STRATEGIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING LEARNER ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN.

By

BLOSSOM B. SHANGASE

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SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR M.G. MAHLOMAHOLO

CO- SUPERVISOR: DOCTOR R.J. KGOTHULE

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DECLARATION

"I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted by me for the Masters degree at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and has not previously been submitted by me at another university/ faculty. I furthermore, cede copyright of the dissertation in favour of the University of the Free State."

Signed:…………………………………………………

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving fiancé Don Mhlongo for encouraging and supporting me through this long process. Thank you for your continued commitment, unconditional love, understanding, and sacrifice. I also dedicate this dissertation to my daughter Nokuthula Shangase who sacrificed many evenings and weekends trying to assist me with computer skills because I was working on the completion of this project. I would also like to dedicate this work to my in laws, who unknowingly encouraged me to complete my dissertation with an unwavering and tenacious spirit.

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Thank you for your spirit has guided me throughout the years.

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have bitter feelings as the list is endless. Their effort and support were also recognised and appreciated.

Lastly, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to be part of this PAR cohort. Hence, I am passionate to destitute communities and would love to see them being driven by the words of Abraham Lincoln who wrote in his 1862 message to Congress: "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion piled high with difficulty, and we must rise to the occasion. As our case is new, so must we think anew" (Lincoln, 1953: 537).

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS USED IN THIS STUDY

ADEA :   Association for the Development of Education in Africa

CASS :   Continuous Assessment

CBR: Community-Based Rehabilitation

CER: Critical Emancipatory Research

DBE: Department of Basic Education

DoE: Department of Education

EAZ: Education Action Zones

ELRC: Education Labour Relations Council

FET: Further Education and Training

GDE: Gauteng Department of Education

HoD: Head of Department

HOD: Head of the Department - school level

IBE: International Bureau of Education

IQMS: Integrated Quality Management System

KZN: KwaZulu-Natal

KZNDoE: KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

LAIP: Learner Attainment Improvement Plan

MEC: Member of the Executive Council

NCS: National Curriculum Statement

NDoE :   Nigerian Department of Education

NMoE: Namibian Ministry of Education

NSC: National Senior Certificate

NSCE :   National Senior Certificate Examination

OVC: Orphans and Vulnerable Children

PAR: Participatory Action Research

PD: Professional Development

PGP: Personal Growth Plan

PLC: Professional Learning Communities

POA: Programme of Assessment

PPN: Post Provisioning Norm

QLTC: Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign

RCL: Representative Council for Learners

SGB: School Governing Body

SIP: School Improvement Plan

SMT: School Management Team

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

TQM: Total Quality Management

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

USA: United State of America

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

ABSTRACT

The study is about the formulation of innovative strategies to assist teachers towards the effective implementation of the Learner Attainment Improvement Plan (LAIP). In terms of (DoE, 2009:42-43), teachers have to be competent, dedicated and caring in order to sustain learner attainment, and they have to understand the kind of learner that is envisaged by the requirements of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). A challenge currently facing teachers together with the school management teams (SMTs) is how the goals and the values of social justice, equity and democracy can be interwoven across the curriculum. Policy on norms and standards for educators further, describes the roles and their associated competencies for the development of a teacher in South Africa; however, teachers still face challenges in fulfilling them. The results of the findings for the study revealed that the inadequate implementation of the LAIP results from public schools still being owned by the state. Hence, such schools are still having less power to enact their decisions. They are still voiceless and ostracised. The study therefore argues for a greater use of social capital, whereby the voices of all stakeholders, from the grassroots level to the top, would be heard and recognised, thus creating opportunities to strengthen communication and collaboration among them.

The study is therefore informed by critical theory, employing the principles of participatory action research. Through this methodology and theoretical framework, participants engage as equal partners in identifying innovative strategies to assist teachers towards sustaining learner attainment. In contrast with the positivists' approach where the researcher distances himself or herself from the human subjects being studied. The human subjects are being treated as molecules in the laboratory or as respondents who provide the researcher with data. As researchers we have to be mindful of the saying that it takes the whole village to educate a child. Opportunities for communities who better know the challenges that the schools are faced up with in terms of the implementation of effective implementation of policies such as LAIP need to be taken into cognisance. Hence, solutions to these challenges will come from them to effect change in the education system as a way of improving academic learner performance.

Based on the literature review and the discussions with the participants, strategies towards the implementation of LAIP in order to improve the academic learner performance were formulated. Also, the words of Abraham Lincoln who wrote in his 1862 message to the congress: "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion piled high with difficulty, and we must rise to the occasion. As our case is new, so must we think anew", drove the participant, (Lincoln, 1953: 537).

ABSTRAK

Hierdie studie handel oor die formulering van innoverende strategieë om leerkragte te help met die effektiewe implementering van die Nasionale Strategie vir Leerderprestasie (NSLP). In terme van die Department van Onderwys (DoE, 2009: 42-43) moet onderwysers vaardig en toegewyd wees, en beskik oor empatie ten einde leerderprestasie te bevorder. Hulle moet ook die tipe leerder soos genoem in die vereistes van die Nasionale Kurrikulum Verklaring (NKV) verstaan. 'n Uitdaging wat onderwysers en skoolbeheerliggame tans in die gesig staar is hoe die doelwitte, en die waarde van sosiale regverdigheid, gelykheid en demokrasie verweef kan word regoor die kurrikulum. Beleide vir onderwysers t.o.v. die norme en standaarde beskryf verder die verskillende rolle en hul geassosieerde vaardighede vir die ontwikkeling van 'n onderwyser in Suid-Afrika, maar onderwysers staar steeds uitdagings in die gesig ten opsigte van die vervulling hiervan. Die resultate van die bevindings van hierdie studie onthul dat die onvoldoende implementering van die NSLP 'n gevolg is van openbare skole wat nog steeds aan die regering behoort. Gevolglik beskik hierdie skole oor minder mag om hul besluite deurgevoer te kry, en is dus nog steeds stemloos en uitgesluit. Hierdie studie beywer hom daarvoor vir 'n groter gebruik van sosiale kapitaal waar die stemme van alle belanghebbendes, van die laagste tot die hoogste vlak, gehoor en herken kan word, en daardeur geleenthede skep om kommunikasie en samewerking met mekaar te verbeter.

Hierdie studie is gedoen aan die hand van kritiese teorie, met die implementering van die beginsels van deelnemende aksie-navorsing. Deur gebruik te maak van hierdie metodologie en teoretiese raamwerk kan deelnemers as gelyke vennote optree in die identifisering van innoverende strategieë om onderwysers te help om leerderprestasie te volhou. Hierdie is in kontras met die positivistiese metode waar die navorser hom/haarself distansieer van die humanitêre onderwerpe wat bestudeer word. Hierdie onderwerpe word behandel soos molekules in 'n laboratorium of soos deelnemers wat die navorser van inligting voorsien. As navorsers moet ons versigtig wees vir die gesegde waarvolgens dit die hele gemeenskap se verantwoordelik is

om 'n kind op te voed. Geleenthede vir gemeenskappe wat bewus is van die uitdagings wat skole in die gesig staar, in terme van die implementering of effektiewe implementering van beleide soos die NSLP, moet in ag geneem word. Die gevolg is dat die oplossings tot hierdie uitdagings en die teweeg bring van verandering in die onderwysstelsel as maniere om leerders se akademiese prestasie te verbeter, deur hulle sal kom.

Die formulering van strategieë, ten opsigte van die implementering van die NSLP as 'n poging om leerders se akademiese prestasies te verbeter, is gebaseer op die literatuurstudie sowel as op die besprekings met die deelnemers. Vervolgens is die deelnemers ook aangespoor deur die woorde van Abraham Lincoln tydens sy 1862 toespraak aan die parlement: "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion piled high with difficulty and we must rise to the occasion. As our case is new, so must we think anew" (Lincoln, 1953: 537).

Sleutelwoorde:

Nasionale Strategie vir Leerderprestasie ; Nasionale Senior Sertifikaat Uitslae, Verdere Onderwys en Opleiding, Deelnemende Aksie-navorsing, Implementeringstrategieë, Samewerking, Geartikuleerde visie, Kollektiewe kapasiteit, Professionele leergemeenskappe; Sosiale kapitaal.

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1.   INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE OVERVIEW

In this study I develop strategies to improve learner achievement through effective implementation of the existing Learner Attainment Improvement Plan (LAIP) (Department of Education (DoE), 2010:1). A master plan for total learner performance and school management improvement, the LAIP focuses on the functionality of the school to enhance the quality and academic performance of the learners. It is an implementation of the quality assurance measures, assessment policies and systems to monitor success of learners (DoE, 2010:1). Schools, especially in township and rural environments, consistently experience poor learner academic attainment (DoE, 2010:118), the most noticeable indicator being the disappointing National Senior Certificate Examination (NSCE) results, (Department of Basic Education (DBE), 2010:79).

Literature reveals that teachers have to be competent, dedicated and caring in order to sustain learner attainment, therefore it becomes important to understand the kind of learner envisaged by the requirements of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (DoE, 2009:42, 43). The challenge facing school management teams (SMTs) is to interweave the goals and values of social justice, equity and democracy across the curriculum (DoE, 2009:41). In addition, teachers are still struggling to fulfil various roles, including those of learning mediators, interpreters and designers of learning programmes and materials, leaders, administrators and managers, scholars, researchers and lifelong learners, community citizens, pastors, assessors, and learning area/ subject/ discipline/ phase specialists, as outlined in the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000:47). This has had a negative impact on learner attainment, therefore the quest for the most effective strategy to maintain consistency in learner attainment continues.

District support teams have conducted workshops for SMTs with the intention of capacitating them in terms of curriculum management, (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, (KZNDoE), 2011:4), and subject advisors have tried to

equip the heads of department (HODs) with strategies to manage and monitor various subjects, whilst also visiting the school to assist educators in effectively fulfilling the various roles outlined above (KZNDoE, 2011:5).

Various programmes, such as the LAIP, were launched by the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Education in the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province in January 2009 (KZNDoE, 2011:2). Some of the strategies already in place to enhance learner performance in schools were the School Improvement Plan (SIP), enabling the schools to measure their progress through a process of continuing self-evaluation; the Personal Growth Plan (PGP), an important record of needs and progress of individual educators addressing growth; and the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), which aimed at quality public education for all and constant improvement of the quality of learning and teaching (Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), 2003:13 & 23).

The main aims of the above legislative imperatives and policy directives were to determine competence; to assess strengths and areas for development; to provide support and opportunities for development; to assure continued growth; to promote accountability; and to monitor overall effectiveness of an education institution (ELRC, 2003:3 & 4). The Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC), launched in 2008, called on all individuals and organisations to assume responsibility for improving the quality of education (ELRC, 2011:45) and was introduced to improve learner performance by the DBE. However, the interventions had not been productive.

This study therefore aims to make a contribution to improving the situation, particularly by researching ways to empower educators, improve their effectiveness and thereafter maintain consistency in learner attainment. The Gauteng Education Department (GDE) has introduced an intervention programme to ensure direct and intensive support and capacity-building for the schools, referred to as 'Education Action Zones' (EAZ) (Ntuta & Schurink, 2010:1). In Namibia there has also been emphasis placed on teacher development, both pre-service and in-service, based on a belief that teachers play a central role in student learning (UNESCO, 2010:2). Nigeria has instituted urgent reviews of the secondary school curriculum, proper funding of education, and provision of

physical facilities to prevent the collapse of secondary education (Agba, Asuquo, Emeh, & Ogaboh, 2011:33).

The United State of America (USA), on the other hand, stressed "school improvement leadership" for creating a positive learning environment for students (Hallinger & Heck, 2005:662, 663) in a programme that mediated academic expectations embedded in curriculum standards, structures, and processes, as well as the academic support that students received. It employed improvement strategies that were matched to the changing state of the school over time and supported continuing professional learning of staff, which in turn facilitated the undertaking, implementing and sustaining of curriculum change (Hallinger, 2005:662 & 663).

Aitchison (2001:539) argued that every institution should see itself as a seat of lifelong learning, with learners encouraged to take full responsibility for their own learning (Carmichael, 2010:452). However, in Gauteng, Ntuta and Schurink (2010:1) highlighted the importance of external leadership and support by the districts and the Department of Education (DoE) in changing the poor performance of learners. Ronald (2009:681) called upon the distribution of particular types of leadership practices and creation with a sustained focus on strategies aimed at the improvement of teaching and learning. Sacred Heart College R and D (1999:10) argued that if schools could become learning organisations and self-reliant, with teachers taking pride in learner-centred classrooms, the results would improve.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The poor performance of Grade 12 learners in South Africa is a cause of concern to all stakeholders, one reason being that teachers are not playing their roles effectively. Although the LAIP exists it is evident from the NSCE results that the effective implementation of this plan is still not complete, so the need for new strategies to improve the results is important. Based on the above the following research question thus informs this study:

- How can the Learner Attainment Improvement Plan be effectively implemented by teachers?

In response to this question, the main aim of the study is therefore to formulate strategies to assist teachers towards the effective implementation of the LAIP.

The stated aim of the study will thus be broken down into the following objectives:

- To conduct an investigation into the challenges facing schools, teachers in particular, in the implementation of the LAIP.

- To describe and discuss the strategies that have been tried to date, so as to identify those that still require attention.

- To understand the contexts within which the evolving strategy could be effectively implemented.

- To anticipate threats that might hinder the effective working of the strategies and formulate a mechanism to circumvent them.

- To monitor the implementation of the strategies so as to determine whether they are working effectively towards improving learner attainment.

1.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The appropriate theoretical framework for the study is Critical Emancipatory Research (CER), adopted because of its emphasis on power sharing among all stakeholders. For the improvement of learner attainment, working together of all stakeholders was vital, but conditions had to appeal to all stakeholders since CER attested to the transformation and empowerment of schools and their significant stakeholders. CER assisted in minimising the obstacles that might emerge when conducting the study, because it promoted praxis.

Mahlomaholo and Nkoane (2002:2) saw a role of the researcher as being to interpret other people's interpretations, and make sense of them. They argued that this framework encourages researchers to be analytical, and to search for deeper meaning from all angles of the research question. Finally, CER was educative and

empowering, changing the lives of people and advancing the agenda for equity in all forms. It advocated social justice, peace, freedom and hope (Mahlomaholo & Nkoane 2002:2). The strategies I formulated were geared towards yielding desirable results, because all the stakeholders were engaged and therefore owned a programme that should have been put in place collaboratively.

1.4.   METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

In order to formulate the effective strategy referred to above, I employed most of the principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR), and involved all participants at one secondary school in which the study was conducted. Participants were required to reflect 'on' and 'in' their action of implementing LAIP, and to coordinate the above a structure consisting of the following was constituted: two members of the SMT, the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB), the chairperson of the Representative Council of Learners (RCL), two educators serving on the SGB, a councillor from the municipal council, the business person and myself. All the participants were asked to collect qualitative data as they had a common interest in the school, situated in the Ugu district of KZN and ranked as 'quintile 1' because of the high rate of unemployment. CER values, such as respect, equity, social justice, peace and hope were also respected (Mahlomaholo & Nkoane 2002:4).

I used the Free Attitude Interview (FAI) technique, whereby one question was posed to initiate conversation with the participants (Mahlomaholo & Nkoane 2002:4), followed by a reflective summary to obviate any digression from the proposed topic and redirect the participant to think seriously about what he/she was saying. When necessary I posed a clarifying question to tighten the focus of the discussion.

Together with the eight participants I was involved in a group discussion to navigate the challenges that necessitated the formulation of a strategy to implement the LAIP effectively. The participants were to reflect on their experiences about the present situation of the school environment and how they perceived its academic future. The conversations took place at a common venue

to ensure that all participants were comfortable, and they were told beforehand about the nature of the interview and the relevant research techniques were observed. The information gathered was audio-taped with the consent of the participants in order to review progress and to suggest ways in which the plan and its activities could be adjusted for improvement purposes. This was to enhance the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the strategy (Schwandth, 2007:161).

The format of the conversations described above followed during at least one meeting of the identified structure per month, the first of which was held at the beginning of the study and data collection process, on a Saturday to allow for open and intensive discussions by all participants, unconstrained by schedules. The meeting was to workshop all participants on what the LAIP and academic improvement of learners at the mentioned school entailed and meant. Experts and officials from the KZNDoE were invited to share ideas and best practices on the LAIP. Once all were informed they became ready to participate in the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis session to be held the subsequent Saturday. The main aim of the session was to pull together resources and ideas for the effective identification of five priorities on the bases of which an Action Plan for the formulation of the LAIP implementation strategies was designed. For each priority the Plan included activities that were organised by and for the teachers, in conjunction with the structure I had put together. For each activity the structure identified the most able and competent person and/or committee to plan and carry out such, as well as the resources required, timeframes and monitoring processes. The monthly meetings assisted in checking on progress and adjusting the planning for the subsequent month. All activities and meetings were tape-recorded and transcripts analysed.

As a verbal method was required to analyse data, I used Critical Discourses Analysis Van Dijk (2009:62-85), then applied the discursive practices to glean the necessary themes. I employed the social structure to draw conclusions (Mahlomoholo & Nkoane 2002:5) and following the analysis of data I organised information sessions to workshop it with the participants. These sessions were held after school hours on two afternoons. The participants then formulated a strategic plan to perform a SWOT analysis, identified areas of concern and listed

them according to their priorities. Finally, an action plan was formulated that details priorities, activities to be performed, dates of action, person/s responsible, resources required, timeframes and monitoring of the implementation of the LAIP.

1.5.   VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

This study will be important in that the hitherto illusive strategies for the effective implementation of LAIP will be concretised and made accessible to and manageable by schools. The study will thus benefit the learners in terms of informing teachers of the best ways to improve learning. Indirectly, parents of the learners will also benefit as they shall be informed of what takes place at schools and so understand better ways of supporting their children. The KZNDoE will benefit when LAIP is better implemented and when learners' performances improve.

1.6.   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

All directives laid out by the University of the Free State in terms of respectful research were observed. For example, permission was sought from the KZNDoE for conducting research at the identified school. The principal, SMT, parents and SGBs were informed of the nature of the research and requested to participate in the study. All participants signed informed consent forms, assuring them of the confidentiality of any information they would share, as well as steps taken to maintain anonymity, including the use of pseudonyms. They were told that they were free not to respond or participate and could drop out of the study at any time, without any negative consequences befalling them.

1.7. LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY

As the study was qualitative in nature, and employing most principles of PAR, this created a burden on me. It was not funded and I had to cater for participants with refreshments. It must be noted that, initially, not all stakeholders were keen to

contribute since they were still not clear about this kind of research. I sensed that some were afraid to contribute to the discussions; however, this was gradually replaced by willingness to participate. Also, since all stakeholders had to be involved during the entire research process it became difficult for some, as they had other engagements or commitments. However, we had to continue and agreed that they would be given feedback when they joined us.

1.8   LAYOUT OF THE STUDY

The research study consists of five chapters, as follows:

Chapter One: An overview of the study.

Chapter Two: The theoretical framework, placing emphasis on theories informing the definition of operational concepts with a focus on the challenges facing schools, teachers in particular, in the implementation of the LAIP.

Chapter Three: The methodology and design employed in pursuing the study, with the focus on qualitative research methodology employing most principles of PAR and their relevance to the study.

Chapter Four: The findings in respect of the strategies, their components, the conditions conducive to their successful implementation, as well as risk assessment.

Chapter Five: Strategies for the Implementation of the Learner Attainment Improvement Plan.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEWING LITERATURE ON THE STRATEGIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEARNER ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims to formulate strategies for the effective implementation of the Learner Attainment Improvement Plan (LAIP), in pursuance of which it reviews literature on the best practices around the world. In order to systematise this it is important to indicate the theoretical framework that informed the study, hence the perspective adopted in both reviewing the best practices and later formulating the strategies practically. Reasons are given for employing Critical Emancipatory Research (CER) rather than positivism, currently a competing and dominant perspective in research. The above discussion then informs the choice of the conceptual framework in which LAIP and its implementation are located. Furthermore, I define and discuss important operational concepts in the context of the above, namely, implementation strategies, LAIP and the Further Education and Training band (FET). I then look at how other best practices in the South African Development Community (SADEC), on the African continent and internationally, approach the implementation of the LAIP policy.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The following components comprise the theoretical framework for this study.

