, 2013:11-17).

This study shows the importance of acquiring the appropriate facilities, media and infrastructure. It is therefore critical for the coordinating team that is assigned to implement the TS to seriously consider the acquisition of those resources and facilities in implementing the framework for TS. Some of these facilities could be acquired through negotiations with other stakeholders in and outside the community. For instance, the coordinating team on the research site negotiated with the Provincial Department of Arts and Culture to avail their Internet connected computers that are placed in the libraries to the local distance education students. The students were allocated certain periods on which they could access the computers. This agreement has gone a long way in making possible for students to access the Internet, access the University LMS and even send assignments electronically to the University faculty.

The availability of resources and facilities create a condition conducive to the implementation of the tutor system.

6.2.3.10 *Monitoring and reflection*

Monitoring is continuing review and collection of data which assist in the determination of anticipated outcomes, and it is an essential part of evaluation. Evaluation according to Bemberger *et al.* (1986:6) and UNESCO (2009:10) refers to the systematic collection of information conducted during or after a project in order to make judgments about effectiveness against anticipated outcomes and to help inform decisions about future interventions. It is important to note that the main reason for monitoring and evaluation is to determine whether the intended outcomes or goals of the project are achieved so as to be able re-adjust or use the available resources appropriately in order to achieve those pre-planned outcomes.

In this study the coordinating team began to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the framework for effective TS immediately when tasks and activities were allocated to each of the five task teams. This was done by providing each task team coordinator with a work plan which specified each task and activity to be accomplished and the timeframes. Each gave feedback to the entire coordinating team about the tasks that were assigned to them and the progress on each activity. By documenting each achievement, the coordinating team could assess progress against well-specified outcomes.

This study therefore spells out the importance of monitoring and evaluation which are used to determine the outcomes or goals jointly set for each task team by the entire coordinating team. The coordinating team in return assists the task teams that encounter challenges and hindrances to accomplish its task by giving advice and provide precautions where necessary. Monitoring and reflection is an important component that provides the framework for effective TS with a condition conducive to its effective implementation on the research site.

6.2.4 Risks and threats

This section deals with the possible risks and threats that may hinder the successful implementation of the framework for community-based tutor system. These risks and threats need to be identified, assessed and evaluated by the coordinating team in order to be able to circumvent them or mitigate their impact.

6.2.4.1 *Coordinating team*

The study found that the formulation of the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system would not succeed if there was no coordinating team selected by the community to represent its aspirations. If the community is not involved in the project there would not be ownership of the project, therefore it would not have the necessary support for it to succeed and be sustained. The study also shows that if there was no coordinating team there would not be direction, leadership or management of the project, and the project would not achieve its objectives or expected outcomes that would be beneficial to the community and to the most affected people, the students.

This study found that it is important to involve the most affected people in a community-based project such as this one. Their experience and influence is pivotal in ensuring access to resources and knowledge of public education-related issues. This helped the community in guarding against the involvement of the elites who may marginalise the affected people and derail the entire project from its intended objective. It also reveals that any project that is meant to benefit the community must be initiated, planned, implemented and monitored by the affected people within the community. If the broader community and the affected people are not involved from the onset the project would be aimless because it will not address the issues that affect the students who may feel marginalised by not getting the effective tutor support and efficient student support services from the concerned university. It also means that there would not be any mutual agreement or consensus among the people with diverse backgrounds, views and interests within the community. The study recommends that a dedicated team should mediate and influence social change with the most affected people. It should also facilitate the opening of communicative space wherein the excluded and the subjugated are afforded the opportunity to openly and freely voice their concerns regarding the implementation of framework for the effective tutor system.

6.2.4.2 *Vision*

One the important role of the coordinating team is to formulate a unifying vision which clarifies the nature of the problem, in this case the lack of tutorial and administrative support. Without the unifying vision which inculcates the habit of working together as a team, the coordinating team would not know what the community wants the team or individuals to achieve and accomplish with regards to the implementation of the framework for the effective TS. The absence of vision negatively affects the understanding of the challenges and other factors that could impede the implementation of framework for the effective TS. It would also seriously demotivate the participants who are supposed to diligently work out plans to address the identified challenges that would affect the successful implementation of the framework effective tutor system.

Since the overarching vision of the framework for the envisaged TS is to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through the community-based approaches it further enhances equity and access through the redistribution of educational resources, skills and competences to the less advantaged learners who live in the remote and under-resourced communities. It is therefore critical to share this vision with the whole community on the research site. If the community members may not be the owners of the vision of the framework they may not fully support the framework for the TS. That would be the greatest threat to the framework.

6.2.4.3 *Situational analysis and prioritisation*

The SWOT analysis was a planning tool that helped the coordinating team to answer pertinent questions. The study thus concluded that the situational analysis should enable the participants to be aware of some of the facilities, resources and media that could be available and accessible to the learners. It enabled the facilitation of exploratory processes through which possible solutions to the problems and challenges were achieved. It was possible for the community to decide on the alternative direction or route to take in order to circumvent impediments. Situational analysis, made it possible to identify the desired inputs and outcomes in relation to the tutor system. These inputs and outputs were prioritised by listing them in their

order of importance, thus the study was able to maintain focus on important issues that needed careful consideration.

The study therefore recommends that there be an agreement among the participants with regard to the criteria, process and technique that would be used for prioritisation of the listed issues. The coordinating team should as far as practicable facilitate the process of engendering a sense of cooperative and participatory action among the community members. The prioritisation technique should not be imposed on the participants but discussed until consensus is reached. Whatever process or procedure is suggested must be explained in simple terms and language comprehensible to all.

6.2.4.4 Collaborative planning

Collaborative planning is a process of joint decision-making among the stakeholders. This is carried out in order to resolve problematic issues that are related to planning or the management of issues. Priorities that need to be urgently addressed, tackled and accomplished are clearly set out and stakeholders or the coordinating team provided with a systematic approach to achieve the priorities set out. The results are effectively achieved from the resources that are available to the coordinating team. It beckons the participants to respond to the questions of how the TS priorities could be realised, and enhances community participation that requires clear understanding of the attitude of the community wherein the effective TS is to be implemented.

It is therefore important that the collaborative planning process be democratic and participatory otherwise the participants will not contribute their views or knowledge to the formation and implementation. There would be no consensus reached by the participants if the space were not opened for all those involved to air their views. Allowing all participants to fully participate in the planning and decision making process makes them feel that they are adequately heard and the sense of equal power and responsibility is developed. According to this study an effective collaborative planning process for the framework for effective tutor system requires formulation of a vision statement on desired developments and growth. It also

requires joint formulation of TS goals and objectives, and planning on how the strategies could be monitored and revised.

Without collaborative planning for a community-based tutor system, tapping into community competence will not occur. It further means that the capacity-building, resources and problem-solving abilities of individuals and the community will not occur. Planning on the research site would be pointless and as a result the formulation and the establishment of effective TS would be at a risk.

6.2.4.5 The tutor training

A tutor needs training in order to be effective, irrespective of whether it is a face-to-face or on-line tutoring. He or she should acquire facilitation skills because he/she is expected to facilitate and guide the learning of students so that they gain knowledge and understanding of the presented subject content. To achieve this the tutors should develop and practice a multitude of skills and facilitation strategies that would enhance skills and competences. The typical duties of a tutor include ensuring that the students understand the subject matter and have academic support in the subject matter, with guidance, counselling and pastoral care. The tutor is expected therefore to provide academic and non-academic support. Academic support includes supporting students with cognitive, intellectual and knowledge issues of specific course, while the non-academic or counselling support is the support of students in the effective and organisational aspects of the students' studies. This therefore means the tutor's role is both pastoral and academic, and includes marking of assignments and coursework, and provision of feedback on the submitted material.

The study shows that if a tutor is not trained he/she will not be able to effectively facilitate learning. If that happens, the implementation of the framework for effective tutor system may be seriously threatened and its main objective of providing students with the necessary tutorial support and student support services would be compromised. Access to educational opportunities and appropriate resources would not be achieved. A tutor who is not trained would not be able to teach, guide, motivate the students, or encourage active learning and collaborative learning by

creating a climate of respect and acceptance among the students. Failure to fulfil all these and other requirements, such as problem-solving and self-regulated learning would mean the whole purpose of the implementation would be compromised.