2.2.1. Historical background of critical emancipatory research

I used Critical Emancipatory Research (CER) as a lens through which to examine how the LAIP can be effectively implemented by teachers to improve the academic performance of learners. CER is deemed fit for this research study

because it places emphasis on social and power structures, emancipating and empowering the human subjects (Stahl, 2004:2). According to Campanella (2009:2), for LAIP to be effectively implemented it is necessary for all stakeholders to be involved throughout the teaching and learning process. She also claims that CER as a theoretical framework assists in understanding a human as a speaking being. It enables us to listen to people who have been oppressed and disadvantaged because what we speak or say is embedded in an ideology (Mahlomaholo, 1999:9). In our educational institutions, human subjects have been voiceless due to politics and power, which in most cases are oppressive, producing ideologies of superiority and inferiority, and therefore they have to be confronted and subverted (Mahlomoholo, 1999:6).

Research studies have formerly been conducted following a positivist paradigm, which regards human subjects as molecules in a laboratory, but it is appropriate that an interpretive approach such as CER will go beyond understanding the humans as speaking subjects, as the subject matter itself is what the people say or do (Myer, 2004:111). Myer (2004:111) concurs with Friere, Macedo & Ramos (2007:33) when arguing that CER is the best theoretical framework to be employed when fighting for social justice and educational reform. He made an important contribution to critical pedagogy and had success in putting theory into practice, believing that poverty and illiteracy are directly associated with oppressive social structures and unequal exercise of power in society. Also, Apple (1990:99) placed at the centre of his analysis of schooling and wider society the relationships of class, gender, race and cultural forms of resistance. His focus was also on "lived experiences" and "everyday patterns of interaction" of educators and learners, including other cultural forms. Apple's contribution to critical pedagogy was in his ability to articulate how the transmission of various knowledge and teaching labour practices are linked to capital and capital accumulation.

McLaren (1995:43) agrees that CER helps learners and educators understand the school, classroom practices and the political, social and economic issues underlying their social world. He further argues that CER attempts to explain the origins of everyday practices and problems in education. It is not simply explanatory but is committed to enabling change towards better relationships, and

a more just and rational society. CER therefore criticises social inequalities and injustices and is committed to their transformation. This theory posits that in human affairs all 'facts' are socially constructed, and provides enlightenment as to the actual conditions of social life.

For Hooks, a female advocate of CER, teaching is about service and giving back to the community. Since we are teaching in varied communities she calls for a paradigm shift and a change in the way we think, write and speak (Hooks, 1994:11). She further urges teachers to create strategies for what she called "conscientisation," whereby teachers and students should perceive one another as "whole" human beings, striving towards knowledge not only of books, but also of how to live in the world. As such, this calls for transformation in our classrooms, in how we teach and what we teach.

2.2.2. Critical emancipatory research objectives

Stahl (2008:4) maintains that CER can be used to change the status quo, overcome injustice and alienation, and promote emancipation. As this research study aimed at better analysing and understanding strategies for effectively implementing the LAIP, it allowed me and my co-researchers to search for better, freer, less alienating and more emancipated ways of initiating and promoting change to people who have been ostracised. This is unlike positivism, in which the focus is on controlling variables, including other human beings (Mahlomaholo, 1999:6).

From an educational perspective, CER was used to open up, for stakeholders who have been excluded, opportunities to access the existing structures of the school, and to understand classroom practices and the political, social and economic issues underlying their social world, (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2011:5). Use of CER denotes commitment to changing towards better relationships and a more just rational society. Societies are dominated by social inequalities and injustices, so challenging these will disrupt the status quo (Campanella, 2009:1).

2.2.3. Formats

According to Deeper (2012:9), CER is implemented first by identifying problems in society that need to be addressed as a priority. In the school under investigation, which has been struggling to sustain its academic performance of learners, stakeholders have first to collaboratively identify the reasons for this. The second step is to design and evaluate existing policies and programmes, then devise solutions to close any loopholes. The argument remains that since the LAIP policy clearly stipulates what has to be done to yield desirable outcomes the academic performance of learners should improve. Deeper (2012:9) maintains that CER involves all stakeholders who have been deprived of their freedom to participate in the improvement of the implementation of policies such as the LAIP. He further claims that the stakeholders have knowledge that could be applied to improving programme activities that lead to improvement in learner performance. Stakeholders know better the challenges facing schools in implementing the LAIP effectively, hence solutions to such problems should come from them.

CER in a Community-Based Research (CBR) programme is therefore intended to empower persons who have been marginalised, oppressed and vulnerable, as well as voiceless. Deeper (2012:9) concurs with Freire et al. (2007:77), arguing for a paradigm such as CER to address oppressive social structures and unequal exercise of power in society. The relationships of class, gender, race and cultural forms persist, hence the need for strategies that promote human rights and overcome barriers that prevent the participation and inclusion of certain persons.

2.2.4. Nature of Reality

Azaiza, Hertz-Lazarowitz & Zelniker (2010:271) believe that the adoption of CER will

> … support the programs or organizational decision-making and problem solving as well as the transformative approach which is founded upon the principles of emancipation and social justice, seeking to empower members

of community groups who are less powerful or are oppressed by dominating groups.

Understanding the kind of learner envisaged by National Curriculum Statement (NCS) policy requires teachers who are the key contributors to the transformation of education in South Africa to improve their skills and confidence and use diverse learner characteristics to identify and implement suitable teaching and learning strategies. In terms of the DoE (2006:10) such a learner is to be imbued with the values and act in the interests of society based on respect for democracy, equality, human dignity and social justice as promoted in the Constitution. Hence, through CER a mission to strengthen communication and engagement amongst all stakeholders is maintained. The African proverb that says "it takes the whole village to educate a child" can be extrapolated to a nation and the teaching profession. No single person can unilaterally bring about substantive change in an organisation and teachers on their own will not succeed in building up a nation.

Babbie and Johann (2003:222) argued that CER enables the production of knowledge in an active partnership with those affected by knowledge. By locating research in a school, grounded knowledge was produced through collaborative relationships with the participants. The mentality of working with aloofness is discouraged as CER upholds values such as equity, social justice, freedom, peace and hope. Through CER, nobody is seen as disarming others, since in engaging with literature on the historical background of Critical Theory (CT) it became evident that it disables power imbalances and forges partnerships between the researcher and the researched (Campanella, 2009:4).

Also, in CER, the critical researchers look at their roles as facilitators and enablers who share expertise rather than impose it, thus advancing what Heron and Reason (1996:47) called 'cooperative inquiry.' I further examined the notion of researcher reflexivity through every stage of the research process, and looked more closely at the importance of dialogue in building connections amongst the participants. By acknowledging learners as active participants in the process, I examined how researchers enabled their voices to be raised. Finally, I focused on transparency, and found that freedom to voice ideas and participate freely in the whole process spontaneously emerged from the participants. Power sharing

amongst participants prevailed, hence the process was educative and empowering.

2.2.5. Nature of knowledge

For Bradbury and Reason (2001:2), action research is about working toward practical outcomes and creating new forms of understanding, since action without reflection and understanding is blind, and theory without action meaningless. More broadly, theories which contribute to human emancipation and the flourishing of community, which help people to reflect on their place within the ecology of the Earth and contemplate spiritual purposes, can lead to different ways of being together, as well as providing important guidance and inspiration for practice.

According to Mfeka (2005:12), critical educational theorists argue that researchers must understand the role that schooling plays in linking knowledge and power in order to develop active citizens. To promote the agendas of critical theory, researchers therefore need to possess specific skills and knowledge, and keep up to date with new approaches and methodologies (Mbhele, 2008:5). Therefore, I argue that critical theory will equip teachers with specific skills, deemphasise the normative pedagogy and encourage teaching and learning as a basis for transformative pedagogy that is more affirming since it is educative and empowering. As we working together sharing ideas, experiences and transformative pedagogy to improve teaching and learning, we place emphasis on collaboration, as CER attests.

On the other hand, Giroux, (2003:53) claims that CER is specific in locating the sources of 'un-freedom,' oppression, class and social justice, which is often in communities and society at large. This brings the discussion to the tradition of critical pedagogy, which for Naidoo (2007:27) represents an approach to schooling that is committed to the imperatives of empowering learners and transforming the larger social order in terms of interests of justice and equality. Teachers must therefore understand the dominant culture at all levels of schooling. Hooks (1994:36) suggests that for teachers to be able to fight against

fears of multiculturalism there must be training sites available in which they can express those concerns while also learning to create ways to approach the classrooms and curriculum. As Giroux (2003:67) and Apple (1990:91) argue, schooling does more than just reproduce inequality.

2.2.6. The role of the researcher

Informed by the above background, it is my contention that CER is underpinned by principles essential for working towards the formulation of strategies to assist teachers to implement the LAIP effectively. The CER theory is participative and collaborative since it ensured that I as a researcher and the participants took part in the process of change (Ledwith, 2007:111). This means that, together with all the stakeholders concerned, I engaged in the process of finding new innovative strategies to be employed by teachers in order to improve learner attainment. Campanella (2009:4) calls upon critical researchers to be genuine, thus adhering to ethical issues and ultimately establishing mutual trust among the participants. She believes researchers should be empathetic, accepting, and mindful of the issues the communities are faced with, allowing participants to voice these issues in a manner convenient to them. She also maintains that critical researchers work 'with' people rather than 'on' people, therefore allowing them to be more human and developing the ability to listen and respect one another. This maintains reflexivity and humility among participants.

Mahlomaholo and Nkoane (2002:2) argue that the researcher is tasked with the role of interpreting other people's interpretations and trying to make sense of them. This framework informs analysis and guides investigation towards deeper meaning from various angles of the research question. To change the status quo of the education system in South Africa, CER is deemed fit since it emancipates and empowers, redresses inequalities and promotes individual freedom within a democratic society. Informed by the critical researcher's role, therefore, it becomes evident that the strategies will be geared to yielding desirable results. All the stakeholders were engaged, operating with equal power relations and therefore owning the programme that is put in place.

2.2.7. The relationship between the researcher and the participants

CER theory, according to Campanella (2009:2), enables the researcher to work with the participants as his or her co-researchers. The researcher becomes aware that they are in the best position to analyse and understand the strategies required for the implementation of the LAIP on power sharing amongst all stakeholders. Hence, having all stakeholders work together is vital to the improvement of learner attainment, but for effective results to be achieved, conditions have to be appealing to them. CER helped me to minimise obstacles that emerged when conducting the study, because it promoted praxis, and together we strove to find solutions rather than dwelling on the problems in a more participatory mode.

Campanella (2009:5) advises that the researcher and participants take into cognisance the power differential between them by ensuring that autonomy and responsibility are maintained. She adds that the researcher and participants should work collaboratively as equal partners across the entire research process in order to change their position through challenging their marginalisation. Informed by this history, it is my contention therefore that CER is underpinned by principles that are essential for working towards the formulation of the strategies to assist teachers to implement the LAIP effectively. Having presented arguments for use of CER as the theoretical framework, it is now necessary to define and discuss operational concepts used in this study.

2.3   DEFINITION AND DISCUSSION OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS

In order to understand the concept and practice of the LAIP plan, it is important to define and discuss the following operational concepts.

2.3.1. Implementation strategies

Implementation is the carrying out, execution or practice of a plan, a method or any design for producing an intended result. The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (2006) defines 'implementation' as the action that must follow any preliminary thinking in order for the desired results to actually happen. Based on this definition, implementation strategies would then be understood as the activities that the participants would design when participating during their strategic planning. They would be designed in such a way that they produce the desired outcome, which for this study is the improvement of learner performance. For the implementation strategies to yield good results they will have to incorporate the expertise of the people monitoring them and follow appropriate timeframes. During the time of evaluation the team members were in a position to measure their successes and further identify areas of concern.

According to the *Oxford Business Dictionary* (2005), implementation strategies are regarded as systems put in place that list the activities to be performed; the costs involved in carrying them out; the expected difficulties; and the schedules required to achieve their objectives. Taking this definition into practice, implementation strategies are relevant to this research as they will be guiding us during the strategic process. Formulating the strategies requires that all stakeholders be involved in their identification and analysis, as well as understanding them.

2.3.2. Learner Attainment Improvement Plan

A master strategy for the improvement of learners' performance, the LAIP was launched by the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for education in the KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province in January 2009 (KZNDoE, 2010:1). It focused on the functionality of the school to enhance the quality and academic performance of the learners, the main aim being to implement these quality assurance measures, assessment policies and systems to monitor success of learners. Through this plan the DoE seeks to mobilise its forces and use its resources in a well calculated

way, pursue clear targets in the short, medium and long term, and use the challenges of the past as an impetus to eventually turn the corner and sustain good performance practices throughout the Basic Education Schooling System (DoE, 2010:3).

The LAIP policy laid out 27 national goals of the DoE to be reached by 2014, 13 of which were output goals dealing with better school results. The remaining 14 were departmental inputs aimed at making the first 13 goals achievable (DoE, 2012:1). The argument, therefore, is that while the DoE has set up these goals there was no involvement of stakeholders and inadequate implementation of the LAIP plan, leading to learners' poor academic performance, as the school under investigation shows. Due to non-involvement of stakeholders, even if they have seen the policy they tend to develop resistance towards it because they do not own it. This indicates that the plan was haphazardly put together by the DoE and opportunities were not open to stakeholders to communicate or reflect upon it. The stakeholders were being treated mechanistically and were voiceless, as the plan was formulated autocratically and without the key implementers, notably the teachers.

Since this study is focusing on strategies for the implementation of the LAIP in the FET band, it is appropriate also to discuss what this means in the South African context.

2.3.3. Further Education and Training Band

Education and training in South Africa is provided in three bands of the NQF, namely, General Education and Training (GET), from Grades R to 9; Further Education and Training (FET) and Higher Education (HE). This FET band refers to education and training provided from Grades 10 to 12, as well as to vocational education and training programmes that lead to the award of qualifications registered at Levels 2 to 4 of the National Qualification Framework (NQF). The focus of this research study, when referring to the FET band, is on the former (DoE, 2006:6).

2.4. THEORIES RELEVANT TO THE STUDY

The most suitable conceptual frameworks for discussion and understanding of the implementation of the LAIP in this study were considered to be social constructivism and social justice.

2.4.1. Social constructivism

Using social constructivism helps us to implement the LAIP as learners construct their knowledge, hence supporting learner-centeredness rather than teacher-centeredness (Amanda, Jackson, Karp, & Patrick, 2006:6). Social constructivism becomes the perspective in investigating how the LAIP is enacted by teachers in schools, against the background of institutional forces such as daily subjective realities and curriculum stories that might influence their experiences.

Mfeka (2005:16, 17) differentiates between learner-centred and teacher-centred pedagogy, articulating the DoE's core syllabus, the Nated Report 550, which refers to:

> Any teaching in which the focus is on the content, about which the teacher is understood to be expert, and which must be "covered" in such a way that students will be able to show that they have acquired a certain body of knowledge. Student activity is that of watching and listening to the teacher. Students speak when called on in response to teacher questions. Student's conversation with other students is generally unauthorized, is regarded as teacher-centred as it falls under the traditional teaching methods.

However, he stresses the learner-centred approach in support of the social constructivists, arguing that this approach favours:

> … any teaching in which the focus is not on the teacher as performer, rescuer, or repository of wisdom, nor on the content as given material that

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must be covered, but on students' interaction with accessible, meaningful content, with one another, and with the teacher as facilitator of that interdependence. Process is an essential part or the content in this form of instruction.

Teachers up to this point are struggling to realise the vision of learners constructing their own knowledge so, by implication, the desired perspective of transformation is somewhat compromised. A greater challenge has been lack of articulation between the conceptual, pedagogical, social and other planes of the constructivist teaching experience (Windcshitl, 2002:85).

Constructivists believe that instruction depends on learners and learning environments, and emphasise the interaction between these influences. Learning must be embedded in the contexts (Schunk, 2000:25), therefore working with constructivism in CER creates a seamless understanding between learners and a community whose voices have been silenced by giving them an opportunity to interact (Amanda et al., 2006:8).

Based on this perspective, Jackson, Karp, Patrick and Thrower (2006:122) write that an instructional model based on the social constructivist perspective stresses collaboration among learners and with practitioners in society (Lave & Wenger, 1991:66; McMahon, 1997:59). Lave and Wenger (1991:72) assert that a society's practical knowledge is situated in relations among practitioners, their practice, and the social organisation and political economy of communities of practice. For this reason, learning should involve such knowledge and practice (Gredler, 1997:43; Lave & Wenger, 1991:76). Social constructivist approaches can include reciprocal teaching, peer collaboration, cognitive apprenticeships, problem-based instruction, web quests, anchored instruction and other methods that involve learning with others (Schunk, 2000:103).

2.4.2 Social Justice

The NCS stipulates that the principles of "social justice serve to remind all humanity (government and civil society), that the needs of all individuals and societies should be met within the constraints imposed by biosphere, and that all should have equal opportunity to improve their living conditions" (DoE, 2006:6). This can be read simply to mean that one of the roles of teachers in school is to interweave a principle of social justice in their practice in order to adequately allow all learners to perform better. This might mean that the principles of social justice that teachers must organise in their practice will answer questions such as: *Who are the learners in my class? What are their hopes, dreams, and aspirations? What are their passions and commitments? What skills, abilities and capabilities do each bring to the classroom so that the LAIP implementation becomes effective?*

Apart from these stated questions, if we as teachers reveal what it is that our learners know, discern if they are learning, respond when individual learners are not learning, and enrich and extend the learning for those in our care who are proficient, then we will be in a position to improve their academic performance. However, to acknowledge this we have to become conscious that teaching is not only about imparting knowledge to the learners but also making an extra effort in nurturing them. We should also acknowledge that we are called upon to impact on their quality of life and its duration. Learners will reach a point at which they will take action upon their deeds by making informed decisions in their lives, as NCS policy stipulates. This means that we have to confront a moral imperative to find the most promising strategies for helping every student achieve at his/her highest level, thus curbing the high rate of poverty and illiteracy which are a burden to the economy of this country (Dufour & Marzano 2011:11).

Student academic performance will improve when students have access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum which gives clarity to what is to be achieved. Therefore, DoE officials, together with the teachers, are obliged to engage in conversations through properly planned workshops and seminars, to collaboratively identify the knowledge and skills most essential to their students (Dufour & Marzano, 2011:81). The currently experienced notion is of teachers,

who are the key policy implementers, not being involved when the policies are being formulated. National, political and bureaucratic agendas are instead informing the curriculum discourse practices, thus perpetuating the unequal power imbalances.

Fullan and Hargreaves (2012:xi) call for a fundamental message to be sent to teachers that social change will contribute to a hoped for better life, and an understanding of it. In order to convey that message the teachers would need a "social justice conscious and a dialectic stance: with one eye firmly on the learners and the other eye looking unblinkingly at the concentric circles of context, historical, cultural and economic reality". The central paradox here is that while the individual learner is the focus of attention, it is the social cooperation in the class that enables a better learning experience than would individual effort (Mfeka, 2005:33). Ideally, participating in this form of social cooperation and regulation is meant to facilitate mutual proficiency, which learners internalise as individual competency. For this reason, the notion of Vygostskian 'zone of proximal development (ZPD)' is considered when organising learners to orchestrate learner-achievement pedagogy. Jackson et al. (2006:12) describe this zone as:

> … the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined by independent problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.

The pedagogical assumption of the ZPD is that if knowledge is acquired spontaneously in relation to social and firsthand experience, forgetting is less likely. When examined more closely, the nature of social justice teaching that is sought in the NCS offers an alternative to the rather isolated and rigid ways of learning and teaching, as well as to the lack of intrinsic motivation in some learners. It is meant to provide a humane perspective of assigning development roles in the classrooms as well as an appropriate distribution of outcomes that highlight individual differences. This study therefore attempts to make sense of how teachers can effectively implement the LAIP in their classroom by taking into account learners' differences.