6.2.4.6. *Student support*

Learner support, according to Garrison and Baynton (1987:7) is defined as the resources that learners can access in order to carry out the learning process. These resources could be human or non-human “to guide and facilitate the educational transaction”. Learner support services therefore concern interactions that facilitate the learning process and may include face-to-face tutorials, telephone tutorials, outreach visits, on-campus study schools, as well as written correspondence, possibly through assignments (Sewart, 1993:3-12; Thorpe, 2002:105-119). According to Kramer (2003:11), the purpose of the academic services, from the perspective of the student, are institutional programmes, learning opportunities, and interventions that enrich or supplement learning and personal development. They also correct or ameliorate academic or personal knowledge shortfalls, skills deficiencies, or maladaptive attitude and prevent the occurrence of foreseeable personal or academic difficulties, or make the University life more convenient or pleasant. The most important purpose of academic services or support according to Kramer is to enrich the educational experiences and learning of all students irrespective of whether they are on-campus or off-campus students.

Administrative support is another type of support service associated with learning at a distance and may include enrolment advice and counselling (Kramer, 2003:11). The learner support services are critical to the success of the students in their learning process, therefore they must be equitably provided to all students irrespective of their geographical location.

The equitable provision of learner support services is crucial to the throughput rate or success rate of students in higher education irrespective of whether the student lives in the urban or remote rural areas (Qakisa-Makoe, 2005:44-61; Benza *et al.*, 1999:1-6; Kangai *et al.*, 2011:12-32). It has been noted, however, that most of the institutions of higher learning in the developing countries are unable to provide these

services to the students who stay in remote rural areas thus such students feel isolated and the attrition or drop-out rate is high among these students.

This study shows that the students who are not provided with the learner support services such as face-to-face tutorials, encouragement to pursue advanced topics in a discipline, relate classroom experience to their life and integrate knowledge, receive timely feedback and have access to library services, will either drop-out or fail. This would threaten the success of the implementation of the TS framework on the research site. In Nigeria, for instance, according to Ukpo (2005:253-261), high failure rate was attributed to late arrival of study material and involvement of students in other economic activities as they were either employed or self-employed. The most important factor attributed to this failure rate was poor quality learner support services, more especially in study centres that are under-sourced and overstretched.

This study therefore highlights the importance of student support services which include effective learning facilitation strategies and administrative support that involves services such as pre- or post-registration orientation, counselling, study skills and assignment writing skills. Without student support services, the framework for the tutor system will not be effective, successful or sustainable.

6.2.4.7 Appropriate facilities and infrastructure

High quality university education needs good and sound infrastructure with appropriate facilities. This issue has been emphasised by Zimbabwe Open University and DHET where sharing of facilities by the institutions of higher learning and the use of local school buildings for provision and expansion of educational opportunities is also supported and encouraged (Benza et al., 1999:1-7; DHET, 2013:1-33).

The study shows that there is a need for facilities such as venues for study purposes, computers with Internet connection and libraries. Infrastructure such as electricity, appropriate roads, bandwidth and reliable network for mobile learning are critical, especially to students who live in the remote areas where there are no regional study centres or learning centres. This therefore indicates that the TS cannot be implemented successfully if the students do not have access to

appropriate facilities, infrastructure/resources and media. There is a great risk of failure rate, drop-out rate if the students are not provided with the necessary facilities, infrastructure and media.

6.2.4.8 Monitoring and reflection

The study found that monitoring needed to be understood and operationalised as a reflective practice to determine the extent of functionality of the various components of the tutor system. It is the type of evaluation that is performed while a project is being implemented. Furthermore the study found that it was pivotal to make monitoring and reflection integral aspects of the process of developing a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system.

The adjustments and corrective measures that were necessary were effected in the collaborative plan frequently pursuant to enhancing the operational processes towards the effectiveness of the tutor system. This was achieved as a result of the monitoring and reflective processes that were engaged in during the monthly meetings of the study. The study recommended that monitoring and reflection were necessary to give feedback about the extent of achievement of the plan for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system.

6.3 FINDINGS IN RELATION TO AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study was to design a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches. The following discussion indicates how the objectives of the study were achieved:

Objective 1: to conduct a situational analysis in order to determine the need for formulation of the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system

The situational analysis helped the study in identifying the challenges that the University had to overcome in order to implement a tutor system that is effective in remote rural areas. The University students on the research site were not adequately

supported, thus there was high failure rate and drop-out rate. Literature indicated that a student support system is central to any university, particularly the open distance education system, and thus the students must be afforded the opportunity to connect with the institution and develop valuable learning experience. This could be accomplished through the provision of comprehensive and effective tutor system and student support services in collaboration with the communities. The establishment of community learning centres with academic support (tutor system) can provide face-to-face tutorials, telephone tutoring, peer teaching/tutoring, collaborative learning and problem-based learning. These could also include partnership with other stakeholders in and outside the research site, with online services and interactive synchronous activities such as desk-top conferencing and video-conferencing in order to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system. It is important to note that the use of these technologies has the advantage of synchronicity, as Hentea *et al.*, (2003:164) state that synchronous communication (real-time) other than asynchronous communication (time delayed) allows participants to communicate via video/computer conferencing, audio-graphic conferencing, picture phones, chat sessions, instant messaging and stimulates face-to-face dialogue and promotes a sense of community “to a limited degree” (Jung, 2005:20; Dzakaria, 2012:2; Malik, 2003:635; Berge *et al.*, 2002:409; Marold & Haga, 2003:248; Shih *et al.*, 2003:379; Lin *et al.*, 2003:484; Ruhe, 2002:143; Maloney & Tello, 2003:16; Fink, 2002:27; Strauss, 2002:13; Janvier & Ghaoui, 2003:162; Danchak, 2002:2; Uribe *et al.*, 2003:5; Soles & Moller, 2001:12).

Objective 2: to identify the components of the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system

The study found the following as components of the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approaches: a dedicated coordinating team that would provide leadership and management to the processes; an impelling vision, mission and values to guide the study; a situational analysis; comprehensive planning; monitoring and reflection. The coordinating team should be democratically elected and must have community’s educational interest at heart. The coordinating team should comprise mostly local people who would look into all

important aspects that would make the provision of tutorial support system through the effective tutor system possible on the research site (Lee, 2003:183; Munro & Pringle, 2009:16; McNaught & Beal, 2012:191).

Objective 3: to understand contexts and circumstances under which the emerging framework can be implemented successfully

According to literature and empirical research the study assisted in understanding the conditions that contribute to the sustainable implementation of the framework for effective tutor system through community-based approach. These included the democratic election of the coordinating team, community participation in the formulation of the unifying vision, joint environmental scanning, prioritisation, strategic planning, policy imperative, training of tutors, student support and monitoring of the strategic plan for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system through community-based approach (Adams & Hess, 2001:17; Jason *et al.*, 2004:2; Chislip, 1995:6; Murray and Ozanne, 1991:133; Platteu, 2004:228; Gordon *et al.*, 2000:842; Minkler, 2004:693; Baum *et al.*, 2006:855).

Objective 4: to conduct a risk assessment in order to embed mechanisms to circumvent the threats to the framework

The risks that were identified during the implementation of some of the aspects of the study and through the literature were promotion of community participation, democratic election of the coordinating team, sharing of information concerning the findings, joint strategic planning and monitoring of the outcomes.

According to the literature (see chapter 2 paragraph 2.4) it is important for the community to participate in the formulation and implementation of the effective tutor system because the community gives valuable and useful information with regard to their socio-economic conditions of the community, demographics, existing resources and possible stakeholders. If the community is not involved there is a likelihood that the valuable information may not be found, which could cause the attainment of the objectives. Community participation is one of the key elements of PAR. The entire

aspects that are mentioned above are discussed at length in paragraphs 4.5.1.; 4.5.2; 4.5.3; 4.5.4.