Furthermore, social justice teaching is meant to arouse learners, engage them in a quest to identify obstacles to their full humanity and freedom, then to move against those obstacles (Ayers, Hunt, & Quinn, 1998:96). This dissertation argues that in order for teachers to effectively implement the LAIP in their classroom they need to be conscious of, understand and have the skills to use diverse learner characteristics to identify and implement appropriate teaching and learning strategies. The reason is that teachers are struggling to implement appropriate instructional practices that support constructivist learning in their classroom. Borich (2007:302) would agree with Meyer (2006:27) but points out that teachers find it hard to take the time necessary to adapt their lessons to their learners' needs, prior histories and experiences, or to analyse and critique the success of their lessons afterwards.

However, because of pressure upon teachers when learners do not perform, from for example, government officials and taxpayers, they fail to perceive learners as whole human beings with complex lives and experiences. Teachers tend to shatter them and only see them as seekers of compartmentalised fragments of knowledge. We further blame these young people (learners) and their parents for their problems, ignoring the institutional imperfections and barriers, in turn silencing the "negative?" student voice (Hooks, 1994:53).

2.5. FACTORS THAT HAVE AN IMPACT ON LEARNER ATTAINMENT

Learner attainment can be associated with quality results in education, but for quality to be maintained there must be a relevant curriculum that encourages successful learning (Dufour & Marzano, 2011:93, 94). This replaces the past perspective of the learner as a tabula rasa with emphasis on learners' previous experiences, language, culture, environment and knowledge, facilitating a shift from the known to the unknown, from family and community education to school education. It encourages learners to participate actively in building their knowledge and establishing an interactive relationship between school learning and life experiences. A relevant curriculum uses this element from the learner's surroundings as support material for observation and experimentation, objects for

investigation and exploration, and fields of application and practical work. These in turn specifically develop methodological capacities and general skills to transcend learning situations and provide a gateway to the world and development (Adea, 2003:171).

2.5.1. Policy implementation

In 2009, the Minister of Basic Education appointed a Ministerial Task Team to review the implementation of the NCS Grades R to 12. Its brief was to identify the challenges and pressure points that impacted negatively on the quality of teaching in schools and propose mechanisms that could address these (KZNDoE, 2011:53). However, as Buckland, (2011:73) attests, the problems of education in South Africa lie not simply in failures of the current policies, although there are certainly instances where they need modification, but largely in the implementation of existing policies, and the ways in which they are developed and modified. Jansen and Sayed (2001:11) also argue that policy failures arise out of a variety of factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic. They see failure of policy implementation as largely the result of poor conception and development, and an absence of human resources to support it. This is an example of *extrinsic* causative factors of policy failure, and so far as the implementation of LAIP is concerned, educators should be conversant not only with new approaches to teaching and learning but also with the kind of learner envisaged in the NCS (DoE, 2011:6).

To justify the discussion, various programmes in addition to the LAIP were launched by the MEC for Education in the KZN province in January 2009 (KZNDoE, 2011:84, 85). For instance, the School Improvement Plan (SIP) enabled schools to measure their progress through a process of continuing self-evaluation; the Personal Growth Plan (PGP) was to be an important record of needs and progress of individual educators addressing growth; and the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) would ensure quality public education for all, and constant improvement in the quality of learning and teaching (Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), 2003:13, 23).

The main aims of these legislative imperatives and policy directives were to determine competence; to assess strengths and areas for development; to assure continued growth; to promote accountability; and to monitor overall effectiveness of an education institution (ELRC, 2003:3, 4). Furthermore, the Quality Learning and Training Campaign (QLTC), which was launched in 2008 by the Department of Basic Education (DoBE) called on all individuals and organisations to assume responsibility for improving the quality of education (ELRC, 2011:45). If all these pieces of legislation were communicated properly to all stakeholders, the LAIP policy would have also been implemented effectively. The LAIP policy stipulates that the overall provincial intention is to provide quality and accessible curriculum delivery to all learners. The school-based LAIP further attempts to meet the targets set out in Action Plan 2014 and Schooling 2025 to improve learning and teaching in the schooling system (DoE, 2010:3), and this is attesting to the above legislative imperatives and policy directives. However, the interventions have not been productive, hence this study seeks to establish strategies to empower educators to be effective and thereafter to maintain consistency in learner attainment.

2.5.2. Strategic Planning

Education is seen as central to any country's global economic competitiveness and growth, the reduction of poverty and inequality, and environmental sustainability. The motto for the DoE (2011:1) is that: '*Teachers are to be in class, on time, teaching and making use of textbooks,*' and this for the improvement of academic performance of the learners.

Government has agreed on 12 outcomes as a key focus up to 2014, and has made education the priority, placing education and skills development at the centre of the present administration's priorities. The achievement of Outcome 1: Improved quality of basic education is therefore central to this Strategic Plan. Our strategic priorities are informed by the government's Programme of Action, the Delivery Agreement and the Action Plan to 2014: Towards the Realisation of Schooling 2025. Clear measurable targets have been set out in the Action Plan in

terms of strengthening learner achievement at key stages of the schooling system. This medium- to long-term plan identifies key interventions to improve the quality of learning, education management and administration, and to allow for the monitoring of progress against a set of measurable indicators covering all aspects of basic education.

This Strategic Plan outlines the overarching goal of improving the quality of learning and learner achievement, and sets out the key strategic priorities. The DBE has a crucial leadership, policymaking and monitoring responsibility in improving the quality of learning and ensuring sustained education quality improvement across the education sector. The focus of all education and quality improvement strategies is the learner and the quality of learning attained for effective and lifelong growth, development and wellbeing. This focus clearly guides our thinking as to what has to be done to ensure that we are creating an enabling environment for effective teaching and learning, so that all citizens are empowered to participate effectively in society and the economy.

To ensure effective teaching and learning the focus of strategies are geared towards the learners, the teachers, the schools and, by extension, provincial administrations of education, including district management. For effective teaching and learning to take place we have to ensure that schools are fully functional. However, Mukhopadhyay (2005:154, 155) maintains that the strategic planning is critical for Total Quality Management (TQM) in education, because strategic planning maps the direction in which the country is heading. It comprises the clearly articulated goals that all the stakeholders collaboratively formulate and if implemented properly will yield a desirable outcome.

To improve academic learner performance, clear and articulated goals are to be understood by all stakeholders. Sallis (2002, vii, 24) concurs with this view, seeing TQM as a philosophy, and the "dream" of high educational attainments as the "right of each and every child throughout the world". TQM is a practical but strategic approach to running an organisation (a school or the entire education sector) that focuses on the needs of its customers and clients (learners and students). It rejects any outcome other than excellence, and represents a permanent shift in an institution's focus away from short-term expediency to long-

term quality improvement. Therefore, to maintain learner performance, the education sector in South Africa needs a long-term strategic approach and framework if it is to deliver the necessary "public value" of quality teaching and learning.

Through TQM the goals of the NCS will be reinforced in terms of "the kind of learner", "the policy envisaged", and "the kind of teacher" needed to produce such learners. The NCS requires that every teacher accept responsibility for contributing towards moulding these young minds to achieve their highest possible potential. With such changes in the education system, and pressure from government and the economic need to run schools both effectively and efficiently in an altered marketplace, strategic planning is now an essential responsibility for all school managers (Knight, 1998:xi). West-Burnham (1994:82, in Bush & Coleman, 2000:68) likens strategic planning in an educational institution to "a matter of bridge building or mapping the route between the perceived present situation and desired future". Clarke (2007:389) avers that, unlike businesses, schools, especially public schools, cannot simply re-invent themselves and start doing something that has nothing to do with education or that is at odds with the legal and policy framework within which they operate. He suggests that strategic planning be used as a form of renewal, to re-focus and re-energise the school, confirming the need to remain true to its chosen goals and established direction.

From an ideal vision of the future, we may identify useful strategies and tactics for improvements. Strategic planning is not a prescriptive, rigid, linear, lock-step, authoritarian process, nor is it built on hunches and raw feelings, but rather it encourages the educational purposes, mission and vision of the school to be accomplished. It provides blueprints for results-oriented progress and renewal. The key focus in Strategic Planning lies in its basic purpose that:

> … the primary clients and beneficiary of any educational enterprise is society. This humanistic approach intends to improve learner accomplishments and contributions both in school and in later life. It cares enough about people to be results-oriented. It empowers the educational partners - learners, educators and citizens - to define an ideal vision and

develop a strategic plan and related tactical plan to achieve educational success with long-range payoffs.

The NCS concurs with Herman, Kaufman and Walters (2002:10, 13, 20, 21), who suggest that we should stop splintering the curriculum and content, because we miss the coverage of vital areas and synergies among topics and areas, thus failing to implement policies such as LAIP effectively. The reason behind this is that we are acting without a clear vision and each stakeholder does what she or he thinks is good, not realising that we are missing a mark. If we start educational (and curriculum) planning with a wider perspective, namely what learners have to know and be able to do in tomorrow's world, then educational experience will be more complete, responsive, and useful. Conversely, poor planning will take us to unwanted, unintended, and often dangerous destinations, ones even worse than those currently being reached. Therefore, strategic thinking, and consequent planning and accomplishments, depend upon useful direction-finding, based on where our education system should be directed and why we want to go there.

Therefore, sustaining the academic performance of learners involves strategic planning, including formulating the vision, mission, goals and development plans of a school. The values and beliefs of a school community underpin how these are managed; therefore an understanding of a school's culture will facilitate a better understanding of how to assist it in becoming more effective. Whole school development is a holistic process that aims to improve all aspects, not only one or two parts. The primary focus must be on improving the quality of teaching and learning (Barton & McCombs, 2008:26).

2.5.3. Professional Development

"Professional development (PD) can succeed only in settings, or contexts, that support it," writes Harwell (2003:87), also emphasising the role of leaders in establishing such contexts and the significance of educators' beliefs as they engage in professional learning. She also stresses the need for a sense of the "urgency of providing teacher professional development that changes teacher

behaviors in ways that lead to improvement in student performance". The area that the LAIP policy has identified that require professional developmental focus is the content knowledge of teachers, particularly in subjects such as Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Accounting and English and Geography, (DoE, 2012:2). Furthermore, the policy indicates that the pedagogical knowledge of teachers is still lacking, hence PD can play a vital role in addressing this predicament and enable the LAIP to be implemented effectively. While the result of all education reform should be student improvement, every reform initiative, if it is to succeed, must begin with recognition of the importance of teachers in raising student performance (Harwell, 2003:v).

As such, professional development is crucial, especially in the light of the new FET curriculum and its implementation. The NCS, with its outcomes-based perspective, is intended to address the relevance of education offered to a learner. In order to improve learner academic performance, therefore, professional development has to meet the task of developing educators for a new agenda within a transformation period aimed at reconstructing the education system (Mkhwanazi, 2007:14). There has to be a change of emphasis towards educators' knowledge, skills and attitudes. Hargreaves (1994:54) stresses this notion by saying that significant change in the implementation of the curriculum is unlikely to be successful unless professional development is given attention.

However, Montello, Norton and Webb (1994:234) write that professional development in education has many facets, as is evident from the numerous terms found in the literature to describe the term. Such terms include in-service training; professional growth; continuing education; on the job-training; human resource development; and staff development (Rage, 2006:273). Meanwhile, Landey and Schreuder (2001:28) view professional development as an umbrella term that includes concepts such as staff development, personal development and in-service training, all necessary to change academic learner performance.

According to Guthrie and Reed (1991:346), the terms 'professional development' and 'in-service training' are frequently used interchangeably, yet there is a logical distinction between the two. On one hand, professional development relates to lifelong development programmes that focus on a wide range of knowledge, skills

and attitudes in order to educate students more effectively (Pruitt & Robert, 2003:53; O'Neill, 2003:285). It may be a formal, systematic programme designed to promote a personal and professional growth. On the other hand, in-service training relates to the acquisition of knowledge or a particular skill and can therefore be a component of professional development in the broader context (Guthrie & Reed, 1991:346). Despite any possible inadequacies, it is important that professional development be proactive, addressing the anticipated professional needs of teachers and their personal needs as individuals (Rage, 2006:277).

In light of the above, therefore, for improvement of learner performance in an organisation the emphasis should be on the continuing development of the individual, with primary focus on the extension of personal strengths rather than the remediation of personal weaknesses. For educators to perform their roles as outlined in the Norms and Standards for Educators, they need to be given adequate opportunity to undergo professional development: "Education management development is the key to transformation in education, and … management is not an end in itself but an essential part of achieving the central goal of promoting effective teaching and learning" (Rage, 2006:277).

Huberman (1995:145) has also indicated that the conceptual predecessor of professional development was staff development and that this movement was based on the need for teachers to locate their development within the broader discourse of school reform. He cited Lieberman and Miller (1991) in their catalogue of professional development activities, which included teacher study groups; curriculum writing; teacher research projects; peer observation; case conferences; programme evaluation and documentation; trying out new practices; teacher resource centres; and participation in outside events and organisations. Louis, Marks and Kruse (1996:87) argue that the way in which teachers interact with each other outside their classrooms is critical to the effects of restructuring of educational practices on learners. Based on the stated argument, it is seen that PD is a social interaction among teachers learning from one another about their successes and challenges in the implementation of the curriculum.

They further claim that professional development must fulfil three needs, namely:

1. Personal development need: advancing educator's knowledge and skills for personal and professional use.

2. Career development need: supporting the professional advancement of educators to jobs at higher level in the school (organisation) by developing the skills of important, selected staff members so that anticipated vacancies can be filled.

3. Organisational (school) development need: Improving performance to benefit the whole school in order to save the primary aim of the education system, which is the promotion and attainment of quality teaching and learning.

In light of the above, I therefore argue that professional development will enhance the performance of individuals and the school as a whole. However, since the school is an organisation, it has to take into cognisance that professional learning communities are being strengthened, as Chan and Chandler (2012:43) suggest.

2.5.4. Professional learning communities

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), as Chan and Chandler (2012:43) argue, are considered to be important in improving quality and development of the organisational capacity to boost school improvement for student learning. While teaching is the major responsibility of a teacher, learning plays an important role in the support of it. Hence, a Chinese proverb deemed relevant here is that: "Studying is like rowing against the current, if you do not advance you retreat." Similarly, a teacher will become outdated without continuous effort in learning, which confirms that amongst the seven roles a teacher should play are lifelong learner and researcher. Teachers' attitudes and beliefs as successful practices need to be reinforced by meaningful follow-up training sessions, to ensure that they stay in place. In addition, all teachers need not only to learn but also to learn together, if they are to become effective in imparting student learning.

According to Dufour and Marzano (2011:22), PLC is an "on-going process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and

action research to achieve better results for the students they serve". Hargreaves (2004:48) writes that PLC is not a programme to be purchased but rather a process to be pursued but never quite perfected. It is not an appendage to existing structures and cultures, but rather profoundly impacts structure and culture. Also, it is not a meeting but an "ethos that infuses every single aspect of a school's operation". PLC does not demand that educators work harder at what they traditionally have done but rather calls upon all stakeholders to redefine their roles and responsibilities and do so differently.

Bolam, McMahon, Stoll, Thomas and Wallace (2005:i) attest to the idea of PLC as worth pursuing as a means of promoting school and system-wide capacity-building for sustainable improvement and pupil learning. They further claim that an effective professional learning community (EPLC) fully exhibits eight key characteristics: shared values and vision; collective responsibility for pupils' learning; collaboration focused on learning; individual and collective professional learning; reflective professional enquiry; openness, networks and partnerships; inclusive membership; and mutual trust, respect and support; all of which are adhered to the principles of CER.

2.6. RELATED LITERATURE

Schools, especially in townships and rural environments, consistently experience poor learner academic attainment (DoE, 2010:3). The National Senior Certificate Examinations (NSCE) results reveal that the effective implementation of this LAIP is still not adequate, and the poor performance of Grade 12 learners is a cause for concern to all stakeholders. One of the reasons for the poor performance is that teachers are not playing their role effectively. They have to be competent, dedicated and caring in order to sustain learner attainment, and must understand the kind of learner envisaged by the requirements of the NCS (DoE, 2009: 42, 43).

The challenge facing school management teams (SMTs) is how the goals and the values of social justice, equity and democracy can be interwoven across the curriculum (DoE, 2009:41). Norms and Standards for Educators' policy describes

seven roles and their associated competences for the development of a competent teacher in South Africa (DoE, 2000:47), however, teachers still face challenges in fulfilling them, with a resultant negative impact on learner attainment.

The problem of learner attainment is not limited to KZN but is also predominant in other provinces and parts of Africa, and overseas. For instance, Gauteng reported that an intervention programme known as Education Action Zones (EAZ) was initiated to schools that had failed to sustain the academic performance of learners (Ntuta & Schurink, 2010:1). Namibia also indicated that their education system faced many challenges in terms of implementing the curriculum and those impacting on academic learner performance were: lack of infrastructure, insufficient funding, lack of trained personnel, and high failure rates (Storeng, 2001:12).

Agba et al. (2011:37) found that the Nigerian secondary school level did not equip students to meet the standards of the university in terms of knowledge acquisition and skills development. The same was experienced in the USA, when the public policies reduced the proportion of government funding available for education and training, resulting in learners not feeling joy in learning (Carmichael et al., 2010:461, 462). All these scholars posit that unarticulated policies, inadequacies in curriculum content, lack of teachers' pedagogical approach to impart knowledge to learners, and lack of adequate resources, play a vital role in learner performance. Therefore, to adopt some best practices from local and international counterparts may contribute to improvements in the South African education system.

2.6.1. Intervention programmes introduced by Gauteng

Ntuta and Schurink (2010:1) reported on the MEC for Education's intervention programme, the EAZ, which was directed to secondary schools with a pass rate lower than 20% in their NSC results. The programme was designed to ensure direct and intensive support and capacity-building to these schools for a period of three years. The innovation was aimed at implementing special programmes for

learners, for example, training in leadership skills and conducting motivational talks, in particular for Grade 12. They also devised a plan to monitor progress in the implementation of official school curriculum and felt a need to provide additional training for teachers of high risk subjects such as Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Accounting and English. They provided additional training to SMTs and SGBs, such as curriculum management, their roles and responsibilities and conflict management. Since they were in favour of networking within and outside the school they then established special business partnerships with other countries, for example France, to access extra resources, such as exchange programmes aimed at developing the management skills of principals, educators and SGBs. They made an extra effort by entering into a partnership with the religious fraternities to provide after-school programmes as well reaching special security agreements with the South African Police Services (SAPS).

The findings of the study conducted then show that the EAZ programme indeed produced better results, as the schools improved from 20% to 60%. However, due to lack of empowerment and involvement of people to support the programmes these schools failed to sustain their academic learner performance when the EAZ was removed. The programme had been imposed on them and they did not have a say in its formation, hence they failed to own it, leaving unequal power sharing between the stakeholders. I therefore point to Sacred Heart College R and D (1999:37), when arguing that schools be given the opportunity to strive to become learning organisations and self-reliant, and within which teachers take pride in making learner-centred classrooms and improve results. The success of the EAZ programme was due to various factors, such as the cessation of admission of learners who were too old to quality for certain grades. Also, involvement of all stakeholders, especially parents, was encouraged in every possible way. Team-building and conflict-resolution workshops were organised by the EAZ programme and clear performance measures and guidance presented. Lastly, the school was well-resourced.

2.6.2. Interventions Introduced by Namibia

There has been an emphasis on teacher development, both pre-service and in-service, because teachers play a central role in student learning (UNESCO, 2010:2). In Namibia, the challenge of education policy is not only a challenge of quality but also one of equity, and of equal opportunities to learn and achieve. Hence, it calls for a need to strengthen the weak managerial and technical capacities of the national ministry and other organisations and communities that act in the education sector (Geckler, 2001:6; Iipinge & Likado, 2012:7). As with other countries, the Namibian Ministry of Education (NMoE, 2009:5) was concerned with the achievement of learners and hence it raised important factors to be considered as guiding and underpinning effective action on quality improvement.

These factors were, first, that the political will to act may be best seen as the initial step towards a broad-based and long-lasting national commitment to a shared vision that embraces quality and equity and that provides the foundation for a "cultural quality." Such a commitment is not only reflected in public pronouncements of policy, it is also made concrete by: (i) allocation of adequate resources; (ii) a focus on quality and learning in political discourse; (iii) participation of all stakeholders; and (iv) effective communication strategies to build broad-based support.