Objective 5: to explore ways of monitoring the implementation of the framework in order to find out how effective it is

According to the literature review and empirical research (see chapter 2, paragraph 3.4) monitoring of the TS is an essential part of evaluation. Evaluation refers to the systematic collection of information conducted during or after a project in order to make judgements about effectiveness against anticipated outcomes and to help inform decisions about future interventions. After the plan has been adopted and implemented the coordinating team set out the strategy to monitor the progress of implementation and the achievement of the desired goals. The team identified the key success factors which were key choices around which the favourable results were necessary and key success indicators were used to assess the key success factors. Some of the key success factors were the dissemination of information to the public about the effective tutor system and the interest that it derived from the community. The success indicators in this regard were the number of people who attended the meetings, the increase in the number students who enrolled with the University at the research site, the number of people who were interested in applying for the tutor position; the increase in the number papers written in each examination period and the increase in pass rate of newly registered students.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The development of a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system can be derailed by the prevalence of power struggles and misuse of power by those given responsibility to care for public facilities such as school buildings, community halls and public libraries. This study demonstrated how power differential realities that prevailed could be levelled off using principles of CER. The challenge could however be the sustenance of harmony amongst the participants in view of the ever changing leadership at different levels and sectors of the community and public institutions.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the recommended implementation strategy of the effective tutor system the following recommendations must be taken into consideration:

- It is important to have the significant number students who are studying through distance education on the research site in order to make the project sustainable.
- There must be a potential number of prospective students within the area in order to be able to make the projection with regards to the student support services that the students would need in relation to the tutor system on the research site.
- Tutors should be offered not only generic training but also subject-specific training because some lack pedagogical competence which is a combination pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. This means that there should be a tight link between knowing how and what to teach.
- There is a need for community participation with regards to the implementation of the effective tutor system. Community participation should be encouraged at all costs because the success of such a project depends on the involvement of all the sectors of the community, particularly the most affected sector, such as students and parents.
- Collaboration with different stakeholders within and outside the community is crucial in order to address the support needed to implement the framework for effective tutor system on the research site. Those stakeholders should include the Department of Education, local and provincial government, local schools, the institutions of higher learning, the parents and the students. This collaboration is important because it is through such collective decision-making process that the selection of the coordinating team could be successfully conducted.
- The University must be willing to partner the community to make the student support services available within the research site. This could be done by conducting career-exhibitions, career guidance, field-registration, student counselling, study and examination skills and tutorial support services.

- The local schools should be willing to offer their facilities for tutorials and computer related training. They could offer their classrooms for tutorial and for study purposes, and offer their computer laboratories for training, Internet access and e-tutoring. The local government could assist in making local libraries and community halls available to the students, the coordinating team and the broader community for conducting workshops, seminars, mobile registration and community meetings. Teachers and other local professionals could be recruited to be the face-to-face tutors or e-learning tutors.

6.6 SUMMARY

The study attempted to develop a framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system using community-based approaches. It also implemented the framework and in the process monitored and reflected on the extent to which the participants attained their agreed upon priorities. In this chapter, the study discussed findings on the bases of which conclusions were made. The chapter also made recommendations in respect of each of the conclusions drawn. The organising principle throughout this chapter was around the five study objectives. The chapter further identified limitations which could constrain the development of the framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the tutor system using community-based approaches.

6.7 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the main aim of formulation of the framework to enhance the effectiveness of the tutor system through community based approaches is by providing effective tutorial services and student support services to the students in the remote rural areas. The student support services which include pre-registration orientation, field registration or mobile registration, post-registration orientation, counselling, study skills training are critical to the development of the framework for enhancing the effective tutor system. The study also concludes that the affected communities should take an initiative of challenging the status quo in collaboration with other stakeholders within and outside the community. It is also critical for the

broader community to participate fully and freely during the inception of a project and must choose the coordinating team that would lead, direct and manage a tutor system for the community. There should be constant feedback provided by the coordinating team in order to keep the community abreast of the challenges and achievements that the team experiences along the implementation phase of the tutor system.

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ANNEXURE S1 (PARTICIPANTS)

SUSTAINABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

36 Market Square

Jochem van Bruggen Street

Langenhovenpark

Bloemfontein

9300

30 September 2011

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH

I am doing an educational research through the University of the Free State. The Topic is: *A framework for an effective tutor system*. I request you to take part as members of study coordinating team that will facilitate the design of a framework for effective tutor system. The study is a component of the bigger project viz, Sustaining Learning Environments led by Professor M.G. Mahlomaholo.

This study seeks to design a framework towards the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system at the University of South Africa (Unisa). It is therefore envisaged that the study programme will be aligned to other regions for mutual benefit viz. effective tutor system.

Your participation in the study will be voluntary and you may withdraw at any given moment if you feel that conditions for participation have changed. The information obtained for this study through you and other participants will be treated confidentially and will be used for the purpose thereof only. It will also comply with the rules and regulations of conducting a research.

For more information please do not hesitate to contact me at the following cell number: 0835762719 or e-mail: snhlapo@unisa.ac.za.

Please confirm availability and free consent for participation in this research study by completing your personal particulars below:

Thank you in advance.

-----	-----
Nhlapo Stanley	Date
Names	:-----
Contact details	:-----
Signature	:-----
Date	:-----

ANNEXURE S2 (STUDENT)

SUSTAINABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

36 Market Square

Jochem van Bruggen Street

Langenhovenpark

Bloemfontein

9300

30 September 2011

Dear Student,

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH

I am doing an educational research through the University of the Free State. The Topic is: *A framework for an effective tutor system*. I request you to take part as members of study coordinating team that will facilitate the design of a framework for effective tutor system as Unisa. The study is a component of the bigger project viz, Sustaining Learning Environments led by Professor M.G. Mahlomaholo.

This study seeks to design a framework towards the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system at the University of South Africa (Unisa). It is therefore envisaged that the study programme will be aligned to other regions for mutual benefit viz. effective tutor system.

Your participation in the study will be voluntary and you may withdraw at any given moment if you feel that conditions for participation have changed. The information obtained for this study through you and other participants will be treated confidentially and will be used for the purpose thereof only. It will also comply with the rules and regulations of conducting a research.

For more information please do not hesitate to contact me at the following: cell number 0835762719 or e-mail: snhlapo@unisa.ac.za.

Please confirm availability and free consent for participation in this research study by completing your personal particulars below:

Thank you in advance.

Nhlapo Stanley

Date

Names :-----

Contact details :-----

Signature :-----

Date :-----

ANNEXURE S3 (DD)

SUSTAINABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

36 Market Square

Jochem van Bruggen Street

Langenhovenpark

Bloemfontein

9300

30 September 2011

The Deputy Director: Facilitation of Learning and ITC

Midlands Region

Forum Building

Rustenburg

Attention:

REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH

I am doing an educational research through the University of the Free State. The Topic is: *A framework for an effective tutor system*. I request you to take part as members of study coordinating team that will facilitate the design of a framework for effective tutor system as Unisa. The study is a component of the bigger project viz, Sustaining Learning Environments led by Professor M.G. Mahlomaholo.

This study seeks to design a framework towards the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system at the University of South Africa (Unisa). It is therefore envisaged that the study programme will be aligned to other regions for mutual benefit viz. effective tutor system.

Your participation in the study will be voluntary and you may withdraw at any given moment if you feel that conditions for participation have changed. The information obtained for this study through you and other participants will be treated confidentially and will be used for the purpose thereof only. It will also comply with the rules and regulations of conducting a research.

For more information please do not hesitate to contact me at the following: cell number 0835762719 or e-mail: snhlapo@unisa.ac.za.

Please confirm availability and free consent for participation in this research study by completing your personal particulars below:

Thank you in advance.

Nhlapo Stanley

Date

Names :-----

Contact details :-----

Signature :-----

Date :-----

ANNEXURE S4 (RD)

SUSTAINABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

36 Market Square

Jochem van Bruggen Street

Langenhovenpark

Bloemfontein

9300

30 September 2011

The Regional Director

Midlands Region

Forum Building

Rustenburg

Attention:

REQUEST PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am doing an educational research through the University of the Free State. The Topic is: *A framework for an effective tutor system*. I request permission to do research that will facilitate the design of a framework for effective tutor system at Unisa. The study is a component of the bigger project viz, Sustaining Learning Environments led by Professor M.G. Mahlomaholo.

This study seeks to design a framework towards the enhancement of the effectiveness of the tutor system at the University of South Africa (Unisa). It is therefore envisaged that the study programme will be aligned to other regions for mutual benefit viz. effective tutor system.