Second, selecting and sequencing priorities for quality improvement strategies needs to deal with two distinct dilemmas: (i) the definition of priorities; and (ii) how to reach a significant number of students. Setting priorities in most cases is a matter of choice about a scope and sequence of innovations. It is not a question of what to do and what not to do but involves answering the question of where to start and what to do later. The experience documented in the country case studies suggests the following for the selection of programme priorities: (i) a sense of ownership at school level necessary as a starting point, with intervention strategies conceived as a menu of options for local choice; (ii) improvement in classroom practice based on the recognition of the teacher as the locus of quality improvement, this being the entry point; and (iii) reforms of curriculum content and teaching methods that need to be conceived as a continuous process which only

gradually recognises that dominant practice changes. The most severe constraint on the scope of the innovation is the capacity of the teacher to change teaching practice. Iipinge and Likado (2012:43), Hopkins (2000:82) and Geckler (2001:11) provide frameworks for different intervention strategies according to the school's capacity to adopt and apply change. These are intended not to provide a precise recipe for the sequencing of interventions but rather to suggest how the different elements of the education process need to evolve in a coherent way.

Third, capacity building is widely recognised as a critical priority, but without much progress in addressing it. On the contrary, the challenge has become greater as the circle of stakeholders involved in education has enlarged. Effective capacity-building strategies begin by creating an environment that encourages the utilisation of existing capacity. Management of SWOT audits and decentralisation are among the promising approaches in this regard, with power shared among all stakeholders. Professional development will need to focus on the school but for this to be successful the schools will need to be supported by meso-level institutions. Building new types of organisations at the meso level that actively engages with schools must be at the heart of the capacity-building strategy, especially in a context of decentralisation and moves towards school-based management. These institutions would not be arranged in a hierarchy but rather would work in parallel across the meso level, effectively flattening the education system. They would include networks, research and training centres, professional organisations, social and community projects, and ministry offices.

Fourth, the NMoE (2009:27) reports that more active partnerships have been one of the most successful outcomes since the Jomtien conference concluded the International Consultative Forum on Education for All. The Dakar Framework for Action echoed this and called for "broad based partnerships within countries, supported by co-operation with regional and international agencies and institutions." Partnerships happen at different levels in the system and with different purposes, including at school and community level, largely aiming to support the delivery of education services, often to the most disadvantaged populations. There are also partnerships that shape development cooperation and educational aid.

Fifth, learning from practice is at the heart of any quality improvement strategy. Quality improvement is a multifaceted and complex process in Namibia, yet experience is accumulating and lessons are being learned as countries pursue a "quality education for all" agenda. Four elements of strategy dominate the practice of quality improvement on the continent.

1. A system of learning institutions with flexibility in delivery and equivalence in objectives.
2. Focus on learning permeates such systems and gives it coherence.
3. Continuous improvement emphasising a sustained effort over time, not quick fixes.
4. Evidence-based strategies that provide the foundation for learning from experience.

Quality improvement in basic education is an imperative for all African countries that want to participate in the global information society of the 21st century and lift their people out of poverty. Many countries are actively testing programmes to improve quality. Sharing lessons from experience and learning from each other's successes and disappointment is essential if policymakers and practitioners in the region are to work together as a community of learners (Storeng, 2001:27).

2.6.3. Interventions by Nigeria

In the intervention in Nigeria, according to Agba et al. (2011:33), urgent reviews of the secondary school curriculum, proper funding of education and provision of school physical facilities as a panacea to eminent collapse of secondary education, have been instituted. This is because the Nigerian Department of Education also struggled to devise strategies that would assist teachers to implement the curriculum effectively such that poverty was alleviated. The study reveals then that their main focus was on the specific theme of curricular content. Secondary and university education objectives were also given attention in order to bridge the gap between the two and this was done so that the secondary schools could prepare their learners with specific skills and knowledge required by

the universities. Also, national needs of secondary and university education were taken into consideration, with attention paid to teaching methods so that teachers could raise the level and help learners perform better. Finally, curriculum practice, implementation and evaluation techniques were communicated so that stakeholders could know and understand what was expected of them.

Agba et al. (2011:35) recommend an "urgent review of secondary school curriculum, proper funding of education and provision of school physical facilities as a panacea to eminent collapse of secondary education." They believe that education is a potent tool in graduating families out of poverty and promoting social security, arguing that it is the frontier for social justice and the wheels of social mobility and redistribution of societal wealth, hence emphasising on the values of CER. This therefore calls for the provision of functional and effective education to the whole country, through a curriculum review that reflects the needs and aspirations of the entire nation.

Agba et al. (2011:61) further argue that repeated industrial crises and lack of school physical facilities impede the potency of education as an instrument of sustainable learner performance. The following factors were found as limiting the effective implementation of curriculum: inadequate planning, curriculum overloading or unrealistic goals, insufficient teachers and lack of in-service training, lack of commitment from both government and teachers, and lack of adequate monitoring or evaluation in the education system. The abovementioned factors are also common in South African education.

2.6.4. Interventions by the United States of America

The USA stresses "school improvement leadership" to create positive learning environments for students (Hallinger & Heck, 2005:662, 663). The USA programme mediates academic expectations embedded in curriculum standards, structures and processes as well as the academic support that students receive. This means that the teacher will use every possible method, ranging from hints or feedback, to perform the task for the students as a demonstration. The value of

mediating academic expectation is that the student learns to master tasks, strategies or skills using easier material, and the moves toward mastery of higher level content with more confidence and actual understanding (Marzano, 2004:41). It furthermore employs improvement strategies that are matched to the changing state of the school over time and supports continuing professional learning of staff, which in turn facilitates schools in undertaking, implementing and sustaining curricular changes (Hallinger & Heck, 2005:662, 663).

Carmichael, Palermo, Reeve and Vallence (2010:451, 452) point out that the core purpose of American schools is student learning, with everything else extraneous to that. Carmichael et al. (2010:452) further claim that students are part of the planning process, being asked what they want to know about the particular curriculum and what they already know. Planning takes place on a term-by-term basis, with staff working in teams, and such modelling demonstrates to the students that working cooperatively occurs across the entire school. Every effort is made to incorporate the ideas from the students into the planning, to make the curriculum as relevant as possible to students and to demonstrate to them that their ideas are valued. The planning document is shared with students and parents so that all stakeholders are included in the learning process.

Against the above framework, I argue that for the improvement of learner attainment to occur, all stakeholders must work collaboratively. A school is not in isolation from but an extension of the community; hence, the needs of society will be met through education as a continuous process by which an individual acquires basic skills that enable him or her to function effectively as a member of that society. However, lack of commitment from stakeholders, limited resources, conditions that are not appealing and lack of stringent measures to evaluate whether progress is being made, could impede the effort to fulfil this goal.

2.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter has looked at backgrounds to strategies for the effective implementation of the LAIP. It reviewed literature in terms of best practices around

the world that inform the evolving strategies in the study. In order to systematise the above, it was important to initiate the discussion by indicating the theoretical framework that informed the study, hence the perspective adopted in both reviewing the best practices and later formulating the strategies practically.

After clarifying the theoretical framework, CER, I indicated why I used it instead of positivism, which could be regarded as a competing and dominant perspective in research currently. The above discussion then informed the choice of the conceptual framework in which the LAIP and its implementation were located. Furthermore, I defined and discussed important operational concepts in the context of the above, namely, implementation strategies, the Learner Attainment Improvement Plan and Further Education and Training band. I looked at how other best practices internationally, on the continent, in SADEC and South Africa approached its implementation and/ or policies.

The next chapter presents the research methodology, design and data collection methods.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN IN THE FORMULATION OF STRATEGIES TO IMPLEMENT THE LEARNER ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN EFFECTIVELY

3.1.   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the method and processes that were used in obtaining data from the research participants in order to formulate the strategies to assist towards the implementation of LAIP effectively at a school in KZN. The focus is on the interventions that, together with the participants, I put in place to explore the challenges, with possible solutions identified by the participants. The chapter further considers conditions suitable for the plan to work successfully as well as threats to the effective implementation of such a plan and how we circumvented them. Subsequently, it examines ways that were used to show whether the strategies designed to implement the LAIP successfully were effective. Profiling of the participants used in the study is presented, with attention paid to the instrumentation employed in collecting data. I describe how data was collected and analysed, and outline measures taken to ensure adherence with ethical stipulations.

3.2.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

Results of any investigation can evidently be reliable and universally accepted, provided research work is carried out methodically. There are however various methods in research, the common aim being to reach its objectives. Research design refers to the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain answers to research questions and includes the procedures for conducting the study, when, from whom, and in what conditions the data will be obtained. It indicates how the research is set up; what happens to the participants and what methods of data gathering are used (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:31).

The study sought answers to the following critical questions:

1. What challenges do schools, teachers in particular, face with the implementation of the LAIP?

2. Are there strategies to date that have been tried to identify gaps that still require attention?

3. How could the contexts within which the evolving strategy to implement the LAIP be best understood ?

4. Are there any threats that might hinder the effective working of the strategies? If so, what mechanism could be formulated to circumvent them?

5. How can the implementation of the strategy be monitored in order to determine its effectiveness with regards to learner attainment?

It was deemed suitable to use a qualitative research approach to address the stated questions, employing most principles of PAR.

3.2.1. Qualitative Research Approach

The reason behind the adoption of a qualitative research approach was that the investigation aimed at informing the empowerment of schools and teachers to campaign for social justice, educational reform and, consequently, improved learner performance. People routinely interpret and make sense of their worlds, but when one investigates social worlds it is necessary to relate one's interpretation to the natural everyday situations in which people live. Hence, social life can be adequately understood from the point of view of the people who form part of that society.

I also chose a qualitative approach because it involves interaction with participants and observation of events as they occur. I wished to interact with all stakeholders concerned so that together we could devise innovative strategies to assist teachers to become more effective and productive in their classrooms. Mbhele (2008:29) has argued that qualitative methodology is 'warm', since it concerns itself with human beings, interpersonal relations, personal values, meanings, beliefs, thoughts and feelings. For Borg and Gall (2012:128), qualitative research

"… is multi-method in its focus, involving an interpretative naturalistic approach to its subjects matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of and interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them".

Consequently, qualitative research is concerned not with verifying existing theories or hypotheses but rather with discovery, as proposed by Hitchock and Hughes (1995:247). According to Singh (2006:56), the qualitative research approach is "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification". Whereas *quantitative* researchers seek casual determination, predication, and generalisation of findings, their *qualitative* counterparts seek illumination, understanding, and extrapolation of similar situations. Therefore, qualitative analysis results in types of knowledge production strategy different from those found by quantitative inquiry.

Butler (2002:126) has argued that an optimal time to use qualitative methods is when it is not possible to separate a phenomenon from its contexts. Hence, it could be contended that understanding the innovative strategies to be employed by teachers in order to improve learner attainment and supportive contexts present such an opportunity. Unlike the quantitative research design, the qualitative mode of thinking recognises a dialectical relationship that is a feature of social phenomena. The positive notion regarding a qualitative paradigm is that it treats a social phenomenon in totality (Bridges, Higgs, Horsfall, & Titchen, 2011:103), so where there is a problem it is looked at as interactive and in the whole context, not subjected to attention on a single factor. In the case of this study, of the formulation of the strategies towards the implementation of LAIP in the Further Education and Training (FET) band, the emergent paradigm stresses the consideration of the entire context in which those strategies are being employed. On the other hand, the quantitative research design would disregard the context and focus solely on the strategies as components of a complex situation. The qualitative school of thought stresses the significance of not focusing on one element in a complex situation.

Neuman (2000:122) wrote that qualitative researchers speak a language of "cases and contexts", whilst Thusi (2004:35) reiterated that qualitative researchers

conduct detailed examination of cases that arise in the natural flow of social life. They accentuate the human factor and intimate firsthand knowledge of the research, thus avoiding distancing themselves from the people or events they study.

Consequently, qualitative research relies on data in which meanings are expressed through words and other symbols, and the qualitative researcher looks for patterns, themes and exceptions to the rule (Hitchoch & Hughes 1995:250; Neuman 2000:135; Welman & Kruger 2001:181). For Singh (2006:57), researchers adopting the qualitative perspective are more concerned with the individuals' perceptions of the world; hence the key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in their world. The language of qualitative research is one of interpretation, as CER attests.

Qualitative researchers are therefore able to provide feedback in a way that participants find it productive and encouraging. Its success, however, depends on cooperation and commitment from participants, from whom researchers require much, and to whom little may be returned. Qualitative research calls into question the existence of correct, absolute solutions to human problems and treats knowledge in tentative, sceptical and relative ways. For educators whose lives and research have been devoted to improving the human condition, using qualitative approaches assists in creating for the possibility that there are no simple solutions. According to Neuman (2000:122, 123), qualitative research has the following characteristics: (i) that of capturing and discovering meaning once the researcher becomes immersed in the data; (ii) concepts are in the form of themes, motives, generalisations and taxonomies; (iii) measures are created in ad hoc manner, and are often specific to the individual setting or researcher; (iv) data is in the form of words and images from documents, observations and transcripts; (v) theory can be causal or non-causal and is often inductive; (vi) research procedures are particular and replication is very rare; and (vii) analysis proceeds by extracting themes or generalisations from evidence and organising data to present a coherent, consistent picture.

Based on these stated characteristics of qualitative research, the data was collected from one high school in KZN. I set out to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of a school failing to implement LAIP effectively, and hence a qualitative research approach that employed most principles of PAR was used.

3.2.2. Participatory Action Research

Francis and Pain (2003:46) write that participatory research approaches are popular in developed as well as developing countries, including South Africa, which has characteristics of both groups. They affirm that critical qualitative methodologies work with participants to effect change, as in this study that is seeking to formulate innovative strategies to be employed by teachers to improve learner performance. Through PAR, all stakeholders were able to air their views on the matter, and establish programmes collaboratively that would improve the performance of learners. PAR involves an interaction with participants and observations of events as they occur (Mbhele, 2008:29), and is in line with CER, to acknowledge that both the researcher and the researched work closely together by sharing a common knowledge and reaching a consensus collectively.

Babbie and Johann (2002:222) also found the PAR approach to data collection as an essential component of in-depth emancipatory research. It enables the production of knowledge in an active partnership with the participants who are affected by that knowledge. Furthermore, by locating the research in a school, grounded knowledge was produced through the collaborative relationships with the participants. The mentality of working with aloofness was discouraged since PAR upholds values of CER, such as equity, social justice, freedom, peace and hope. Nobody was seen disarming others, since in engaging with literature on strengths of participatory methodology I focused on how the use of participatory methodology disables power imbalances and forges partnerships between the researcher and the researched. I also looked at the role of the researcher as a facilitator and enabler who shares expertise rather than imposes it. I further examined the notion of researcher reflexivity through every stage of the research process, before looking more closely at the importance of dialogue in building connections amongst the participants. By acknowledging learners as active

participants in the research process I examined how researchers enabled their voices to be raised. I focused on transparency in the research process, and freedom to voice ideas and participate freely in the whole process spontaneously emerged from them. Power sharing amongst participants prevailed; hence the process was educative and empowering.

For Azaiza, Hertz-Lazarowitz and Zelniker (2010:271) the core elements of PAR include active involvement of all stakeholders who are affected by the issue being studied, the periodic communication of findings to the participants and group discussions, and interaction between participants and between researchers and participants. The stakeholders thus collaborated throughout the stages of the research process, from design to interpretation and dissemination of the results.

It must be borne in mind that the implementation of policies to education and subsequently their adoption is notoriously challenging, highlighted in Chapter 2. Therefore, a study had to be aptly initiated that aims:

> to support the programs or organizational decision-making and problem solving as well as the transformative approach which is founded upon the principles of emancipation and social justice, seeking to empower members of community groups who are less powerful or are oppressed by dominating groups (Hertz- Lazarowitz et al., 2010:271).

Understanding the kind of learner envisaged by the NCS policy requires teachers to improve their skills and confidence in using diverse learner characteristics to identify and implement suitable teaching and learning strategies.

PAR had thus played a pivotal role since we were in a mission to strengthen communication and engagement amongst all stakeholders. Through PAR, stakeholders were empowered with curriculum skills and qualities that are involved in the knowledge production about the curriculum area for which they were responsible. As such, for effective implementation of the curriculum the School Management Teams (SMTs) should be well versed in how to manage the curriculum and be able to offer mentorship and support to teachers. Teachers also have to be knowledgeable in the subject or learning area they are handling. They should know its conceptual structure and must be up to date with new approaches

and methodologies. Parents and the community should likewise be in a position to assist the learners with regards to their school activities. The municipal councillor should give guidance and assist, particularly with such societal issues as arranging social grants and food parcels for Orphans and Vulnerable Children- (OVC). Learners are faced with challenging demands, such as looking after the sick and caring for families, which has an impact on their academic performance. Therefore, an active participation from stakeholders was deemed appropriate in fulfilling these challenging roles.

One of the most effective ways of bringing about change to people is to involve them in the programmes that are being initiated, so in turn give them support and in part own them. However, in the apartheid regime people's experiences were often neglected, as were societal needs and their involvement. PAR came to eradicate that notion by acknowledging the flattened structure and power sharing amongst stakeholders. Teachers no longer have to sit within the closed doors of their classrooms, and bringing together relevant stakeholders will assist the teachers in coming to terms with the needs of society and addressing them.

For Murugen (2008:23), a participatory approach disables the power imbalances between the researcher and the participants. Rather than the researchers as professionals acting upon rural, often unschooled community members, creative multiple participatory tools will give participants a voice. For example, interaction between group members around specific tasks, such as establishing a strategic plan, generates shared information and enables new perspectives to be gained. He added that the key components in this approach are: participation, engagement, involvement and collaboration with participants involved in the research process as equal partners.

The participants are co-researchers, whose insider local knowledge is valued for sense-making. As stated in Chapter 2.5.2, a school is an extension of the community; hence it cannot function in isolation. Moreover, Dwyer, Happell, Kahl, Morris, Moxham, Reid-Searl and Wheatland (2009:1435) also advocate the utilisation of a process driven by participants and aimed at addressing a research problem, thus introducing a sense of ownership and commitment to what is being implemented.

For participating stakeholders, taking action to explore innovative strategies to improve learners' performance may be empowering and simultaneously expose them to principles of equality and social justice through the equitable and just collaborative research process fostering PAR. However, employing PAR, as claimed by Galletta and Jones (2010:342), is "a challenging endeavour that creates opportunities for youth, educators, and community members to study issues that are important to their lives, to play a key role in the knowledge production, and to take action toward change". PAR was deemed appropriate since this study aimed at changing the academic performance of learners with a call to all stakeholders. Kamugisha, Martin and Sanginga (2010:696) confirmed that employing participatory approaches in policy and development, as well as devolving decision-making to the lowest level, create more inclusive spaces for hearing the voices of all.

Ideally, most people are keen to perceive their voice being heard and honoured, therefore PAR allows the researcher to work closely with participants rather than adopting an aloof stance. This means that both the researcher and participants are actors in the research process, influencing the flow, interpreting the content, and sharing options for action. I therefore contented that PAR was suitable for this study as we were dealing with human subjects who were poor, marginalised and oppressed, yet had minds, feelings and hopes which ought to have been taken into cognisance. Their reality was unstable and unsustainable, but people perform according to the conditions provided for them. Through PAR, the human subjects would be nurtured, supported and empowered, as CER advocates, thus moving towards producing good results. As Dwyer et al. (2010:1434) claim, PAR was aimed at facilitating action and creating knowledge about it through a spiral process of observation, action and evaluation. They added that a collaborative relationship between research team and educationists in identification of relevant challenges within the education system and potential solutions is a key feature of action research, a process that unifies theory, research and practice.

In support of Dwyer et al. (2010:1434), the stakeholders therefore looked at the intervention that needed to be put in place in order to assist teachers to effectively implement LAIP.

3.3. INTERVENTION

Education has a crucial role to play in contributing to social and economic development of a country, but citizens have to be motivated and encouraged to actively participate in all aspects which will be brought about by the changing dynamic of the programmes put in place. Hence, it is imperative that when change emanates human subjects are empowered to deal with the challenges. Without a competent teacher no curriculum can be implemented effectively.