The information obtained for this study through you and other participants will be treated confidentially and will be used for the purpose thereof only. It will also comply with the rules and regulations of conducting a research.

Thank you in advance.

Nhlapo Stanley

Date

ANNEXURE S5 (POLICY)

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE TUTOR SYSTEM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION
2	LEGISLATIVE IMPERATIVE
3	AIM
4	VISION
5	MISSION
6	VALUES & PRINCIPLES
7	OBJECTIVES
8	PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES
9	ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY
10	MAINTENANCE OF SHARED RESOURCES
11	SAFETY & SECURITY FOR SHARED RESOURCES

1. INTRODUCTION

There is lack of academic and administrative support for students who stay in the remote rural areas for students who pursue their studies through distance education mode of learning in South Africa. This therefore means that there is no effective tutorial support because of factors such as inequitable resources and infrastructure, lack of tutors or lack of properly trained tutors and lack of administrative support services such as career counselling, study skills, registration and financial support. This lack and absence of the academic and administrative support contributes to low throughput and high failure rate including the high dropout rate among the students, particularly those who stay in the remote areas. In some cases this low throughput, high-failure and drop-out rate do not justify the extent to which some institutions have provided resources, facilities and media for learner support purposes for its students.

The formulation of the framework for the enhancement of the effective community based tutor system is seen as an attempt to remedy the factors that are highlighted above which cause low throughput rate, high failure-rate and drop-out rate among the students who stay in the remote rural areas of South Africa. The formulation of the framework would help the students who are affected by these factors to have improved and required access to appropriate resources, infrastructure, academic and administrative support that would enhance their academic performance in spite of their geographical location through the distance education mode of delivery.

2. LEGISLATIVE IMPERATIVE

- 2.1 RSA Constitution Section 41 (1) (h): Collaborative effort between school is a constitutional obligation according to this section
- 2.2. Public Finance Management Act number 1 of 1999 section 38 (b) encourages the use of public facilities effectively, efficiently and economically. Thus underutilization may not be effective, efficient and economical
- 2.3 SASA empowers the public in terms of the constitution to take charge and use the public facilities sustainably ...
- 2.4 Occupational Health and Safety Act
- 2.5 Policies:

RSA: DHET: White Paper For Post-School Education and training, November 2013

3. AIM

This policy aims to formulate a framework that will enhance the effectiveness of the community based tutor-system in order to make the tutorial support and administrative support accessible to the students who stay in remote and rural areas where the institutions of higher learning do not have the regional and/or learning centres centres. There is therefore a need to devise a way that will make it possible to implement the tutor system in those remote and under-resourced and poor communities This would be accomplished provided that a new perspective is adopted in relation to the shift from the principles of neo-liberalism or market fundamentalism to the one which is positioned to serve the interest of a democratic society. This view that all societies need to be democratised, that all segments of the society need be given the opportunity to realize their full potential and that the principles

of social justice would prevail, this endeavour of formulating a framework to enhance the effectiveness of the community based tutor system would be made possible.

4. VISION

It is through the community based tutor system that the remote and under-resourced communities could enhance tutorial and administrative support for teaching and learning to its residents.

5 MISSION

The mission of the framework for community based tutor system is to:

- develop and implement an effective and efficient framework for community based tutor system.
- address needs and problems associated with shortages and lack of academic and administrative support for teaching and learning and the required resources, facilities and infrastructure for effective community based tutor system.

6. VALUES & PRINCIPLES

The values adopted for the attainment of the vision and mission statements are mutual respect & trust. The principles are collaboration and responsiveness that are espoused in the RSA Constitution *viz.* Peace, Social Justice, Equity, Freedom and Hope

7. OBJECTIVES/PRIORITIES

In order to achieve the aim depicted in 3 above the two schools identified the following objectives which should be operationalized / implemented:

7.1 Venues

- 7.1.1 Tutorial venues
- 7.1.2 Study-space
- 7.1.3 Library facilities

7.1.4 Community hall (for meetings, orientation and registrations)

7.2 Tutorial support strategies

7.2.1 Face-to-Face tutorials

7.2.2 Peer tutoring/Teaching

7.2.3 Collaborative learning

7.2.4 Assignment tutoring

7.2.5 Online teaching/tutoring

7.3 Technology enhanced learning (Synchronous and Asynchronous devices)

7.3.1 Skype connections

7.3.2 Video or computer conferencing facilities

7.3.3 Tele-conferencing

7.3.4 DVDS

7.3.5 Personal Digital Devices

7.4 Infrastructure

7.4.1 Reliable power supply

7.4.2 Bandwidth

7.4.3 Internet connected computer laboratory

7.5 Tutor recruitment and training

7.5.1 Adverts for tutor positions

7.5.2 Facilitation skills training

7.5.3 Computer related skills & teaching & learning devices

8. PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

8.1 The efforts and actions of the affected schools should be characterized by collaborative planning, implementation and reflective engagements amongst the participants

- 8.2** The collaborative efforts should be participatory. They should accommodate diverse experiences, backgrounds and competencies of affected persons (participants)

9. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

- 9.1** Acquisition of resources should be done in accordance to the prescripts of the law of agreement and service level agreement between the CBTS and the supplier.
- 9.2** The collaboration should thus be coordinated and led by a representative team. This team should in turn be led by a team leader chosen by the affected participants
- 9.3** The team may delegate some of its duties and functions to a respective task team in terms of capacity, access to resources, knowledge and skills.
- 9.4** The coordinating team remains accountable for the implementation of tasks as may be determined from time to time
- 9.5** In order for the coordinating team to achieve its mandate, it should determine and decide on participants' roles and responsibilities; timeframes; identification of activities to be executed; delegation of responsible persons; and persons to be targeted (beneficiaries).

10. MAINTENANCE OF SHARED RESOURCES

10.1 Maintenance

- 10.1.1** The supplier/service provider should ensure that the facilities/resources are in good working conditions conducive and user friendly.
- 10.1.2** The users of the facilities and resources should ensure that the working conditions are sustained as far as practicable.
- 10.1.3** The facilities and resources should be used for purposes for which they were made.
- 10.1.4** The resources and facilities shall be maintained in terms of manufacturer's / service provider's agreement / contracts

10.2 Consumable material – should be catered for according to the agreement.

10.3 Replacement and repairs of resources

10.3.1 The mutually agreed upon standard processes and procedures in respect of stolen and damaged resources and facilities should be followed

10.3.2 The mutually agreed upon standard processes and procedures should be in line with code of conduct as promulgated in the SASA and other instructive policy documents

10.4 Cleanliness

10.4.1 The facilities and resources should be cleaned in accordance with agreed upon programme and principles: the last user should leave the facility and resources clean and tidy

10.5 Specialized facilities: science laboratory; computer laboratory; school hall and library

10.5.1 The policies for specialized facilities should be considered as forming part of this policy

10.5.2 The specialized facilities should be used in strict observance of and respect for its rules and regulations

10.5.3 The regulations and rules for the use of these facilities should be communicated timely with the users.

10.5.4 The copies of the rules should be made available and be displayed in the centres / facilities

11. SAFETY & SECURITY FOR SHARED RESOURCES

11.1 The shared resources should be secured by the hosting institution against theft

11.2 All doors and windows should be locked and closed by the person in charge after use. This responsibility should not be left in the care of learners

ANNEXURE S6

OPERATIONAL PLAN: THE FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY BASED TUTOR SYSTEM

No	Priority	Problems Needs	Strategic activities	Action	Responsibility	Time Frames
1	Venues	Unavailability of venues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutorial venues • Study space • Library facilities • Halls 	Identification of local facilities/ venues	Engage local schools for tutorial, study space venues.	Coordinating Team: TASK TEAM (B)	March 2012
2	Tutorial support strategies	Lack of tutorial support to students	Introduce Tutorials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • face to face tutorials • Peer tutoring • Peer teaching • Collaborative learning • Assignment tutoring • Online tutoring • Online learning 	Investigate the possibility of introducing tutorial support strategies by appointing tutors or train students on collaborative learning which includes peer teaching and peer tutoring.	Coordinating Team: TASK TEAM (A)	March 2012
3	Technology enhanced learning	Lack of support to students through technology	Introduce the utilisation of Technologies for teaching and learning:	Investigate the use of other technologies to enhance teaching & learning (Synchronous or	Coordinating Team: TASK TEAM (F)	April 2012