Therefore, together with the stakeholders I envisioned establishment of innovative strategies to be employed by teachers in their daily routine. The learning mediators, interpreters and designers of learning programmes and materials, leaders, administrators and managers, scholars, researchers and lifelong learners, would be actively involved in the community, becoming good citizens and displaying pastoral care. They would also be assessors, and specialists in learning area, subject, discipline and phase (DoE, 2000:47). When teachers are able to observe these seven roles then the academic performance of learners can improve. It was then necessary to consider with the team members the ways in which this would be appealing to all stakeholders concerned. Our intended mission was to be accomplished by trailing through the following three phases.

3.3.1. Phase 1

Firstly, we had to establish a recognised structure constituting of myself, the principal of the participating school, one HoD, two educators from the SGB representing the staff, the chairperson of the SGB representing the parents, the chairperson of the Representative Council for Learners (RCL) representing the learners, a business person and the municipal councillor. This team was formed so that it could generate solutions to the practical problem of teachers struggling to implement LAIP effectively. Furthermore, it would empower stakeholders by encouraging them to engage with research and then collectively develop or implement activities to turn the situation around (Kemmis & McTaggart 2000:595).

When the team was established we called a meeting in which we workshopped ourselves as participants on what LAIP and academic improvement of learners at the mentioned school entailed and meant. It was during this information session that it became evident that the stakeholders were unclear about what LAIP was and what it entailed. We therefore invited experts and officials from the KZNDoE to come and share ideas and best practices on LAIP. Even participants took turns to share their expertise and experiences. We also created a situation in which all could talk and share their own preferred medium of communication, be it pictures or personal stories. Once all were informed and ready to participate I assured them that their participation was voluntary and should anyone wish to withdraw from participating he/she would be allowed to do so. I then issued them with consent letters to sign.

Our first meeting took longer than I anticipated, almost three hours, because I had to clarify our research topic, aims and what the study intended to achieve. I also provided a platform for them to voice any concerns they might have with regards to the process. It was important to ensure that we all had a common understanding of what the process entailed.

The second meeting constituted a proper structure that was being formulated based on the number of participants who had returned the consent forms. Together we then agreed on assigning portfolios to one another, such as secretary and a chairperson for the meeting. However, these portfolios were rotated among the team members in order to capacitate one another and display the sense of transparency as well as trust among us. As well as advancing the agenda of CER this also acknowledged the principles of PAR, such that those who were previously despised got the chance to direct the meeting. We arranged that we would meet fortnightly on Thursday afternoons, for two hours. When everybody understood the technicalities of the entire research process we set up the date for our next meeting.

Everybody seemed comfortable and excited about this learning process, however, the participants requested that I chair the meeting as they were still in a position to become settled. I then divided us into two focus groups of five and four members respectively. I tasked the team with some work that was going to drive us in the

direction of achieving the purpose of the research study, which was to formulate strategies to assist teachers in the effective implementation of LAIP. The team was to describe what a school was, to observe the current situation of the participating school environment, and reflect on how they wished to see its academic future. This was to find out whether or not the participants had an understanding of LAIP policy, in line with Middleton and Patrick (2002:321), who suggested that observational research is useful because it can portray individuals' actions rather than their recollections or beliefs, can document how pattern of human subjects engagement in academic tasks unfold over time, and is sensitive to the environment in which the events occur. These authors further argued that observations are limited to examination of behaviour, and provide limited insight into how individuals make sense of events.

3.2.2. Phase 2

During the second phase of our fourth meeting for the subsequent month, the person chairing for the day allowed the team to enter their focus groups, then allowed members to get together and consolidate their findings with regards to the task that had been given. This time was made available to enhance collaboration among research participants, and the conversation led to written text. The spokesperson for each group presented the ideas they consolidated, giving all the team members a strong desire to participate in the SWOT analysis. Instead of meeting a week later the team agreed to meet the following Thursday. They requested from the principal to postpone any plans the school might have to accommodate our meeting, driven by the following philosophies and notions: "Wherever I am, I shall make a positive mark" and; "wherever I am, I want other people to feel my presence". In this meeting the focus groups were reshuffled, to avoid members influencing one another and to enhance strong communication among us all. We therefore, highlighted our strengths as follows:

- Committed SMT, EDUCATORS and SGB members, NO CLASS is without a teacher, that is to say, all vacancies have been filled and SAFETY and SECURITY are tight.

- Our weaknesses were: Unqualified and under-qualified educators, Inconsistency in the NSE results, insufficient floor space and furniture, No resources: electricity, library, laboratory and media centre and drop-outs.

The opportunities were identified as:

- Aiding from better performing schools as well as business and industry and visitation by the subject advisors and district officials.

Our threats then were:

- Overcrowding of the school, reluctance of learners to study, do homework and pass, as well as teenage pregnancy.

This led us to the identification of areas for concern, and we listed them according to their priorities. Once we were all ready we agreed upon the formulation of the strategic planning which had to take place on the next meeting.

The action plan detailing our five priorities on the basis of how LAIP could be implemented was formulated as follows, taking into cognisance the activities to be performed.

Our first priority was to produce a 100% pass in Grades 10, 11 and 12, to be done through intensive teaching during official hours as well as during weekends and holidays. We also agreed to establish homework centres in which learners could be assisted with their homework. The key performance indicator would be the early finishing of the syllabus. The syllabus has to be completed between the 31st of August and the 21st of September, allowing for revision. Rigorous testing and remediation were also mentioned as vital and were to be carried out each quarter as a continuing process until the last paper was written for NSCE. Previously, formal testing had given much care and informal testing was disregarded, since teachers felt they were time-consuming. Those who were to monitor this activity were the principal, HoDs, subject heads, councillor, chair-person of the SGB and the chair-person of the RCL.

Our second priority focused on the improvement of Mathematics and Physical Science teaching and learners. All the participants agreed that learners taking these subjects should be enrolled through Kutlwanong programme, which is run

by a nongovernmental organisation (NGO) in the area. The request to the SGB to subsidise the needy learners taking these subjects was tabled. The SGB requested an urgent meeting with the Finance Committee to discuss the issue. Surprisingly, they agreed to help these learners with transport fees. The principal, Science HoD, subject teachers and the SGB were responsible for making certain that the learners attended this programme.

The next priority was to produce quality results. To encourage teachers and learners to obtain best results we introduced the awards for the best teacher with the best symbols as well as a certificate of excellence to the best learner. The awards were scheduled to be given at the end of the year. Our target symbols were symbol A-C, even in challenging subjects such as Mathematics and Science. People who were responsible for monitoring this activity were the principal, the HoDs, the subject teachers and the SGB.

The fourth priority was curbing the late-coming and absenteeism of learners. The security and the administration clerk were to audit on a weekly basis learners who consistently absented themselves from school and/or who regularly came late. If the name of a learner appeared for two consecutive weeks the parents would be called to the school. Also, teachers were urged to ensure that effective teaching was taking place in their classroom and more written work given to students, so that the culprit could see that they were being left behind. This would be seen through the improvement of results and learners' discipline. The security, administration clerk and the principal were to monitor this activity.

The fifth priority focused on closing the content gap and pedagogical gap, since the school was still having underqualified and unqualified educators teaching in the FET band. We agreed on staff development, which was to be conducted every Thursday for two hours. Networking within and outside the school was encouraged. We were of the view that teachers' interest and confidence in the subject(s) they were teaching would be aroused, thus assisting them to teach with a direction. This was a continuing process throughout the year. The principal, HoDs, subject heads and senior teachers were given the task of monitoring this initiative.

Excited about our stated role we then embarked on to the next phase.

3.3.3. Phase 3

We agreed on the formulated plan to be implemented in one simple move. However, to evaluate whether the plan was working towards yielding our purpose of improving learner academic performance we had to meet every month during its implementation. We agreed that the focus groups would remain as they were in Phase two. One of the participants suggested that we devise a monitoring tool to check the success of and loopholes in our plan. A set of questions were then developed that could guide the discussion. We agreed that we were to comment about the image of the school before and after the implementation of the plan whether it has changed or not. We were also going to remark on how teachers, parents and learners commit themselves to the academic performance of the school. These questions assisted us in exploring any noticeable changes that could have emerged since the implementation of the plan in Phase two. Hence, the discussions remained flexible, allowing us to clarify responses and probe topics we were to focus on, in order to implement this LAIP effectively and draw up the agenda for the next meeting.

3.4．DATA COLLECTION

Data collection involved the following steps.

3.4.1. Research Setting

The school identified as research setting for the study was situated in the Umbumbulu area, under the Ugu district of KwaZulu-Natal. It is ranked as a quintile 1 school because of high rates of unemployment and poverty. The school was established in 1994, as a junior secondary school, then graduated to senior secondary in 1997. There were 11 educators, including the principal and two HoDs, one of whom headed the Mathematics and Sciences department, and the other responsible for both Languages and Humanities. The total enrolment of learners was 311, from Grade 8 to 12. However, the Grades 10 and 11 results were to be used as a standard benchmark in order to determine the trend in

learner attainment and the success of any strategy formulated in this research study. It was not necessary to focus on the Grade 12 results as the learners would soon be leaving the school. The learner population consisted only of Black African learners.

3.4.2. Participants in the Study

The participants consisted of the principal of the participating school, who gave clarity pertaining to the managerial activities, challenges and vision of the school, one HoD, who described the procedures of curriculum monitoring and the support programmes for educators trying to meet the challenges of implementing LAIP effectively, and two SGB educator representatives, who were to represent teachers.

Involvement of these parties in the study was to raise issues in terms of the existing curriculum and whether or not they as teachers were coping with it. If not, what were the challenges they faced and how would they identify the support they might need? A chairperson of the SGB was to give their position towards the governance of the school and also to state the supporting programmes they had as the community in trying to change the academic performance of the learners. A chairperson of the RCL was responsible for highlighting the challenges they as learners had and activities that could assist in addressing the situation. They thus were becoming responsible citizens, involved in the structures of the community. A municipal councillor was to inform the team of the structures and programmes that they as government had which could be accessible to the school and the learners in particular. The local business person had to clarify what services or support he might offer to the school, and I, being the researcher, had to empower the team about emancipatory research so that everybody felt at ease taking part in the research process.

Gaining access to the research site and the participants is an important step in the research process, (Cohen, Marion & Morrison 2007:133; Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004:96), therefore permission was sought from the DoE and the principal, as official gatekeepers who allow or deny access to schools as research sites.

Each research participant was regarded as a gatekeeper in his or her own right, and permission to participate in the study was sought from each. I ensured that all the research procedures were observed, such as the names of the participants to be replaced by pseudonyms, and the participants to be informed of the purpose of the research and implications of their participation. I also gave them a clear explanation of the tasks expected of them, so that they could make an informed decision to participate voluntarily in the research project. I further adhered to CER values, such as respect, equity, social justice, peace and hope throughout the research process (Mahlomaholo & Nkoane, 2002:4).

3.4.3. Instrumentation

As Krishnaswamy (2004:1-8) states, in PAR the research partners (researchers and community members) have a clear understanding of the broader goals of the research project. He further suggests that the researcher's goals have to be clarified so that they can be related to those of the potential partners from the community. Without a clear sense of what the research project is trying to accomplish it will be difficult to design a practical and effective participatory research project.

Since the focus of the study was to formulate the strategies to effectively implement LAIP, the participants had first to develop a mission statement, which was accomplished so that desired outcomes and general strategies were identified. Our mission statements, describing the goals, general strategy and values of the team members, were developed through strategic planning. We agreed to meet at a time and venue convenient to us all and identified other relevant stakeholders who we thought would be affected by the research study. Their participation was treated with respect and we understood that we had to be patient in building trust with them.

Once all was in place we created space for our informal and regular meetings in which we held training sessions and agreed upon the formation of small groups. The team members were allowed to use the language of their choice in communicating ideas, be it pictures or mother tongue. We then agreed on a

common understanding, signed consent forms and reached agreement on tape-recording our meetings. We also felt a need to engage in principles of an effective, scientific but user-friendly interview technique, known as Free Attitude Technique (FAI), whereby one question was posed to initiate the conversation with participants (Mahlomaholo & Nkoane, 2002:4). The conversation led to a long list of issues which we prioritised according to relevance to the research question, namely: How can LAIP be effectively implemented by teachers?

We then agreed upon observation schedules, such as when Grades 10 and 11 mark sheets would be available to assist us to obtain data. For this research study I felt there was a need for me to shift from focusing on what was observable to allow the participants to be themselves and to speak as human beings. The discussions were therefore to be my primary source of data.

3.4.4. Data collection procedures

In seeking strategies to assist teachers towards the effective implementation of LAIP, a single case study was designed. Cresswell (1994:12) states that a case study is concerned with investigating and interpreting certain attributes or characteristics of individuals or groups. He further maintains that case studies are a type of qualitative research which explores a single phenomenon (the case) and collect detailed information through a variety of procedures.

It was for this reason that the data in this study was gathered by qualitative research methodologies, including observations and interaction with the participants in form of discourses. Angrosino, Barbour, Flick & Kvale (2007:8) believe that if one wishes to know how people understand their world and life, one has to talk to them. According to these authors, in a discussion process, the researcher listens to what people themselves say about their world, hears them express their views and opinions in their own words, and learns about their views on their work situation and family life, their dreams and hopes. As conversations are qualitative in nature they attempt to understand the world from the participants' point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences, and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations.

Thusi (2004:39) further claims that "there should be a move away from obtaining knowledge primarily through external observation and experimental manipulation of human subjects, toward an understanding by means of conversations with the human beings to be understood". This means that participants have to be allowed to tell about their experiences, fears and aspirations. For this reason I opted to use the principle of FAI technique to obtain data.

The nine participants were divided into two focus groups of five and four respectively. Of importance in qualitative research is acquiring an in-depth understanding of each conversation (Singh, 2006:56), which means that to have many participants does not increase the value of the findings. As researchers we are concerned about meaning making and meaning construction of each participant. I had to alternate between groups to understand what each one felt, and intervene if necessary. All our conversations were tape recorded and each conversation took about one hour. They took place in our usual meeting place so as to ensure all were comfortable, and they use the language with which they were comfortable. All were told beforehand about the nature of the research meetings and all the relevant ethical research principles were observed. They all gave their informed consent and I made them aware that they were not obliged to participate in the study and would not be pressurised to respond to any question. However, I had to explain my intention to use the tape recorder, for the purpose of proper and accurate recording of conversations for later transcription. I then assured them that all the information gathered during our meetings would only be for research purposes.

As we gathered as participants to devise activities to be operationalised for effective implementation of LAIP we felt a need for us to set standards. We agreed upon defining the goal and means to achieve it, then articulated expectations and built a shared vision. We did not wish to assume that everyone was moving in the same direction towards the same goal, but rather came up with strategic objectives understood to have an impact on the entire school. To avoid resistance from other members who were not in the team, we ensured that our vision was shared by all decision makers, who then gave feedback at their respective departments. We also considered that our mission was a long-term process; hence it encompassed design, development and implementation of the new

programme and system, as well as the design and redesign of processes. Since our initiatives were scrutinised by every stakeholder, we developed measures for monitoring and evaluation, and these were sanctioned by the stakeholders, (Phelan, 2000:12).

3.4.5. Data analysis

Since the study was to focus on the effective implementation of LAIP, I firstly examined what the policy was saying with regards to the concepts we were discussing. I then used the spoken words of the participants, only extracting verbatim the opinions that would enable me to strengthen my argument. I further analysed the text relating to what the theoretical framework guiding this study was attesting, that is CER, then looked at what literature, based on the arguments raised and how other countries have overcome or succeeded in dealing with the matter.

Based on the above argument, the results of this study were analysed qualitatively. According to Chetty (2000:66), qualitative researchers generally study fewer people than do quantitative researchers, but they study them more intensively. As a consequence, they often pursue patterns in the behaviour, belief, and knowledge of individuals across settings, circumstances, time, and other variables. Investigators can substantiate hunches, collect multiple points of view and establish ranges for discerned patterns.

Research methods can be broadly divided into *quantitative,* taking a positivist approach, and *qualitative,* which are relativists in their perspective. Relativist researchers postulate that the world may look different to other people. Hitchock and Hughes (1995:296) regard such researchers as naturalistic, interpretive and qualitative. Their purpose is not to obtain a set of facts but to gain insight into perspective. As such, Johnson and Mazzei (2005:182) write that naturalistic qualitative enquiry is concerned with the description and explanation of phenomena as they occur in routine, ordinary natural environments. They further claim that it deals in words and meanings, seeking to maximise understanding of events and facilitating the interpretation of data.

Qualitative researchers therefore, attempt to construct holistic views of events, permitting analysis of the complex relationships among such factors as learners, educators, classrooms and curricula. This holism typically extends beyond the borders of school itself, taking into account communities and their sub-groups and the general socio-cultural context within which they are embedded (Chetty, 2000:70). Qualitative paradigms are thus characterised by the assumption that reality is ever-changing and incompletely knowable, that knowledge consists of tentatively held understanding, and that research designs and results are inevitably permeated by values, for instance of the researcher, the research participants and the research audience.

Since the verbal method was used to collect data, the critical discourse analysis was implemented Van Dijk (2009:62- 85). As was stated above, among other forms of collecting data, discussions were the primary source for this research study. The tape recorded focus groups' discussions were transcribed verbatim, noting all that was being said within a mutually agreed upon topic. Through this analytical phase, I used as evidence text, that is the spoken words by the researched. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985:83), qualitative researchers reject the concept of validity due to the constructivist viewpoint that reality is unique to the individual and cannot be generalised. The interpretation phase then followed at the discursive practice level, since it is known that "what we speak is the clear reflection of our practices". I finally drew my conclusion based on the social structure I had employed, because society influences what we say (Mahlomaholo & Nkoane, 2002:5).

Unlike quantitative research, where the issue of quality is justified by validity and reliability, in this qualitative study quality was ensured through adhering to the issue of consistency. That means that throughout the research process the participants were treated as equal partners in determining the strategies for the effective implementation of LAIP. Since then co-researchers were at liberty to raise their views. Peace and hope then arose, and no person would tell a lie. If what we intended to achieve failed it did not mean that somebody had been deceitful, but rather that we were to return to the planning stage and re-strategise, (Murugen, 2008:23). Furthermore, Todd (2010:2) is of the view that reliability and generalisability are not issues in action research because it aims to generate

findings that are useful within a specific context rather than ones applicable across many different situations. Similarly, the basis for judging validity in action research is different from that used in quantitative research, where validity is measured by the extent to which the research actually investigates what it is supposed to investigate, and because of this research design and data analysis procedures become crucial. However, in action research validity can be measured by the extent to which the research produces findings which are useful in developing the classroom situation (Todd, 2010:3).

3.5.   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In addition to measures described above, all directives laid out by the University of the Free State in terms of respectful research was observed and operationalised. For example, permission was sought from the KZNDoE for conducting research at the identified school. It is normal practice in research to observe ethical issues, such as voluntary participation in the study, to acknowledge, respect and guarantee participants' confidentiality and anonymity (Mkhwanazi, 2007:30; Smith, 2003:56). Obtaining consent from the participants is not merely the signing of consent forms but also ensuring the consent is voluntary and informed about the purpose of research and implications of their participation. I also assured the participants that the data collected would be stored in a secure safe to which only I had access.

3.6.   CONCLUSION

Drawing up the participatory process was painstaking and time-consuming; however, there was no easy way this research could have approached. In my view, I wished for a process that would be a product of commitment, enthusiasm, drive and to the support of all stakeholders. I wished to bring about change to the lives of the people, especially the black community, namely the communities which were being marginalised, oppressed and deprived of their freedom to voice their ideas without fear or prejudice.

This chapter has presented the approaches that were utilised to obtain data from the research participants. It presented the research design and methodology, with attention paid to the interventions implemented to empower the human subjects in order to bring about change to the communities they were serving. The profile of participants was given as well as the instrumentation used to collect data. Attention was once more paid to data collection procedures and a discussion on how it would be analysed. Ethical considerations were also taken into cognisance.