No	Priority	Problems Needs	Strategic activities	Action	Responsibility	Time Frames
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skype • video/computer conferencing • teleconferencing • Pre-recorded DVDs and PDAs 	Asynchronous): -Investigate the use Skype, Video/computer conferencing, teleconferencing, Pre-recorded DVDs, PDAs and so forth.		
4.	Computer Labs, Internet connectivity & Infrastructure	A need for resources, facilities and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Investigate alternative power supply. -Acquisition of bandwidth -Access to Internet connected computers 	<p>Negotiate with schools and other possible providers of Internet connected computers.</p> <p>Investigate other means to acquire broad-band for Internet and other means such as satellite connections and reliable networks for PDAs</p>	Coordinating Team: TASK TEAM (C)	May 2012
5	Tutor recruitment and training	Lack of trained and qualified tutors	Recruitment of qualified tutors for academic support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertise and/or head-hunt for qualified tutors. • Offer on-going generic and subject related training for tutors including 	Coordinating Team: TASK TEAM (D)	June – December 2012

No	Priority	Problems Needs	Strategic activities	Action	Responsibility	Time Frames
				computer related skills training.		
6	Student services: Registration; Counselling; Financial Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -No student orientation • -No accessible student registration • -No student counselling and advising • -Lack of financial AID information 	Investigate how mobile registration, counselling and provision of information on financial can be provided to the remote students.	Negotiate with the institutions concerned to provide mobile registration, student counselling and student financial aid information	Coordinating Team & The Study Coordinator	May-June 2012
7	Evaluation & Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No timely feedback • Lack of feedback • Incomprehensible comments by lecturers • Tutors do not mark assignments and examination scripts 	<p>-Online marking</p> <p>-Access to the Learning Management System (LMS) of the institution concerned</p> <p>-Assignment and Examination marking</p>	-Introduce on-line marking	Coordinating Team. The Study Coordinator, DFTL	Ongoing

ANNEXURE S7

SAMPLE OF INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

Title:				
Date and Time:				
Learning Objectives				
<i>The participants will be able to...</i>	Content Heading	Key Points to Emphasize	Instructional Techniques	Estimated Time
Assessment plan:				
Instructional resources and equipment needed:				
For Instructor		For Participants		
Power point presentation		Hand-outs on program planning model		
LCD Panel		Case study		
Critique form		Reference list on program planning		
Notes for instructor about the process or content				
.....				
.....				
.....				
Room Arrangement Needed:				

ANNEXURE S8:

Transcript of the meetings and reports of the participants

In the meeting where brainstorming of issues in relation to the tutor system in the community the following discussions took place:

Ranthako: Seabo sa moifo ka Me Selina hore re fumane tlelase ya ho balla le sa Ntate Thabang ho hlophisa ditsebi ka hore bana ba ka rutana jwang le tse ding ke ntho tse ikgethileng

Tshepang: Re lokela ke hona mema batho ba ka re thusang ho nka karolo hore re kgone ho fihlela makgabane a bona ha bobebe bakeng sa ho re thusa.

Molelekoa, reminded the meeting that: Baetellipele ba rona ho tswa mafapheng a fapaneng ba thusitse hore re be le tjhebelopele le hore re tsepamise maikutlo a rona ho yona

Pastor: Ha hona ...tjhebelo pele motseng wa rona ke kahoo menyetla ya ho thusa bana ba rona ha e ka sehlohlolong. ... ha re na tjhelete ya ho thusa bana ba rona ho ntshetsa dithuto tsa bona pele, ...feela ...monyetla .. wa ho tlisa thuto motseng wa rona ha re o amoheleng ka matsoho a mabedi. Re o ntshetse pele molemong wa rona bohle. Nthabiseng said:

Vijini ena ya rona entle haholo hobane e bontsha maikemesestso a rona a ho tswellisa pele thuto sechabeng sa rona

Mekoa:re ile ra tsitlallela ho hlomphana, ho tsotella le ho ela sedi maikutlo a motho ka mong ka tshepo ya hore re tla atleha mmoho

One of the Parents commented: Bana ba bangata ba ile ba tlohela dithuto tsa bona hara nako mme ha ke so utlwe ho thwe na molato o bile kae

Montsheng: Leha ho so be le motho ya re botsang, re hlokile tshehetso e topaletseng ya ho ngola diasaenmente, re diehile ho fumana fitbeke ka motho ya hlalosang e seng feela mongolo.

Dirontsho said: Ke bone ke sokola haholo ke le mong ho se bao nka netefatsang le bona. Jwale le disebediswang tse kang di khomputa le inthanete atjhe ke ne ke sa kgone ho di sebedisa.

Tlhokomelo: *Hoja bonyane re ne re tsebana hore ke bo mang ba ingodisitseng thutong dife le hore ke bo mang ba tsamaileng tsela ena bao re ka ithutang ho bona le hore disebediswang re ka di fihlela jwang.*

Tsikwe emphasised: Ho ntse ho hloka hata tataiso e phethahetseng ho ithuteng...mekgwa ya tshebetso ka bo mong le ka kopanelo., ...tlhokomediso e keneletseng ka botebo le bohlokwa ba seo re ithutang sona

Ntshiuwa, one of the community members who attended the meeting, made an observation that: Ha moralo o ne o entswe ka kopanelo re ka be re na le maikarabelo ao re a phethang ho ya ka makgabane a rona. Re ka be re bile re tseba mananeo a fapaneng a yunibesithe le dinako tsa oona: Ntshiuwa added that: Moralo mabapi le boikarabelo ba thuthara o ka be o re thusistse ka tharollo yabothata ba ho fumana di asaenmente morao ho nako, le hore ba nke karolo ho hlahloba mosebetsi wa rona. Sehloho commented: Ho tseba le ho etsa ka pholisi le molao bakeng sa ho fihlela thuto ke matla ho ba tsebang mme ba tjhesehela ho etsa jwalo.... Ka pholisi re ka be re ...sireletsa ditabatabelo tsa baithuti...ra ntlafatsa maemo a ho ithuta.

Menaka added: Tumellano le kutlwisisano tse tlang tsepo ho baithute di ne di ka fihlelwa ka kgotso...e ka thusa ho laola tshebediso e mpe ya maemo kgahlanong le ba eisehang.

Mrs Hlomoka: ho ya ditlasehang ka nako e nngwe ha ho thuse hobane di tutor tse ding di ipalla di theksbuku ha e mong a re qobella ho bala le ho araba dipotso tsa di question paper tse fetileng. ke bona ele tshenyoy ya nako feela.

Matswe, expressed his experience of the tutoring strategies thus, Ka nako tse ding nna ke ne ke ye be ke nahane hore e se be mohlomong unibesithi ha ena disebediswang le maqiti a lekaneng.

Tlhokomediso added that: ho fapa-fapana batho ka tsebo, maikutlo, tebelo, tshehetso le boikitlaetso...ho fapane mekgwa e sebediswang e ka bang metle kapa ya fokola maamong a fetofetohang.

Tsohang said: Kopano tsa ho ithuta di tshwarwe kgafetsa mme di kwetlise baithuti ka mekgwa ya ho rarolla mathata, tshebediso e molemo ya disebediswang.

Letsoho : dikopano tsa ho ithuta di be haufi le moo re dulang... di rupelle ho hlwaya le ho sebedisa disebediswang tsa mantlha ka nepahalo, ho rarolla le ho hlokomedisa baithuti ka dikgaello tse atisang ho etswa ke baithuti, mme re eletsana ka ditharollo.

Moshe said: Kopano tsena ha di ka tshwarwa kgafetsa, di matlafatsa mabaka a ho batla sebaka sa ho ithuta, disebediswang tse kang dibuka tsa di reference laeborari, dikhomputara le inthanet.

Mr Matsoe: Ha re na moo re ballang teng kante ho Laeborari. Le yona e kwala ka mora hora ya bone mantsiboya. Ka wikente ha e bulwe ho hang.