The next chapter is devoted to data analysis, presentation and interpretation of the results.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTING AND INTERPRETING FINDINGS ON THE STRATEGIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEARNER ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

4.1.　INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this study is to formulate strategies that will assist in the effective implementation of the LAIP. This chapter focuses on how the data was analysed, interpreted, presented and discussed, in line with the objectives of the study. There were many occasions for data collection, including information sessions in which the participants explicitly indicated a need for the formulation of such a strategy. The information tabled the challenges public schools are facing in the implementation of the LAIP and considered solutions to address the identified problems regarding the effective implementation of this policy.

The above mentioned sessions paid attention to the conditions for effective implementation of the strategy. As such, when change occurs it is important to be vigilant of what could disrupt the implementation of the LAIP. Therefore, the risk factors that could make the strategy fail were as far as possible anticipated. The chapter also presents action and strategies that were then developed and prioritised for implementation of each study objective, and subsequently operationalised as part of the LAIP strategy.

4.2.　CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENTATION

4.2.1. Misunderstanding of the Learner Attainment Improvement Plan Policy

A major challenge to implementation was misunderstanding of the LAIP policy by stakeholders. Intended for teachers, principals and members of the SGBs it has been infused as part of the overall provincial intention of providing quality and accessible curriculum delivery to all learners. The school-based LAIP attempts to meet the targets set out in Action Plan 2014 and Schooling 2025 to improve learning and teaching in the schooling system (DoE, 2010:3), and is a directive

from the Department that each school have such policy and understand what it entails. This means that the policy has to be communicated to all stakeholders because it gives the direction and assists individuals to act with one common vision. However, the understanding of the LAIP policy in the school is a challenge, as evident when Zozo reported on the task given in Phase 1 during our second meeting of our strategic planning:

> Zozo: *Asisazihluphi ngokuqonda amapolicies la ka education ngoba ashintsha njalo futhi izimvo zethu aziziwa. Sizogcina sisangana phela. Iyiphi yona le policy okuthiwa iLAIP futhi idila nani?* (We are no longer eager to understand educational policies because they keep on changing. Also, our opinions are not heard. We will end up losing our minds. What is that LAIP policy and what it entails?).

From Zozo's comments I realised that teachers are aware of policies but not eager to give themselves time to understand the many changes. When probing to find a reason for this I discerned that the school did not open opportunities for its members to communicate with the policies. When communicated properly, individuals own them as they shall have input into them. The words "*izimvo zethu aziziwa*" (our opinion are not heard) clearly indicated that stakeholders were not involved in the formulation of policies, which meant that they were still voiceless and were being disempowered. This was evident when Bukiwe interrupted Zozo to support what she was saying:

> Bukiwe: *Asisawaqondi ama policy webantu futhi engathi nalaba abawenzayo nabo badideke njengathi. Mina ngizifundisela ngendlela yami endala.* (We no longer understand policies also it seems as if the people who design them are as confused as we are. As for me, I teach using my old style of teaching).

Bukiwe here was in agreement with Zozo because he also indicated that they too no longer understood the policies. He added that even those who formulated them seemed to be confused. As this was the case, he therefore taught without proper understanding of what the LAIP policy required him to do. I then heard Thobeka whispering to Bukiwe:

Isho futhi ukuthi sikhathele iwona futhi ayasicika manje ngoba baqhamuka sebesifunza ngawo (Say also that we are sick and tired of them (referring to policies) as they are imposed on us).

The arguments raised here were that, firstly, stakeholders are confused and frustrated with policymakers who devise policies without the involvement of stakeholders, as expressed in Bukiwe's words that those who formulate them do not include those who implement them. The reason behind this could be that when policies are being formulated the teachers, who are the ones who know what is happening in the classrooms, are not included. It confirms the views of Jansen and Sayed (2001: 11) cited in 2.5.1 that policy failures arise from non-consultation with stakeholders and the consequent lack of ownership of such educational policies. This emphasises that unequal power relations persist, even in the current dispensation, which in turn affects the implementation even of important policies such as the LAIP. Teachers are treated mechanistically, merely as deliverers and implementers of curriculum, without being given an opportunity to reflect on it and interrogate ways of implementing it effectively. Unarticulated policies in education have a negative effect on teachers in terms of understanding them and eventually affect learners' performance negatively (Agba et al., 2011: 35; Hallinger & Heck, 2005: 662 & 663; Ntuta & Schurink, 2010: 1; Storeng, 2001: 15).

All participants were unanimous that they were still voiceless, which means that rural communities like the one in which this school was situated are still not given opportunities to voice issues of interest to them. The question also raised by Zozo, "*Iyiphi yona le policy okuthiwa iLAIP futhi idila nani?*" revealed that they had not seen the LAIP policy and hence did not understand what it entailed. The conclusion therefore is that the challenges to proper implementation of the LAIP could be a result of lack of understanding of policy by significant stakeholders, notably teachers. However, since teachers are being supervised by the recognised structure, the SMT, it was deemed important to investigate whether this structure also experienced challenges.

4.2.2. Monitoring the Curriculum and Providing Support

In terms of the LAIP policy (DoE, 2012: 6-8), some of the core duties of the SMTs are compiling a schedule to monitor all processes of teaching, learning and assessment; checking compliance with policy by subject in terms of content, learning outcomes and assessment standards; and checking work schedule coverage, as in goal 18 of the Action Plan (2014). This policy continues to make it the duty of the SMTs to ensure that HODs and/or senior teachers hold meetings with educators to discuss the content and address policy matters regarding the subject. The subject meetings are to focus on the gaps identified by teachers by grade, and they should also ensure that regular staff meetings are held to discuss progress relating to curriculum delivery, challenges and achievements. Though the policy stipulates that which is expected from the SMTs, the discourses during our information session unfolded as we tried to determine the challenges the SMTs faced in monitoring the implementation of LAIP, and thus give support when necessary.

Zinhle commented as follows with regard to the matter:

> *Zincane kakhulu izinhlelo ezikhona lapho sibizelwa ukubhekana nezingqinamba ekubhekeleni I curriculum. Futhi njengoba ama HoD emabili nje, loko kwenza enkulu ingcindezi. Kufanele abhekelele icurriculum abuye futhi nawo afundise emaklasini. Nezifundo ezingaphansi kwawo ziningi kakhulu. Lokho kwenza angawenzi ngokugculisayo umsebenzi wayo. Isibonelo nje, iHOD yama Languages and Humanities iyodwa.* (There are very few programmes that we are called to be able to deal with the challenges in monitoring the curriculum. A huge challenge is created as we are having two HODs. The HODs are supposed to monitor the curriculum and again go to class and teach. Even the subjects they are handling are so many and that is a result of them not doing their work effectively. For an example, there is only one HOD for Languages and Humanities).

Whilst Zinhle was talking Sha interfered:

> *Asikwazi ngisho ukuba nama subject heads ngoba uthisha eyedwa ufundisa isifundo kusukela lapha ka grade 8 kuze kube ugrade 12 ngenxa*

ye teacher- pupil ratio. (We are unable even to have subject heads because one teacher teaches a subject from grade 8 to grade 12).

After Sha had raised his point, Zinhle continued:

Ukube kuyenzeka nje ngabe ngishiya phansi mina la ka- education ngiyoziqalela omunye umsebenzi. (If it is possible I will be quitting from this education sector and look for another job).

The idea raised by Sha and Zinhle was that programmes for the SMTs to monitor the curriculum were limited. The school had only two HODs, which created a challenge. They were supposed to monitor the curriculum and teach, and even the HOD was taking too many subjects, which compromised efficiency. For example, the Languages and Humanities departments had one HOD. On the other hand, Sha's argument was that they were unable to co-opt subject heads because one teacher was teaching from Grades 8 to 12.

From the word "*zincane*" it became explicit that there was no adequate monitoring of this plan, which if the case would show that little support was available, and so impact negatively on the implementation of LAIP. This confirms the views of Ntuta and Schurink (2010:1), that Gauteng has seen a need to initiate a programme to monitor the implementation of the official school curriculum, and that the SMTs were given training based on curriculum monitoring.

It then became evident that it is not that HODs are unwilling to monitor the curriculum, but since they are handling many subjects and yet are expected to teach could be the cause of them failing to monitor the implementation of LAIP. Zinhle's concern that "ukube *kuyenzeka nje ngabe ngishiya phansi mina la ka- education ngiyoziqalela omunye umsebenzi"* (meaning that "if I am able I will resign from this teaching profession and look for other job") indicated that the teaching profession is no longer appealing to teachers because of the workload. Informed by the participants, there is a great challenge that SMTs are still experiencing in schools and teachers are tempted to look for job satisfaction elsewhere.

The mandatory issue of Post-Provisioning Norm (PPN), that is teacher-pupil ratio, was also a contributory factor to the implementation of LAIP, particularly in

secondary schools. The number of learners is the determinants of the number of teachers, regardless of the subjects being offered. This was proved by this school, which employed only one Mathematics teacher from Grade 8 to 12, yet she was an HOD. This meant that this HOD was expected to have 25 per week contact time with the learners, monitor the curriculum and give support to teachers in her department, and hold meetings with the teachers to discuss issues pertaining to the content coverage, teaching and learning, and implementation of the policy itself.

As Dufour and Marzano (2011:14) argue, the challenge confronting public education is the creation of powerful systems that allow ordinary people to achieve success. The systems remain autocratic and centralised in the education system, causing the SMTs to fail to monitor the curriculum or give the support to teachers stipulated by the LAIP. On the other hand, Kumashiro (2012: 13, 14) found that teacher education had struggled over where it positions itself in terms of the rights of citizens to political and social freedom and equality. Therefore, CER as the theoretical framework for this study was employed to bridge this gap. Through adopting CER, the school was placed in a position in which all stakeholders were involved in an equal power relation from which they could voice the reasons SMT members were failing to monitor the implementation of LAIP policy.

The school is an extension of the community and therefore eager to hear the community's understanding of the implementation of the LAIP policy.

4.2.3. Parents' and Community's Understanding of their Roles

The South African Schools Act (SASA) stipulates that parents be actively involved in the education of their children (ELRC, 2003: B-12). The parents are therefore mandated "to promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school". This includes parents supporting the principal, educators and other staff members of the school in the performance of their professional functions.

The LAIP further emphasises that parents represented by the SGB are to provide the resources needed by teachers in the delivery of the curriculum and that it is

responsible for ensuring that the premises and classrooms are kept clean and that cleaning does not take place during contact time.

Whilst waiting for other participants to join the meeting, Pitso initiated an interesting debate on the knowledge parents and the community have towards supporting the school in the education of their children:

> Pitso: *Siyafisa ukusiza isikole sethu ukuze imiphumela yabantwana izoba mihle. Esikudingayo nje ukuthi kumele sifundiseke ukuthi iliphi iqhaza esingalidlala.* (We are willing to assist our school so that learners' performance could be appealing. What we need is to be taught as to which role we can play).

His first spoken word "*siyafisa*", meaning "we are willing" indicated that parents and the community play a vital role in ensuring that the effective implementation of LAIP is a success in the school. He continues to suggest that there was still a need for parents and the community to be capacitated so that LAIP would be implemented effectively. This simply meant that the non-involvement of parents in knowing their roles towards supporting the school in the education of their children persisted.

I concluded that Pitso's statement could be the reason for the poor implementation of the LAIP policy, and as such was the case I had to reflect on why PAR as the chosen methodology promoted us in pushing such boundaries. Reflecting on the argument by Hertz-Lazarowitz et al. (2010: 271) that PAR had come into existence merely to support the programmes (as cited in 3.2.2) it became evident that not that the community is unwilling to support the school. Rather, they have been deprived of their freedom to involve themselves in the activities of the school. Also, the words, "*esikudingayo nje ukuthi kumele sifundiseke ukuthi iliphi iqhaza esingalidlala*"; (What we need is to be taught which role we can play) indicated that parents and the community still had hope that opportunities would open to them that would allow them to be actively involved.

As Freire, (2007:87) argued, without hope we cannot even start to think about education. We are still becoming a product.

4.2.4. Content Knowledge of Teachers

It has been reported that there is a gap between teachers understanding of the content in subjects such as Accounting, Mathematics and Physical Sciences. Botha, Uys, Van der Berg & Van der Walt (2007:69) were of the view that this might be a raison d'être for the poor implementation of the LAIP, thus resulting in learners' lack of academic achievement. Though the LAIP policy clearly stipulates that subject teachers be conversant with planning and preparation of lessons, to ensure adherence to curricular needs (correct understanding and implementation of both the learning outcomes and assessment standards, aims and objectives), it became evident from our staff development meeting that teachers were not confident with the content pertaining to some areas of their subjects. Fah was heard saying:

> *Sekukaningi sisho ukuthi i- Mathematical Literacy ayibe nephepha elilodwa ngoba u "paper two" wakhona kunzima nakuwe uwuthisha ukuwu "understenda" ngoba icontent yakhona is based on the context that you as a teacher have not been exposed to. Kangakanani-ke ezinganeni?*

To paraphrase, they had been making numerous suggestions that his subject did not need paper two as the content was based on context to which they as teachers had not been exposed. Thobeka quickly added that: "*Sigxila kakhulu kulokho esi comfortable kukona*", meaning that most time was spent on those areas they felt comfortable with, whilst disregarding the others.

I therefore considered reasons for this dilemma and checked the profile of each educator in this school. It transpired that 45% did not have a basic minimum teaching qualification and their content knowledge was based on teaching subjects they were not qualified to teach. This therefore hampered the effective implementation of the LAIP in this school.

Fah's statement that "*sekukaningi sisho*", (meaning we have been making numerous suggestions) indicates that the teachers' views were still not being taken into consideration, though they had made numerous suggestions as the key implementers of policies such as the LAIP. This also suggested that the education system was still struggling to advance the agendas of CER, whilst continuing to

illustrate the unequal power sharing. This demonstrated that the voices of teachers were still not being heard.

This argument became lengthy as everybody wanted to voice ideas. The principal raised a concern based on the Mathematics and Science department.

> Principal: As a school, Mathematics and Science department has been the department which used to produce good results. Eyi… (Sighs and scratches his head then continues). *Kodwa manje iyona department esenzela phansi ngohlobo olumangalisayo njengoba sonke sazi ukuthi we are the underperforming school. Angisazi kumele kwenziwenzenjani?*

The principal's concern was that the department of Mathematics and Science had gone from producing good results to being categorised as underperforming, and he did not know what to do to reverse this. This could be picked from his question, *"angisazi kumele kwenziwenjani*?"* and his sighing and head-scratching.

Sipho responded to the principal's concern by posing a challenging question which took long to be answered:

> Sipho: *Uma ngingabuza nje bothisha, yini le esidala ukuthi imiphumela yabantwana baka Science ingabi mihle njengakokwejwalekile?*

This poses the teachers a question as to what had caused the results of Sciences to decline.

After complete silence Bukiwe said:

> Bukiwe: *Izifundo ezifana nalezi zidinga abafundi abakhuthele nabazokwazi ukuyocobelela ulwazi kwezinye izikhungo. Kodwa lapha esikoleni uthola ukuthi abafundi bagcina la esikoleni kuphela.*

Bukiwe's argument was that subjects such as Mathematics and Sciences require hardworking learners who will also be able to access information from other institutions. However, our learners rely on the information they receive from the school. After Bukiwe finished with his argument, Zakhele added:

> *Abantwana abaphase kahle ka matric ngizobakhokhela uma befuna ukuqhubekela kuma institution of higher learning. Nesikole ngizosixhasa nangezitifiketi ezizonikwa othisha kanye nabafundi abenze kahle*

Zakhele's argument was that he was committing himself to pay for learners who qualify to go to institutions of higher learning. He further suggested that he would organise certificates that would be awarded to teachers and learners who had produced outstanding work.

Thobeka then commented and conveyed words of gratitude to Zakhele:

> Thobeka: *Kusukela ngo two thousand and eight if not two thousand nine, ukuthi imiphumela yaka Science ingabi mihle. Loko kungenzeka ukuba kudalwe ukuthi othisha balezizifundo baye bahamba. Abanye kube ingenxa yama promotions kanti abanye ingoba bathola imisebenzi ezobaholela kangcono. Since then nike besiloku siba nothisha abangaqeqeshiwe ngokugcwele ebebesisiza. Sidlulisa ukubonga okukhulu ngoxhaso esizolithola sithemba ukuthi sizoqhubeka njalo nokusebenzisana.*

Thobeka mentioned that the problems of the Science department started roughly in 2008 or 2009, but the reason she mentioned was that their teachers had been promoted or found better-paying work. Since then, therefore, the school had been appointing unqualified educators. Nonetheless, she thanked Zakhele for the support that had been proferred and was hoping that they would sustain the relationship.

As Hargreaves (1994: 54), Harwell (2003: 87), and Mkhwanazi (2007: 14) argued in Chapter 2.5.3, there is therefore a need for professional development in the education system, and it must be taken most seriously if we are to improve the academic performance of learners. Professional development for educators has been defined as the provision of activities designed to advance the knowledge, skills and understanding of educators in ways that lead to changes in their thinking and classroom behaviour (Harwell, 2003:87). Professional development is therefore crucial, especially in the light of the new Further Education and Training (FET) curriculum and its implementation.

The National Curriculum Statement (NCS), with its outcomes-based perspective, is intended to address the relevance of education offered to a learner. In order to improve learner academic performance professional development has to meet the task of developing educators for a new agenda within a transformation period aimed at reconstructing the education system (Mkhwanazi, 2007: 14). There has to be a change of emphasis towards educators' knowledge, skills and attitudes. Hargreaves (1994: 54) affirms this notion by arguing that significant change in curriculum or any other domain is unlikely to be successful if professional development does not receive attention.

Considering the arguments cited in Chapter 2, it became evident that the department of Mathematics and Sciences was suffering because the teachers who were handling these subjects or learning areas did not have sufficient content knowledge of their subjects. Maybe this had an impact on the failure of the school to implement the LAIP effectively, whilst the learners did not have any programmes available in which they could access information.

4.2.5. Pedagogical Knowledge of Teachers

According to Banegas (2012: 1) pedagogical knowledge empowers prospective teachers with self-awareness of the educational system as a whole, together with an understanding of learners supported by studies in psychology and pedagogy. This type of knowledge paves the way to build in pedagogical expertise as well as an understanding of curriculum. As such, the LAIP policy clearly specifies that teachers are to ensure that their planning is in line with the requirements of the subject policy and aligned to CAPS. Furthermore, this policy stresses that teachers have to administer an informal assessment that covers all the cognitive levels to prepare learners for the formal assessment. It further stipulates that item analysis be available, based on the learner performance after the assessed work is completed, and so inform the appropriate type of intervention strategy (DBE, 2012: 3 & 4).

During the meeting of the strategic planning in which we drew up an action plan, it became evident that teachers' pedagogical knowledge was still inadequate,

despite the LAIP policy stating precisely what the teachers should do in terms of lesson planning, lesson preparation, assessment and curriculum aligning. Zozo was the first participant to comment:

> Zozo: *Engathi isikhathi esiningi manje la ka education esokwenzana no lesson plan no item analysis I task ne task. Sikuphi lesosikhathi? Ayi cha, ungathi sengiyabona !* (It looks as if here in education most of the time is spent on lesson plan and item analysis for each task. Where are we going to get that time? Ooh, no how I wish).

Her remarks were that in the DoE most time is spent on lesson planning and analysing tasks: "How then are they going to get such time? Ooh no, how I wish…!"). I sensed from this rhetorical question and exclamation that whilst teachers were aware of what the LAIP policy expects them to do they seem to disregard it, perceiving it to be against them. She was not in a position to start complying with the LAIP policy. Also, when making sense of her opening comments: "*Engathi isikhathi esiningi la ka education*", meaning (most of the time here in education department) it was evident that teachers had not been consulted when the policy was being formulated, and so did give themselves time to change their pedagogical ways of teaching in line with the expectations of the LAIP policy.

Thobeka also agreed with Zozo, mentioning that setting tasks such that they covered all cognitive levels as expected was too taxing for them, as they were teaching too many classes. This was demonstrated from her argument:

> Thobeka: *Okwani nje ngampela ukugqilazwa okungaka uma sisetha amaphepha. Manje sekuzofanele sibheke ukuthi ama levels siwakhave wonke.* (Why are we being made slaves when we are setting question papers? Now we have to look whether all cognitive levels have been covered).