Sello exclaimed that: Hoja ho bile le mokgwa wa hore re ngole asaenmente ka kopanelo, re le baithuti ba ka bang bane, mme ho shejwe hore e mong le e mong o kenya letsoho re ne re tla tseba ho thusana.

Boloto said: moithuti ya labalabellwang, mokgwa wa ho thutara, boleng ba tshehetso ya baithuti le di thutara; le karolo e bapalwang ke thutara

Letebele said: *Ha hona hore di thutara di ka lesellwe fela. Di hloka ho rupellwa hahang ka mora hore di hiruwe.*

Moutlwatsi reflected on issues that were achieved: ka mora ditlhophiso tsa rona tshehetso ya baithuti e ntlafetse haholo: ho ingodisetsa hae mona, ho tlišetswa orientheishene, ho ba kopanya le ho ba tataisa ho sebetsa mmoho le ho thusana ka disebediswang.

Mr Thabane reminded the meeting that, ho etsa dihlopha tsa ho ithuta tsa baithuti di ba thusa hore ba kgone ho utlwisisa, ho amohela le ho tswela pele mmoho ho sa natse diphapang tsa bona ba ntse ba nka boikarabelo ba thuto tsa bona k'abo mong, **Nthabiseng** added by saying that: baithuti ba thusitswe le ho kgothaletswa ho sebedisanammoho ka kgotso, ba itlhomphe mme ba hlomphe ba bang, ba rutuwe ho hlakisa bothata ba bona le hore bo ka rarollwa jwang ...ba sebedise disebediswang ka boikarabelo.

Mr Boloto: dithutara di nke boikarabelo ba tswelopele ya baithuti dithutong tsa bona.

Mr Matsu commented on the planning for the study and said: Re nkile lenane la dintlha tseo re di lotomantseng ka tumellano ya rona, re hlakisitse sepheo sa enngwe le enngwe ya dintlha tseo, re bontshitse hore ho hloka hahala disebediswang dife ho di fihlela, le hore na re tla ba le disebediswang tseo ho tswa kae.

Mrs Hlomuka added: re kgonne ho akanya disebediswang hantle ka ho hlwaya mehato ya bohlokwa bakeng sa ntlha ka nngwe, re hlokometse nako e lokelang bakeng sa mehato le ntlha ka nngwe. Re ile ra arolelana mosebetsi le boikarabelo bakeng sa dintlha le mehato eo re e nkileng.

Sello reflected on policy issues: re bile le molawana e ipapisitseng le molao wa naha le wa thuto ho re thusa holaola le ho fokotsa kgonahalo ya dikgohlang le boitaolo bo senyekgenyekge.

Ntsoaki added: Dikateng tsa molawana oo ebile ntlha tse kenyeletsang melao ya naha eo molawana o itshetlehileng ka oona, sekhoupu sa molawana le bao o ba amang, diphelelo tsa bohlokwa tsa se amehang jwaloka maikarabelo, jwalo-jwalo.

Tlhaku: bathusi ba rona ba utlwisisa mefokolo ya rona, ke bone ba leka ho sebedisa mekgwa ya ho ruta e kenyeletsang maemo ana ho hlakisa dithuto tsa rona.

Mapaseka added: *Ke bone re fuwa ho araba dipotso tse qholotsang mehopolo tse fapaneng ka dihlophatsa batho ba bararo sehlopha ka seng. Ra fana ka tlaleho tlelaseng e ileng ya re botsa potso tsa tlhaketso tse kenenletseng. Ra etsa hona ka fapanyetsano.. ke ithutile hore ke tsela e matla ya ho ithuta..feela thutara a ntse a le teng ho re tataisa.*

Thabang: *mojulong wa rona re rutuwe ha latela simuleishene ya porojeke ya kgwedi tse tshelletseng. Porojekeng ke ne ke le menejara mme ke laola projeke – bajete, basebetsi le mosebetsi. Ntho e thabisang jwalo.*

Moipone. Bohokahanyi ba rona bo thusitse ho lwantsha le ho fokotsa qaka tse mabapi le tshehetso ya baithuti. Qaka ya ho fumana matheriale wa ho ithuta ka mora nako o rarollotswe ka hore batho ba amehang ba kopane ka nako.

Sebolelo: *stadi sena se hlophisitse hore laeaborari ya setjhaba e fumanehe ho sebediswa ho balla, ho boloka dibuka tse itseng tsa unibesithi e le direferense, le ho fuwa monyetla wa pele ho sebedisa khomputara.*

Letsoha: *Ke na le kgopolo ya hore karolo ya ka ya dipolotiki phathing ya ke sesosa sa hore re hanelwe ka holo, haholo jwang ha ke ne ke le moetellipele wa sehlopha se neng se ronngwe*

Tatolo said: *re fumane hore mekgwa ya ho ruta e bokowa, ho hloka nako e lekaneng ho tlwaetswa dikateng tsa mojulu le tshehetso e fokolang di nyahamisa baithuti ho tla disesheneng*

Ms Moipone said: Re hloka boetapele bo sebete bo bile bo tseba taba tsa bona ka tutor system. Ho hlokeha boetapele bo tshetlehang taba tsa bona ka maikutlo, mehopolo le ditumellano tsa bohle ba amehang hore TS e be seo ba reng e be sona.

Me Maele: *Ha boetapele bo hlompha, bo sa ikgopole bo bile bo utlwisisa le ho ikokobeletsa ba nka karolo, ba nka karolo ba tla bo tshepa. Sena se tlo etsa hore tshehetsano le tshebedisanommoho di rene. Le rona ba hodisitsweng ka tshabo le ho tshoswa re tla buleha, ho itshepa ha rona ho tla tiya kaha re sa tlo hlomphollwa le ho phoqwa.*

Tatolo said: *Tsela eo re qetetse re dumelane ka yona bakeng sa ho ba le vijini e lengwe le ha re na le di tabatabelo tsefapaneng ka morero ona; ho bontsha hore re rata tswelopele ya motse wa rona.*

Mr Kwakwa said: Ho hlakile hore ho ba le tjebelopele e hlakileng ho hlakisa maikemisetso a rona ka TS e lokela ho ba ntho ya pele eo re e etsang. Jwale e be re sheba yona kgafetsa ho lekola hore e be re motjheng.

Mr. Matsu: Ho molemo ho tseba dintho tseo re nang le tsona, maemo a tsona, hore na di ya fumanaha kapa tjhe le tseo re se nang tsona feela re di hloka mapabi le morero ona. Mr Kwakwa added that: Ke tlatselisa ka hore re shebe le diqaka tse ka re sitisang ho tswela pele re be re batle maano ao re ka sebedisang ho di hlola ka oona. Ka nako e nngwe e ka nna yaba re na le menyetla kapa bokgoni ba ho etsa jwalo.

Mr Thabane on what issues to prioritize.

Re ile ra seka-seka dintho tsa mantlha bakeng sa TS. Re dumellane ka di prayorithi tsa tsona ho bebofatsa mosebetsi wa rona. Re a tseba hore le kante ho baithuti bahlokang tshehetso le dithutara the hlokang ho sebesa mekhwa e hlwahlwa ya ho ruta, disebediswang tse kang sebaka sa ho ithuta, stadi matherial, motlakase, khomputara letseding di lokela hore shejwa sethatong. **Mathabo:** Disebediswang tsa mantlha ha di le teng mme di lotomantswe hantle, maemo a tshebetso a ntlafala le kgonahalo ya katleho e ba teng. Nthabiseng said: Re sebetsa mmhoho he etsa plane ena e sebetse.

Mrs Mololelekoa: *Re se re ile ra dula mmoho ra lekola le ho lotomanya ntlha tsa rona ka TS, ra ba ra etsa moralo o re kgontshang ho phethahatsa maikemisetso a rona ka TS.*

Masechaba added: *Ho bile bobebe hoba re arolelane mosebetsi ho ya ka bokgoni ba rona ntle le ho sitisa maemo a rona a mosebetsi le bophelo. Sena se entse moralo wa rona o be re fe sefutho.*

Mr Mahlomola said to the students: Ladies and gentlemen, during the last semester your attendance of the tutorial sessions was so irregular in spite of the fact that we requested you to give your input the tutorial schedule. The attendance of some of the tutorial sessions decreased in such a way that tutorial sessions had to be stopped because tutors availed themselves to the empty classrooms.