From both Zozo and Thobeka one could sense that they were concerned about time, and none realised it was for the learner's benefit. I therefore concluded that if teachers had been given opportunities to reflect on this LAIP policy they could have implemented it effectively. Since they did not own it they developed

resistance towards implementing it effectively then felt no need in acquiring new pedagogical knowledge that could assist the learners in their classrooms.

Their comments also justified my choice of a conceptual framework that incorporated social constructivist theory (see chapter 2.4.1). Teachers, according to Meyer (2004: 970), find it difficult to implement appropriate instructional practices to support constructivist learning in their classrooms. They do not understand or agree that effective teaching takes place when a teacher is able to align his or her teaching methods based on what the learners already know, ascertain this and teach them accordingly. Teaching requires teachers who understand students' existing conceptions and can create learning experiences that will allow them either to accommodate or restructure their knowledge frameworks for new learning. As Borich (2007: 302 & 303) argued, the inadequate implementation of the LAIP results in teachers failing to recognise the direct experiences of their learners and using what they already know as an instructional tool.

Consequently, as noted in Gauteng, Namibia, Nigeria and the USA (see Chapter 2.6), this predicament led to poor performance of learners. Similarly, after I had digested the statements and listened to the arguments made I concluded that maybe the pedagogical knowledge of teachers did have an effect on the implementation of the LAIP in this school, but impacted negatively on learner performance.

4.2.6. Collective Capacity to Promote Learning

Bolam, McMahon, Stoll, Thomas and Wallace (2006:221) argued that learning is based on the teacher's individual and collective capacity, and that this is a complex blend of motivation, skill, positive learning, organisational conditions and culture, and infrastructure of support. When all these have been put in place they give individuals, groups, whole school communities and school systems the power to become involved in and sustain learning over time. The current dispensation recommends that learning not be left to individuals. To succeed in this changing and increasingly complex world, Stoll et al. (2006:222) suggest that whole school

communities work and learn together to take charge of change, finding the best ways to enhance young people's learning. As such, some of the LAIP management goals are to improve parent and community participation in the governance of schools, partly by improving access to important information via the e-Education strategy. This ensures that the physical infrastructure and environment of every school inspires learners to come to school to learn, and teachers to teach and use the school as a location which promote access amongst children to the full range of public health and poverty-reduction interventions.

These goals, therefore, are in line with what Stoll articulated. However, the arguments pointed out that the stakeholders were still struggling to promote learning through collective capacity. This became evident during Phase 3 of our strategic planning, when we had to meet on a monthly basis to evaluate the plan. Sipho commented:

> Sipho: *Niyabona nje ukuba sonke lapha siyakubona ukubaluleka kwalemihlangano yethu ngabe sihleze siphelele futhi sifike ngesikhathi kuyo. Manje abanye bethu babona kuyizinto zabo ezibalulekile*. (Can you also see that if we all view the importance of our meetings we will always be present and come on time? Now some of us they see their own things being important).

Sipho meant that if everybody could see that these meetings were of importance to us all then everybody could honour them and be punctual. However, some see other commitments as being more important.

Thobeka quickly joined the comment and remarked:

> *Uqinisile, baphi nje o Pitso?* This meant, you are true, where is Pitsos (referring to Pitso as a plural form)?

Zinhle continued*:*

> *Niyamazi nje lowo kuhlezwe kulindwe yena,* meaning that you quite know that we always wait for him.

Zozo interrupted:

Kodwa naye uzogcina esengenile egiyeni, kancane kancane. Asiyi sonke singemanzi. (He will eventually be on spot. We do not accept things at once).

Thobeka and Zinhle agreed with Sipho and Thobeka asked where Pitso was. Zinhle added, "but you do know that one [referring to Pitso] that we always wait for him". Zozo interrupted them and said that even Pitso would eventually become actively involved. She further quoted the idiom "asiyi sonke singemanzi", which means that "not everybody responds to circumstances at once". There will always be those that will follow behind.

Listening to these comments I concluded that maybe the ability of our community to work collectively had not yet reached its zenith. However, these remarks also indicated that perhaps the participants were beginning to perceive the importance of working cooperatively, as could be picked up from Zozo's comments that she still had a hope that even those who were seen not to be actively involved would gradually change their behaviour. Also, Sipho's words "*ukube sonke*" ("If all of us") affirmed that the stakeholders were then starting to see the importance of working jointly. The participants justified the principles of CER of bringing hope and of working together. Likewise, this discussion highlighted just one point, that when new innovations are being initiated not everybody welcomes them instantaneously, and rather it takes a process. This could be detected from Zinhle's question.

Based on the stated arguments, one could perceive that the stakeholders were in an emerging stage of working collaboratively, however, there were still elements that needed to be embraced to unify the set so that a common and shared vision could be shared. As this was the case, I was put in a position to think that our communities were still lacking the collective capacity to promote learning. Our communities were still struggling to create the structures and cultures by which current educators continuously improve both their individual and collective practice (Dufour & Marzano, 2011:19). There has to be a shift in our thinking whereby educators are regarded as the solution to, rather than the cause of, the complex problems confronting our public schools, and this confirmed the views of Dufour and Marzano (2011:22), Huffman and Hipp (2003:4), Hodd and Sommer

(2008:10) and Meyer (2006:221), that schools need to work towards developing professional learning communities (PLCs), and that through these our communities will be in a position to share and critically interrogate their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning- oriented, growth-promoting way. As our communities reached that point they would be applying the principles of CER whereby everybody would be valued as equal partners in any decision being taken, eventually promoting peace and hope.

As Ntuta and Schurink (2010:5) reported, Gauteng felt a need for PLCs to be strengthened, hence it initiated team- building and conflict-resolution workshops for its stakeholders in its EAZ programme. The examples of the USA and Namibia also showed that schools alone will not be able to implement LAIP effectively without the involvement of all stakeholders. After such compelling arguments, I concluded that the failure of teachers to implement LAIP effectively was not merely that they were defying this policy but that they lacked the collective capacity to promote learning for all students in the existing structures and cultures of the systems in which they work. This again confirmed the argument of Dufour and Marzano (2011:15).

From the spoken words of participants it became evident then that collective capacity to promote learning in this school was still a challenge that needed to be addressed. In terms of the teachers failing to implement the LAIP effectively, I discerned to the fact that the stakeholders were working disjointly; meaning that each individual was working on his or her own not acknowledging the importance of the collective capacity. Hence, this eventually affected the academic performance of learners.

4.3. COMPONENTS OF THE SOLUTION

Reinforcing the view of Hertz-Lazarowitz et al. (2010:271), the study aims to support programmes of organizational decision-making and problem-solving. Such a study should employ a transformative approach founded upon the principles of emancipation and social justice, seeking to empower members of a community or group who are less powerful and/or oppressed by dominating groups. We as

research participants therefore kept that in mind, working as a team to collaborate activities during the research process that would help address the identified challenges. We ensured that consistency throughout the process was maintained by sticking to quality. All ideas of participants were valued and respected, with discussions debated on an equal and relaxed platform (Anderson, 2006:1).

4.3.1. The forum

As participants, we agreed upon formulating a dedicated team with a common vision responsible to coordinate and monitor our plans of action, to ensure adherence. This was in line with Kemmis's (2000: 3) view that action research is undertaken by people with a common purpose. This team was to affirm that actions were not haphazardly carried out, with each person following his or her own agenda. Rather, it ensured a joint venture amongst all stakeholders and this team was to evaluate and reflect on our progress. This was in accordance with the opinions of Dwyer et al. (2010: 1434) and Kemmis (2000: 2) that key factors in action research are careful planning, observation, listening, evaluation and critical reflection. We did not wish to obstruct the SMT in its duties, but this team was being formed in line with CER, by giving opportunities to those who were formerly ostracised to exercise their powers.

The team included myself, as coordinator of the activities being put in place. I took this role to ensure that we worked according to our plan and be in a position to meet the deadlines. The principal of the participating school also formed part of this team, constantly checking the year plan of the school and ours and notifying the team if any changes had to take place. We did not want our plans to disrupt those of the school or Department. The SGB secretary was also included so that she could take minutes of meetings, record resolutions and report to the SGB meetings. Three educators were identified for their experience, namely the heads for Mathematics, Humanities and Languages, to liaise with educators, report any challenges and suggestions from teachers in each department. Also in the team was the teacher liaising officer (TLO), responsible for working closely with the RCL, and the secretary of the RCL who voiced concerns and suggestions of the

learners. A parent ensured that the community was informed of new initiatives and monitored the functioning of the centres; informing us if not so we could intervene.

4.3.2. Plan of Action

Stringer (2004:3) wrote that action researchers "engage in careful diligent enquiry not for the purpose of discovering new facts or revising accepted laws or theories, but to acquire information having practical application to the solution of specific problems related to their work". However, Kemmis (2000:2) argued that when activities have been implemented they should also be systematically monitored, and that reflection on the processes and the outcomes of change is vital. For Meyer (2000, in Kemmis, 2000:2), the strength of action research lies in the generation of solutions to practical problems.

In this case, the stakeholders were not in a position to effectively implement the LAIP in order to improve the learners' performance. Though the identified problems were many, we agreed to focus on addressing the five that were of priority to us (see Chapter 3.2.2). Agreeing on these would assist us in planning accordingly, so that we were able to implement practical solutions and identify suitable people to be responsible for each activity, based on their expertise and interest. Planning also helped us execute activities geared to producing solutions to the challenges identified, and within the timeframes we had agreed upon.

4.3.3. Audit of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

For our SWOT analysis the forum conducted an audit for the participants, to assist them in identifying the most valuable resources needed to implement our activities effectively. The team found that we had a committed SMT, educators and SGB members. Also, they found that no class was without a teacher, and all vacancies had been filled. They also concluded that safety and security were tight. We then capitalised on this as our strengths, using that to our own advantage in designing activities.

We took into consideration weaknesses, notably unqualified and under-qualified educators, inconsistency in the NSE results, insufficient floor space and furniture, lack of resources (electricity, library, laboratory and media centre), and high dropout rate. The opportunities were identified as procuring help from better performing schools, business and industry, and inviting visits from subject advisors and district officials. Our threats then were overcrowding, reluctance of learners to study or do homework, poor pass rates, and teenage pregnancy.

The team had to carry out the SWOT audit because it provided a framework for educational administrators to focus better on serving the needs of the society. As Balamuralikrishna and Dugger (2012:1) contend, a broader, long-term goal of a SWOT analysis is to curb poverty and help improve the economic status of the nation. In our case we looked at future possibilities of the institution through systematic introspection, taking into consideration both positive and negative concerns. We were looking for strategies to assist the teachers to effectively implement LAIP, and in turn improve learner performance.

This led us to the formulation of our strategic planning in line with priorities stated in Chapter 3.2.2. According to Hayward, Johnson and Ncayiyana (2003:21), strategic planning envisions how a team can leverage the strengths of the institution to enhance its future performance. Based on this, as a team we then agreed that our point of departure to bringing change to the school was to understand educational policies, such as the LAIP.

4.3.3.1. Priority 1: Understanding Learner Attainment Improvement Plan policy

Since we identified that maybe the lack of understanding of educational policies was a challenge to the school in terms of implementing the LAIP policy effectively, we then agreed to put in place programmes that would help stakeholders to understand what was expected from them by the Department of Basic Education. The suggestions unfolded as follows:

Zozo: *Yini singavumelani ngesikhathi esizohlangana ngaso uku unpacka ama policies esinawo la ka education?* (Why do we not agree upon making time for ourselves to unpack all educational policies?)

The team responded negatively to Zozo's idea, but she continued:

Why are you such noisy *ngoba phela bengibeka nje*? I am subjected to be corrected.

While the team members were expressing their dissatisfaction at her suggestion Zozo asked why they were behaving in this manner. Her willingness to stand corrected indicated that she understood the need to be flexible. She was in a position to listen and accept other people's ideas, which also indicated that she was aware that the decision we had to take was intended to accommodate everyone.

Principal: *Mina ngicabanga ukuthi kunganjani uma singahlalela ukuqonda this LAIP policy ngoba impela engathi iqukethe konke esikudingayo.* (I am thinking how it would be if we can try to understand this LAIP policy as it shows that it has everything we need).

The principal suggested focusing on unpacking what the LAIP policy entailed as he believed that contained all that they needed. Betty then seconded the principal's suggestion:

Ayi cha engathi ngihambisana nawe Thishomkhulu. Mhlampe loko kuzokwenza ukuthi sikwazi ukuba ne direction. (Ooh no, it seems as if I am with the Principal. Maybe that will make us to have a direction. Let us pull this bull by its horns).

She continued to justify herself by saying that if they were to focus on the LAIP policy it would be easier for them.

The house kept quiet until Xolani asked:

Sizokwenza kanjani ke loko"? Hawu, kahle kakhulu ubala phela lolo. Sizosebenzisa bona oThursday njengoba siba ne sport day ngabo. (How

are we going to do that? Ooh, we will make use of Thursdays as we normally use them as sport days).

Thobeka suggested:

Kungaba njani futhi uma kungase kube uyena uZozo osiqalelayo uku facilitator our first session of our development based on LAIP policy. Then thina banye siyobe sesilandela. (How would it be if it could be Zozo who start facilitating our first session of our development based on the LAIP policy?

Xolani's concern was that he wanted to know how the whole activity would be performed. However, the principal quickly stated that Xolani should not worry as his concern could easily be addressed. The principal wanted to see and support the implementation of the LAIP policy at all costs, having said "*ubala lolo*" or 'there is nothing to worry about'. He further suggested that the team use the Thursdays normally reserved for school sports. This too confirmed that much as sports were important they were not as important as effective implementation of the LAIP, which would ultimately improve learners' academic performance.

"Kungaba njani" from Thobeka's statement, it meant that if all stakeholders were in full support and understanding of all activities to be performed, they had to have a common shared vision if they were to succeed. "*thina banye siyobe sesilandela*" indicated that the whole team were willing to "pull the bull by its horns together". All stakeholders agreed upon the proposal and Zozo was the first person to unpack the LAIP policy. The Timetable Committee had to be consulted over classes for Thursdays being reduced to 45 minutes from one hour. Also, on Fridays, instead of finishing at two o'clock, we agreed to disperse at three o'clock, to allow for more contact time with the learners. This was a continuing process. The Sport Committee were also consulted over suspension of sports. Surprisingly, all stakeholders were keen to work in consultation with one another and this helped create a harmonious atmosphere within the school.

The resolutions taken then were staff development, which commenced on the following Thursday after the meeting for strategic planning. The person identified collaboratively to lead the discussion was Zozo. Though understanding of the

LAIP policy was seen to have covered all our priorities we further streamlined our activities according to what this policy entailed. That helped us to focus on the content knowledge gap and pedagogical approach of our teachers, as we felt that they were interrelated.

4.3.2.2. Priority 2: Content knowledge gap of teachers

As discussed above, the content knowledge gap of teachers might have had an impact on the implementation of the LAIP. It became evident too that one of the reasons for this crisis was that 45% of the teachers at this participating school did not have the basic minimum teaching requirements. As this was the case, the forum devised activities to support the school as a whole in implementing the LAIP:

Zakhele was the first to comment on this issue:

> *Bengicela kwi team ukuthi ibhekisise ukuthi iMathematics ne Science ingasizwa kanjani. Lezizifundo zisemqoka kodwa sizwile ngo principal ukuthi izona ezenza imiphumela yesikole ingabi mihle.* (I am asking the team to look extensively to Mathematics and Science as to how it could be assisted. These subjects are crucial but we have heard from the principal that they are the ones which make the performance of the school not appealing).

The request here was to focus on improving Mathematics and Science in the school. He further commented that these subjects were crucial yet also the ones that caused the school to underperform, as the principal highlighted. Zozo continued to support Zakhele's request:

> Zozo: *Mhlampe lokhu okushiwo uZakhele kuwubuhlakani obukhulu njengoba uma singaqhubeka nokuyekelela lesimo sibe nje, othisha balezizifundo bazogcina sebeluze ukuzethemba nabo.* (Maybe what Zakhele is saying is highly important because if we continue to leave the situation like this; teachers of these subjects will ultimately lose their confidence).

Zozo meant that she strongly supported Zakhele's request and added that if the school continued to leave such challenge to subject teachers, they would eventually lose confidence in themselves. When paying attention to what Zozo and Zakhele said I perceived that they were keen to see the teachers and the learners of Mathematics and Science being supported. When understanding the last part of Zozo's comment one surmised that her concern was to include the affected teachers. She did not want to see their confidence wane.

Thobeka also commented on the theme:

> *Bengiphakamisa ukuthi izingane zaka Science ziyocelelwa lapha ku Kutlwanong programme mhlampe kukhona umehluko ongaba khona.* (I suggest that learners doing Science be requested permission from Kutlwanong so that they could attend their programmes).

Thobeka's suggestion here was that the learners of Mathematics and Science be put onto the Kutlwanong programme so that there might be some improvement in their performance.

Nobody disputed Thobeka's idea but a concern voiced by Fah was:

> *Ngiyavumelana nalowombono but inkinga ukuthi laba bafundi kuzomele bagibele baye lapho kofunda khona ngoLwesihlanu, uMgqibelo ne Sonto kanti abazali abaningi abasebenzi.* (I also agree with that suggestion but the problem is these learners have to take taxis to attend these programmes on Friday, Saturday and Sunday yet most of the parents are not working).

Fah's concern seemed genuine and was going to assist the team to devise a solution. He was in agreement with Thobeka but his concern was that the Mathematics and Science learners would have to attend classes on this programme as from Friday afternoon until Sunday. This would mean incurring more expenses in an already poverty-stricken community.

Pitso then posed a follow-up question*:*

> *Zingaki zona lezizingane esikhuluma ngazo lana na? Ngibuzela ekutheni kunganjani uma I SGB ingahlangabeza abazali balezizingane ngemali*

yokugibela. (How many of them are these learners we are talking about? I am asking so that the SGB could meet the parents of these learners halfway).

Pitso wanted to know the number of learners who were affected, followed by a request from the SGB to subsidise such learners with a transport fee. This indicated that the whole team were willing to make an extra effort to use the budget to subsidise such learners. Betty said:

> *Okusho ukuthi siding ikomidi elibhekelene nezimali ukuthi lenze umhlangano osheshayo.* (So it means we need the committee which handles money to have an urgent meeting).

This was a proposal that the Finance Committee hold an urgent meeting to discuss the matter.

When hearing all the positive comments from the participants I concluded that CER did empower the team members in terms of reaching agreement in a respectful and peaceful way. I then further looked at how PAR could have assisted in this resolution taken. All team members showed that they supported the programme, and that it was not for somebody else but for them. The agreement was taken collectively as all were involved.

This decision taken also indicated that the stakeholders then understood the importance of networking. They reached a point at which it was perceived that they should outsource to other neighbouring schools. Also, the continuing staff development meetings were also emphasised. The staff development programmes were going to address the recommendation by Sacred Heart College R and D (1999:12), that schools strive towards becoming learning organisations and self-reliant so that they are in a position to improve the academic performance of the learners.

This was raised by Mrs Thabethe in her speech:

> *Bantabami, ukuhluleka kwenu akukona okwenu kuphela kodwa nathi singumphakathi. Njengoba sivumelene ngemihlangano yangoLweZine, siyacela ukuthi ingapheli kodwa iqhubeke. Nalabo abangagwele kahle*

sifisa nabo ukuthi bazithuthukise. Ngizoloku ngiza ngizobheka ukuthi kusahamba ngako yini. (My children, your failure is not for you only but also us as a community. As we have agreed upon the Thursdays meetings, we are requesting that the meetings continue. Even those who are not fully qualified, it is our wish that they enrol. I will constantly come to check whether things are continuing as agreed upon).

Mrs Thabethe did not just speak for the sake of raising a comment but as though she was the biological mother of all the team members. Her words: "*Bantabami, ukuhluleka kwenu ukuhluleka kwethu*" which meant, your failure is also ours simply revealed that as the community they also took the blame for failing to support the school in implementing the LAIP. As they were involved they therefore looked for the 'roses among the thorns'. They became aware that the successful implementation of the LAIP lay beyond the reach of the stakeholders. She went on to encourage teachers to upgrade themselves and also argued that since Thursdays were scheduled for staff development that be maintained. She even committed herself to constantly visiting the school to check whether the initiatives were being carried out as agreed upon.