Mr Tsoai commented: *Ntate Mahlomola, babang barona ha re kgone ho athenda ditlase hara beke hobane transpoto ha eyo ka mora ditlase tsa bosiu.*

Ms Molelekoa interjected by saying that: *Ache ho a makatsa hobane rona baithuti re ele ra khetha diklase tsa hara beke bosiu. Batho babang ba khethele diklase tsa ka moqebelo hobane di le tsa mosheare.*

Nthabeleng said: *Re thabile haholo hobane ha re sa tlameha ho palama transpoto ho fomantshwa di tshehetso tsabohlokwa tsa Unibesithi*

Nthabeleng : Ha ho hlokahale hore re qale pholosi encha fatshe ya thuta system hontse honale dipholosi tse ngata tse re kankang dintho tseo re bonang di tlabo molemo ho thuta sistimi encha yarona

Mr Tsoang who remarked that: Ha re ka ra thusana, ra ba le mekgwa eo ka yona re ka laolang tshebedisano mmoho ya rona ho qoba ho imetsa e mong ka mosebetsi, boikarabelo le thuso, re tla tswelapele ha bo bebe.

Mrs Molelekwa further added that: Ho hliile ho shebahala ho tla ba le tlhokeho ya ho laola ntho tse ngata haeba re tla atleha. Mohlala, pakeng tsa TS le dikolo, laeborari, le unibesithi ho tea mohlala.

Mr Matsu said that: Mohlomong di tutor tseo tse sebetsang moo ha di na mangolo a tshwanetseng kapa ha se batho ba rupelletseng ho ruta univesithing.

One of the Parents said: Ha maemo a tshehetso ya baithuti e ka ya ba e kgotsofatsang, bana le batswadi ba tla kgothala mme ba itahlele ka setotswana ho phethtahatsa maikarabelo a bona ho ithuta le ho tshehetsa thuto.

Nthabiseng: ha baithuti ba ka fumantshwa tataiso ka ntho tse kang mekgwa e metle ya ho bala [ithuta], boeletse ka mafapha a fapaneng a ho ithuta e le ho thusa ho kgetha dithuto tse tshwanetseng j.j. ho ka kgothaletsa baithuti le ho ntlafatsa maemo a TS.

Mr Thabane: Hara disebediswang tsa mantlha tse ka bebofaletsang TS maemo a tshebetso nna ke bona di tlelaserumu ho sireletsa maamong a seng matle a lehodimo, laeborari kapa sekolo ho thusa ka disebediswang tse kang dikhomputara le Internet, mmoho le tshehetso ya unibesithi ka bokgoni ba yona bo tshwanetseng.

Mrs Selewane said: Ho tla tswa katamelong ya rona le kutlwisiso ya ditaba ka ho tshwana re ka kgonang ho ba le seabo tshebedisong ya disebediswa tseo Ntate Thabane a di bolelang. Nnete ke hore le rona re na le tokelo ya ho di sebedisa ka ha ke tsa setjhaba mme re karolo ya setjhaba

Mrs Matsau indicated that: Ho hlokahala hore re behe moralo/polane ya rona leihlo, sehlopha se fuweng boikarabelo se hloka ho fana ka repoto ya sona. Sena se tla re fa monyetla wa ho tseba hore seo re se kgonneng ho se etsa le seo re sa atlahang ho se etsa hore re kgone ho qoba mathatha ao re kopanang le ona.

Mrs Molelekoa: Boemedi boo bo tlameha ho nka boikarabelo le diqeto tsa projekte bakeng sa sechaba, feela bo tlameha ho fana ka tlaleho kgafetsa hore sechaba se dule se tseba hore ho etsahalang.

Mr Thabane said: Re tlameha re dule re le baemedi le ba buelle ba morero ona hobane bonyane boo re bo re khonneng ho atleha kabona sechaba setlameha ho bo tseba le hoba motlotlo ka bona

Adult Centre Principal: Ha re no kgona ho tswella ka ntho ena e ntle ka ntle le ho utlwana le hoba le moelelo o le mong. ..batjha ba rona ba sebedisana ka matla ho ntshetsa pele maphelo a bona le ho bitsa ba bang hore le bona ba thuse ho lwantsha bofuma bo re phelang ka hara bona.

Mme Mmampho commented that: Re lokela ho ba sedi haholo ka dintlha tsa mantlha tseo re lokelang ho di lekodisa e sere ra iphumana re sebeleditse le feela. Ke bona eka re lokela ho phenya-phenya ntho tse kang phumantsho ya dithutara haufi, mekgwa ya tshehetso e kenyeletsang orientheishene, le boitekolo.

Mr Tlhophoho: *ho thata ho ya ka maemo a bophelo le moruo wa rona hore bana ba ye dibakeng tse hole ho ya ithuta. Hape maemo a boitshwaro a qephile ka kakaretso bakeng sa bana ba rona ha ba le hole.*

Me Thinane said: Ha re sa behe taba tsa mantlha ka hodimo lenaneng la rona la dipraeorithi reka iphumana re sentse nako. Re kenyeletse dintho tse kang sebaka sa ho rutelwa se jwaloka sekolo kapa laeborari ya setjhaba, se nang le matlwana le motlakase mmoho le metsi.

Rethabile : Nna ke re re se lebale unibesithi e amehang le dithutara tse ka re thusang, re ntse re kenyeleditse disebediswang tsa thuto jwaleka dikhomputara le stadi material.

Me Mpate: E ka ba tlhakantshutshu feela ha re ka hloka moralalo o ngotsweng ho phethahatsa lenane la dintho tsa bohlokwa bakeng sa TS.

Phoka added: *Re ke re kgutlele polaneng kgafetsa ho netefatsa hore ha re ntse re e phethahatsa, re ntse re fihlela sepheo sa rona. Re boele re lekole maano, disebediswang, dinako, le karolelano ya mosebetsi hore di dumellane le ho ba motjheng. Ha re sa etse jwalo re tlo lahleha re be re kena kgathatsong.*

Morongwe said: Molao o teng, raet. Hobaneng re tlameha ho etsa o mong? Ha re o lateleng ono o teng he. Hona hobaneng re sokola empa re na le tshehetso ya molao. Feela haeba re lokela ho etsa pholisi, e tla lokela e ikamahanye le molao mme le rona re etse jwalo.

Thabiso: Pholisi ke molawana o itshetlehang le ho ntshetsapele molao. E etswa ke batho ba morerong o itseng feela o le molaong. Sepheo ke ho netefatsa hore ba phethahatsa ditumellano tsa bona. Ka hoo pholisi e lokela ho kenyeletsa ntho tse kang maikemisetso, boitshwaro, kgalemo, mapetjo, le tse ding tse ka kopanyang ba amehang.

Me Thuso advised: Ho bohlokwa hore thuthara di be le boikarabelo bo totobatseng hore ba etsa eng hore baithuti ba atlehe dithutong tsa bona. Sena se tla etsa hore kwetliso eo ba e fuwang e be ntle.

Modiehi indicated that: Ha hona hore re tla tswella kante ho thuso leha ekaba tataiso ya boithuti, diqholotso tse ka bang teng, le ka tshebetso ya rona ho ya ka matshwao ao re a fumaneng. Re hloka thuso jwaleka bana ba bang hore re atlehe dithutong tsa rona.

Thabiso emphasised that: Re baithuti ba yunivesithi ena bohle ha re sekeng ra kgeswa, feela hobane re le tulong e nyane, esere ra iphumana re tlohetse jwaloka ba bangata ba tliileng pele ho rona.

Mr Tiholo, one of the municipality workers and a public librarian said: *Disebediswang bakeng sa ho ithuta le ho ruta kajeno, di sebedisa motlakase mme di hlokolosi hore di ka utsuwa. Di hloka tlhokomelo e kgolo le boiphihleo ba ho di sebedisa hore o se senyetse basebedise ba bang nako.* Mr Thabane added: *Ho bolelang hore, tumellano le ba re thusang di lokela ho ba sedi ho kenyeletsa dintho tsohle ho seng jwalo re ka iphumana re na le disebediswang feela di sa re tswele molemo feela hobane re sa tsebe ho di sebedisa*

Mr Pule made comment: *Bothata boo re ka bang le bona ke hore ha re na tsebo e keneletseng ya mabaka ao re sa fumanthweng thuso ka oona. Sena se ama tswelopele ya rona*

Mr Matsi: *Ha ho ka mokgwa oo re neng re ka fihlela ntho tse ngata tseo re difihletseng ha ene e se ka baka la batho ba kgethetsweng ho etalla pele morero oo wa setjhaba wa. Jwale re monyetleng re le setjhaba wa ho ba lenanehong la selemo la yunibesithi.*

Hlomuka added that: *Re na le tshehetso ya baithuti mabapi le khanseling, mekgwa ya ho ithuta, boitokisetso bakeng sa dihlahlobo le boingodiso ba simesta. Dibaka tse ngata tse kgolo ho sa rona ha dina monyetla o jwalo. Leha re so ka re eba le tshehetso tse kang 'feisthofeis' dithutong tsedeng feela bana ba rona ba shebala ba kgontshitswe ho thusana le ho tshehetsana ka ho rutana le ho sebetsa mmoho.*

Mr Tsoang also reminded the coordinating team that: *Bana ba na le sebaka moo ba ithutelang teng motshehare le bosiu sekolong le laeboraring enngwe ya lehae. Haufinyane ba tla kgona ho ya ditlelaseng tsa ho sebedisa dikhomputha, ho sebedisa inthanete, ho nehelana le ho amohela di asaenmente ka mokgwa o tshepehang ntle le tefello.*

Pastor said: *Re na le tjhebelopele bakeng sa thutha sistimi e entsweng ke rona le ba ratang ho ruta le ho ithuta.*

Mr Tsoang: *Sena se nthutile hore ho ba le ponelopele e kopanetsweng ho na le matla a ho boelanya batho. Ponelopele e re kopantseng ho tea mohlala e bile ho rala le ho phethahatsa moralo wa thuthasistimi ya setjhaba e tshehetsang baithuti ba neng ba ke ke ba fumana tshehetso ntle le yona.*

Moutloatsi, one of the young persons in attendance said: *Ke hlokometse hore ho na le makgabane le dintho tse ngata tseo nna ke kgolwa le batho ba bang ba bangata, re ne re so hlokomele hore di teng re na le tsona. Ke hlokometse le hore le tseo ke neng ke nahana hore ha diyo, di ne di ka fumanwa ka mekgwa e itseng.*

Maipato, one of the learners, who said: *Pele ho ketsahalo ena ya ho lekola, le ho hlopholla maemo, ke ne ke na le mohopolo o lerotho wa thuthasistimi ho re ke feela hoba le motho ya o rutang...ke hlokometsehore re hloka bathusi bahlwahlwa [tutor] le disebediswang tse hantle tse ka thusang ho ntlafatsa ho ithuta.*

The member of the SGB of Bopanang High School said: We received a letter from the district education department that gave us a permission to use our school as a satellite for its activities. This therefore tells us that we do have the support of the department but more importantly we could start thinking of establishing a Community Learning Centre in Bopanang High School.

Mr Matsu: Re ile ra hlopha dintlha tse tsamaellanang mmoho ka ho di lotomanya tlasa sehlopha se le seng. Ntho tse kang, laeborari, computa leb, sekolo kapa tlelase re ile ra di bitsa sebaka sa ho ithuta.

Montsheng who in the same vein, recalled that: *Re bile ra dumellana hore ka ha dintho tse ding ha di thulane, re ile ra re dihlopha tseo re dumellaneng ka tsona tsohle, jwaleka sebaka sa ho ithuta, tsa theknologi ho thusa ho ithuta, tse amang dithutara, re etse hore re di fihlella tsohle.*

Mr Thabane, who remembered that: *Re bile ra re, tsena tsohle di boloke le ho hlompha maemo le dinako tse beilweng tse seng taolong ya rona leha di le morerong oo re leng ho oona. Jwaleka nako e beilweng ke di yunibesithe bakeng sa boingodiso, ho ngolwa ha dihlahlobo, le tse ding.*

Ms Modiehi: Morero wa rona o moholo wa ho etsa foreimweke re o fihletse ka ho o roba ka diqonwana e leng dihlopha tsane tsa diporayorithi. Yaba re buisana le ho manolla hore na mehato kapa maano bakeng sa ho phethahatsa e nngwe le e nngwe ke afe. Ke thabisitswe ke boqhetseke le bokgoni tseo re bileng le tsona karolong ena.

Mme Mompoti emphasised that: *Re entse moralo bakeng sa e nngwe le enngwe ya dintlha tseo re di lotomantseng, ra hlwayana ka ho dumellana ka bao ba ka phethahatsang ntlha ka nngwe, ra ba ra akanya dinako tsa tsona, ra dumellana le ka hore na ho hlokehang hore re fihlele dintlha tsa rona*

Mme Mponeng said: Nna ke fumane morolo le ho mamella ho nka karolo ke ho tseba hore molao o kgothaletsa phumantsho ya menyetla ya thuto ka ho leka-lekana maemong a fapaneng. Ka utlwisisa feela hore ho hlokeha ke eme ka maoto ke kenye letsoho bakeng sa rona hae mona

Mr Thaba: Tumellano eo re e entseng le sekolo e ile ya re thusa ho fokotsa kgula-kgulano e neng e ka ba teng pakeng tsa rona TS le sekolo. Hape ho bile bo bebe ho SGB ya sekolo ho ananela tshebetso mmoho ya rona ka ha molao wa naha le pholisi ya sekolo di kgothaletsa kopano e kang ena ya rona.

Dineo confided to the meeting and said: Tsatsing la ho qetela la boingodiso, ke ne ke na le tjehelete e lekaneng ho ingodisetsa di mojulu tse nne tseo ke neng ke batla ho di etsa lemong se hlhlahlang. Ke ne ke se na tjehelete ya transpoto le dijo tsa tseleng ho ya senthareng e haufi. Ke bile lehlohonolo ka hore boingodiso bo etsetswe hae mona hona mona sekolong se re ballang ho zona

Pontsho said: Ke kgothaditswe haholo ke ho fumana tlhakisetsa ka tsa university leha re ne re se khempaseng ke ithutile ho lekane seatla ka hore tshebeletso tsa laeborari nka di fumana jwang ke ntse ke le mona, mmoho le di lektjhara tse fapaneng

Nnuku: Re rutuwe ho itlhopha ka dihlopha tsa ho ithuta le ho rutana e ntse e le rona, ra ba ra eelliswa hore re ka itokisetsa di asaenmente le dihlahlobo ka mekgwa e jwang

Mr Thabana reflected and amongst the statements he made were: Re ile ra kgona ho susumetsa motsamaisi hore a se eme tseleng ya ntshetsopele ya setjhaba ka ho hana ka thepa ya setjhaba e sebediswang molemong wa setjhaba. Baemedi ba TS ba ile ba kgona ho tshwaetsa motsamaisi ho fetola kutlwisiso le ntlhakemo ya hae ho ikokobeletsa setjhaba.

Mrs Moletsane who said that: Re ile ra kopa e nngwe ya dikereke tsa lehae mme ya re thusa nakong eo re ntseng re qhwebishana le ho sebedisa holo ya setjhaba. Re sebedisitse kereke eo ho tshwarela dikopano tsa rona qalong.

Mr Thabane's reflection of the matter when he reported that: Motsamaisi ya ikarabelang holong ya setjhaba o ile a kopa tshwarelo, mme le rona ra ikoba ra re a re tshwarele re ne re sa lwane. Mme a ba a tshepisa hore o tla hlophisa hore holo e fumanehe ka nako tsohle ha

re e hloka, feela re hlophisetseng tshebediso ya yona mmoho le ditho tse ding jwaleka ba di penshene.

The Principal of this school said: As a school we feel that we have to contribute to the upliftment of this community by allocating a classroom that will be used daily by these students for study purposes.

Mr Thabane indicated that: Dintlha tse neng di hloka hore di etsuwe re di entse ka nako hobane re ne re na le moralo oo re neng re sa rate ha o ka sitiseha. Re entse tsohle ka tsela e entseng hore batho ba utlwisise hore re ne re se dipoho empa re le batho ba ikemiseditseng ho sebeletsa setjhaba