The team therefore reached a collective agreement that learners taking Mathematics and Science be enrolled at Kutlwanong programme. People identified as being in charge of this were the Science HOD, the principal of the school and the chairperson of the SGB. Also, the Finance Committee drew up a budget for the needy learners so that they could be subsidised with a transport fee. The chairperson of the SGB checked that the committee sat and that all affected learners were assisted. Staff development programmes were to be continued where teachers would also be assisted with content as well. The HODs, together with the senior teachers, became responsible for this activity and teachers were encouraged to upgrade themselves. The senior administration clerk and the principal updated the qualifications of all staff and made a record of those who produced their proof of registration from their institutions. This also assisted the Timetable Committee and the Examinations Committee to plan in advance for what we called a 'batting teacher' who would fill the gap should the affected teachers be on study leave. The cricketing metaphor meant we needed to ensure that no class be left without a teacher at the crease.

The team adopted the lesson from Namibia, where professional development was recognised as the main priority and that for professional development to be effective they had to come up with strategies that would create an environment which utilised the existing capacity (see paragraph 2.6.2), (Iipinge, 2012:43, Hopkins, 2000:82 & Geckler, 2001:11). Likewise, the school had senior teachers whose expertise was not being utilised. After the debate the team acknowledged this and created opportunities for such teachers to mentor and nurture the unqualified educators and underqualified educators. The team eventually embraced Storeng's claim (2001:27) that sharing of lessons from experienced teachers would have a positive impact on the novice educators.

Apart from the activities that were going to assist teachers, it became evident that there should be others designed to support the SMT members.

4.3.2.3. Priority 3: Monitoring of curriculum and support

One of the core duties of the SMT is to monitor the implementation of the curriculum and give support to educators under their care, (DoE, 2012:6-8). The forum felt it was its responsibility to design activities that would be of assistance to the SMT members. The team were in agreement with the measures taken in Namibia and the USA in terms of putting in place systems that would assist the SMT to monitor the curriculum. Siza suggested that it would be better if the school could have its monitoring tool handed over to all educators so that they would know what was expected of them. She was talking to Ntombi, unaware that the principal was listening to them.

> Principal: *Awusho kakhulu lapho Nkosazane (esho uSiza) khona sizozwa sonke.* The principal called for Siza to raise her concern to the house so that everybody could hear.

> Siza: *Oh cha, thishomkhulu bengithi nje kunganjani uma kungaba khona imonitoring tool ezosho ukuthi yini elindelekile. Uthisha no thisha azoba nayo.* (Oh no, principal I was saying how would it be if there is a monitoring tool stipulating that which is expected). Siza meant that it would be better if

as a school they were to come up with a monitoring tool, stipulating what is expected from the teachers whereby each could have his or her own.

Bukiwe quickly raised a question: *Kahle kahle yini le esifuna ukuthi ibhekwe na?* or 'What is it that the team intends to monitor?'

Ntombi and Thobeka spoke simultaneously:

Uku implimentwa kwe curriculum. (The implementation of the curriculum).

Sipho then added:

Uma kunjalo yini singazibekeli nje thina ukuthi sifuna ukuthi imiphumela yabafundi ibe u a hundred percent ngoba sifisa ukuthi bonke abafundi baphase. Izindlela ke ezizokwenza loko okufanele siqhamuke nawo. (If that is the case; why we do not set a target that we want the results of the results of the learners to be 100% because we wish to see all learners passing. We have to come up with strategies then to achieve that).

When Sipho spoke he supported what had been said by Ntombi and Thobeka, then suggested they not set a target of 100% pass rate. He went on to say it was our wish to see all learners passing, however, the difficult part would be achieving it. Zozo then commented, in support of Sipho:

Bengicabanga ukuthi kungangcono uma singagxila ku ten, eleven and twelve.

Zozo emphasized that it would be better if the focus could be on Grades 10, 11 and 12.

When these comments were being made, nobody rebuked them. Fah was heard saying:

Uma kunjalo- ke madoda kuzomele siqinise ukuthi sina ma weekend classes and holiday classes. Zozo emphasized: *Kanti nakho nje ukuthi labo sixty minutes lessons sibasebenzisa effectively and productively.* (If that is the case we have to ensure that we run weekend classes and holiday classes).

Thobeka laughed openly then commented:

> *Okusho ukuthi sekuzophela manje ukuthi uma kushintshwa I period uthole ukuthi umuntu uqala phansi aye ekhabetheni ibamba eyeka.* (It means there will no longer be situations whereby after the change of period you find a person going to the cupboard looking for something).

The house laughed in unison as Thobeka raised this issue.

Fah had suggested that the school run weekend and holiday classes. I found out that although the school had such classes they were only meant for the Grade 12's. On the other hand, Zozo stressed the intensive teaching during official hours that was for the whole duration of 60 minutes. While I was still confused about her suggestion, Thobeka came to my rescue by stating that it meant as from then nobody would be seen wanting when she or he was supposed to be in class. This simply meant that when it was time for the teacher to be in class he or she should honour his or her class in time. From the laughter I assumed that there were teachers known for lack of punctuality.

Zinhle further made a suggestion:

> *What if we make a deadline that the syllabus is completed in June ukuze sizoba na enough revision programmes with the learners?* ("Ukuze sizoba na" means so that we can).

Thobeka quickly responded to Zinhle's proposal*:*

> *Ngo June? Ngeke it is too early. Kunganjani uma kuba u August noma before trial examinations. Phela ama languages anomsebenzi omningi.* (In June? Oh no, it is too early. What if it is August or before trial examinations? Languages have more work).

Thobeka raised her concern that June was too early for teachers to finish the syllabus, especially for Languages, as there would be more work for them. She suggested that it would be better if the deadline were in August or September, just before the trial examinations commenced. All the team appeared to support Thobeka, with Pitso saying:

Engathi ngiyaweseka lombono kaThobeka ngoba akusizi ukuthi uthisha agijime yedwa ashiye izingane ngasemuva. (I second the idea of Thobeka because it does not help to see teachers finishing the syllabus leaving behind the learners).

This seconded Thobeka's proposal, and Pitso continued to say it was not wise for the teachers to run towards the finishing of the syllabus leaving the learners behind.

Mrs Thabathe also remarked:

Bengicabanga ukuthi mhlampe kungasisiza ukuthi singacela izingane lezi esezaphothula esikoleni kodwa ezihleli zingasebenzi mhlampe zilekelele lezi zesikole uma isikole sesiphumile. Mina lapha kwami izingane zingahlanganyela khona. Anginankinga. (I was thinking that it would also help to ask learners who have completed their schooling but who are staying at home not working. Maybe to assist these who are still at school after school. They can meet at my house. I do not have a problem).

Mrs Thabethe raised an issue when she said she was opening her house for learners to come and study, being assisted by those who had completed schooling but were unemployed. When she shared this I understood that she was talking about homework centres. However, Xolani seemed confused. This was evident from the question he raised.

Xolani: *Uma ucabanga Ma loko kungenzeka? Ngisho ngoba phela abanye balaba obashoyo kade baqeda esikoleni abayazi iNCS.* (If you think Mah, is that possible? I am saying that because some of those learners you are talking about long finished school and they do not know what NCS is).

Xolani asked whether what was suggested by Mrs Thabethe was going to be possible as some of the community members had completed schooling a long time before. They did not have an understanding of what NCS was. As he was raising his concern the principal commented:

Yebo kungenzeka. Phela abazokufundisa kodwa bazobasiza nje ngokuthi umsebenzi abanikezwe wona esikoleni ukuthi bayowenza emakhaya

bayawenza yini. Icishe ifane nje lento nale eyenziwa esilungwini e after care. (Yes it is possible. They will not teach but they will be assisting to look whether the work that they are given at school is done at home. This is similar to what learners do at homework clubs in White schools).

The principal reassured Xolani that it would be possible. The community members were not going to teach but their main role was to monitor learners' attention to their homework, and assist if they could. He further compared it to what is known as 'homework clubs' in White schools.

Ntombi then suggested that tests be written fortnightly and results analysed to enable immediate remediation and/or intervention. Also, she made a valid point when stating that the CASS for learners was to be managed term by term. That would mean that subject teachers would have to ensure that they adhered to the POA for their subjects.

> Ntombi: *Noma lokhu kuzosho extra work to teachers but ngifisa sengathi ama tests angabhalwa noma kabili enyangeni. Lokhu kuzokwenza ukuthi sisheshe sithole izinkinga bese siyazilungisa. Phezu kwalokho engathi othisha bastikha kuma Programme of Assessent ukuqinisekisa ukuthi u CASS wabafundi u tiptop iterm ne term.* (Though this would mean extra work for teachers but I wish that tests be written twice in a month. This will cause us to easily detect problems and rectify them. On top of that teachers should stick to their Programme of Assessment to ensure that learners' CASS is up to standard).

As these comments were put on the table, the team accepted them unanimously. The team stressed to the SMT members and HODs the necessity to ensure activities were performed accordingly. Furthermore, the SGB chairperson together with the councillor was mandated to check whether the homework centre was fully functioning and identify areas which needed support.

The resolutions binding us all were then summed up as follows. Firstly, the SMT drafted the monitoring tool specifying all the performance standards to be assessed. This monitoring tool was issued to each teacher in the school to avoid conflict. The second decision taken was that results of Grades 10, 11 and 12

results had to improve. This would be achieved through intensive teaching and learning during official hours. Teachers would be encouraged to honour their classes on time. The HODs were responsible for monitoring this, with the assistance of the class representatives. A control register was designed for teachers to sign, specifying the topic taught during that day and indicating the number of learners during that session. On Fridays, the class representatives took these control registers to the administration clerk who did the audit for each class.

Another programme that was intensified was the attendance of Grades 10, 11 and 12 learners during weekends and holidays. Such programmes were going to assist teachers to finish the syllabus before the learners commenced with trial examinations. This also was going to allow for revision programmes to take place. Teachers would be requested to submit their revision plans to the HODs for monitoring of effectiveness. All the subject teachers were to be involved and the SGB members requested to avail themselves. A special timetable for these classes would be drawn up by the Timetable Committee, and the attendance registers were to be signed and kept by the principal who would make a report of learners not attending.

Furthermore, a homework centre was to be established, in which learners would be assisted with their homework. Former learners from the school who had completed matriculation but were unemployed would be involved in this process. The reason for agreeing upon former learners was that it would be easy to administer discipline. Mrs Thabethe was tasked with this programme, assisted by the councillor and the SGB members. The principal would also pay regular visits to the centre. Finally, rigorous testing programmes were planned, whereby teachers had to conduct each item analysis. Before these tests were administered to the learners they would be moderated by the subject heads to check whether they were up to the required standards. This assisted in terms of identifying sections that needed more attention and the type of interventions required. The HODs and the Examination Committee were tasked with making these programmes a success. The school administration clerk was approached so that she could arrange time to make copies for the teachers.

As the interventions required much from the educators, the forum felt a need to address the pedagogical approach of educators so that they could effectively implement the LAIP. The team were of the opinion that if teachers were supported they would be in a better position to meet the required standards the team had proposed.

4.3.2.4. Priority 4: Pedagogical knowledge of teachers

During our discussion with the participants it became evident that teachers had a pedagogical knowledge gap, resulting in the inadequate implementation of LAIP. This challenge bore out the findings of Meyer (2004:2) that teachers were finding it difficult to understand the process of learning to teach and making sense of what was happening in their classrooms. One reason is that teachers are struggling to implement appropriate instructional practices that support constructivist learning in their classroom. Likewise, Borich (2007:302, 303) confirmed Meyer (2004:2), but also pointed out that teachers find it hard to take the time necessary to adapt their lessons to their learners' needs, prior histories and experiences, or to analyse and critique the success of their lessons afterwards.

Informed by this, the forum designed activities that would deemphasise lecturing and telling. Rather, they would create a situation in which teachers would encourage their learners to use their own experiences to actively construct understandings that make sense to them and for which they can take ownership. In other words, teachers are to reach a point of bridging the gap between teaching and learning by actively engaging students in their lessons and encouraging them to gradually accept greater responsibility for their own learning.

> In discussing this, Zinhle made her suggestions: *Angiqondile ukwenza I competition among learners but I feel kungangcono uma abantwana singaba groupa emakilasini according to their abilities.* (I don't mean to to encourage competition among learners but I feel it would be better if learners could be grouped to their abilities in class).

Zinhle suggested that learners be grouped according to their own academic abilities rather than having one class full of learners with diverse capabilities.

Team members kept quiet and nobody supported Zinhle's opinion, until Thobekile made a follow-up question:

> *Hhayi- bo kanti uthini u White paper six na?* (Hey, what does White paper six say?

Zinhle responded:

No, angisho ukuthi izingane with barriers zidiscrimethwe but I mean if sakha amagroups eklasini lokho will mean ukuthi as ngi prepare for my lessons I know ukuthi for this group ngibahlelela muphi umsebenzi based kwi ability yabo. (No, I am not saying that learners with barriers be discriminated, but I mean that if we form groups in classrooms that will mean that when we prepare for the lessons we know that this particular group is suitable for which task based on their ability).

Thobekile's question merely reminded Zinhle of what "White paper 6" stipulates. Zinhle responded by saying that she did not mean that learners with barriers to learning be discriminated from main stream, but continued to state that dividing them into groups would enable the teacher to plan according to the special needs of the groups of learners in her or his class. This would mean that lesson preparation would take into consideration the diverse capabilities of learners in the class. Also her argument supported Mfeka's (2005:33) claim social cooperation yielded more positive results than individual learning.

Bukiwe added:

> *Okusho ukuthi manje sekuzoba compulsory to come up with enrichment and remediation programmes ko lesson plane? Wanda wemsebenzi.* (Does it mean that it would be now compulsory to come with enrichment and remediation programmes in lesson plans? What a lot of job.

Bukiwe wanted to know why, when they made lesson plans, they had to come up with enrichment and remediation programmes? He further commented that it was a lot work.

When making sense of their argument I became aware that though lesson plans were made in the school, teachers did not do justice in terms of catering for all the learners in their classroom. Their preparations were for a specific group of

learners, as indicated by the words "*okusho ukuthi manje*", meaning "now it means".

Ntombi raised a question:

> *Sizobenza kanjani- ke labo lesson plan sekuvela wonke lama activities?* (How are we going to make these lesson plans such that they have all these activities?

Her concern was with how they were going to do the suggested lesson plans, such that they covered all the activities. Zozo then suggested:

> *Engathi kuzofanele siplane together, akukho okunye.* (It looks as if we have to plan together, there is no other way).

This meant that teachers needed to plan together as a team.

When Zozo made her suggestion I concluded that teachers were planning individually. That might be the reason they had failed to implement the LAIP effectively. However, since they saw a need for teamwork that illustrated that they were then aware of power sharing of which it is one of the CER principles. No teacher was willing to work in isolation but rather consultative measures were seen as an important tool to effectively implement the LAIP and thus follow the EAZ initiated by Gauteng (Ntuta & Schurink, 2010:1) see paragraph 2.6.1. The discussion also concurred with the interventions in the USA, which, as indicated in Chapter 2.6.4, took place on a term by term basis with staff working in teams. In the USA there was a change of senior primary teachers as they felt obligated to prepare their students for secondary school (Carmichael, 2010:453). Secondary schools were prepared to change their teaching methods and philosophy required to continue the work that occured in primary education. This shift was in line with by Meyer's (2004:2) findings that teachers are struggling to implement appropriate instructional practices that support constructivist learning in their classroom. This meant that teachers are still failing to open opportunities for learners to construct their understanding of what is being learnt in class, based on their existing prior knowledge. In the USA, therefore, learning was shared and students and teachers alike became co- dependants.

Apart from the stated arguments that had taken place, Siza commented:

> *Thina emakolishi esasi treynwa khona kwakuke kube nama demonstration lessons. Lapho ama I ayeplana ama lessons and deliver them in front of us ukuze sizobona indlela okufundiswa ngayo ezinganeni. I suggest ukuthi nathi sikuzame mhlampe kabili enyangeni. Othisha be department bazohlangana babukele uzakwabo efundisa bese emveni kwalokho make ama comments and discussions about his or her lesson.* (The colleges where we were trained used to have demonstration lessons. Where lectures would plan lessons and deliver them in front of us so that we could see methods on how to teach the learners).

Siza's suggestion attracted attention from the team members as they all looked at her with astonishment. However, nobody disagreed with her suggestion that when they were at teacher training colleges there were times when the lecturers would plan and demonstrate the lessons to student teachers. These demonstration lessons were made so that they could learn from them the approaches of effective teaching. She then suggested that each department could also implement this, maybe twice in a month. After the colleagues had made the class visits they would sit down with the teacher and give comments and suggestions about his or her lesson. However, as nobody was against her idea it implied that teachers were willing to be developed and grow so that they could effectively implement the LAIP. When understanding Siza's last statement, "*Emveni kwalokho*" meaning "after that"; make comments and discussions about his or her lesson", it gave a picture that they believed in team effort. Also, they felt that they could learn from one another and share expertise. Furthermore, they became aware that it was they who could change the situation of the school. They showed a sense of ownership which was fostering what CER attests.

Again, when I considered the behaviour of the participants following Siza's suggestions, I concluded that it had been a shock to them. None would have thought of that idea. Also, it indicated that they felt that more effort was being required when a teacher had to deliver the lesson in front of his or her colleagues. When we were ready to move further, Fah requested us to listen to his side of the story:

Kade ngilalele kukhulunywa. Sengithi angibeke nje engike ngikuzwe kushiwo abafundi. Kona basuke bengagxeki kodwa basuke beqhathanisa nabanye. Ukuthi abanye bayabavumela babe active uma kufundwa njengokuthi nje uthish ngesinye isikhathi athi uzofundiswa abafundi ngoba efuna ukubona ukuthi bayakuqonda yini okusuke kufundwa. Kanti abanye ibona ababa active, bakhulume kakhulu kuze kuyephela iperiod. So uma kufika imiphumela, abafundi bazithola bengenzi kahle kulezizifundo lapho benganikezwa ithuba lokuthi ba participathe. Angazi noma ikhona yini indlela esingaxazulula ngayo lenkinga ngoba bayangena impela emaklasini but asiku understandi abasuke bekufundisa. (I have been listening. I so wish to say what students have been saying. However, they did not speak ill of others but they were just comparing. Other teachers do allow learners to be active when they learn like sometimes a teacher would say she/ he would be taught by the learners in order to see whether they do understand that which is being taught; whereas, others are the ones who become active, speaking much until the end of the period. So if results come, learners find that they do not perform well in those subjects where they are not given opportunities to participate. I really do not know whether is there a way to resolve this problem because these teachers they do come into class but we do not understand what they are teaching).

Zakhele added:

Okusho ukuthi othisha kumele isikhathi esiningi basinikeze abafundi kunokuthi kube ibona ama spoonfida izingane. Izingane kumele zizitholele zona manje ama facts and information. (It means teachers have to give learners time more time rather than spoon feeding them. Learners have to discover facts and information on their own).

The concern of Fah was that there were teachers who did not engage their students when they were teaching. These teachers then became the only source of information in class, hence, when compared with those who allowed them to become actively involved in their learning learners were found performing better in those subjects in which they were allowed to participate.

I then tried to determine what was of concern to Fah. I noted that there were still teachers in the school who did not know how to shift from being teacher-centred to learner-centred. It was for this reason that Sacred Heart College R and D, (1999: 37) argued that schools strive towards becoming learning organisations and self-reliant, and places where teachers take pride in making learner-centred classrooms in order to improve learner performance, (see par. 2.6.1). Fah also said that the learners performed much better in subjects in which they were actively involved. This was picked up from his concern: *"Abafundi bazithola bengenzi kahle kulezifundo lapho benganikezwa ithuba lokuthi ba participathe".* This meant that learners found themselves not doing well in the subjects where they were not allowed to participate.

This was in accord with Borich's claim (2007:302), that teaching is not simply the transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the learner but rather the interaction of teacher with learners. Also, Zakhele's comment indicated that it was now time for teachers to allow learners to discover information on their own rather than being 'spoon-fed'. When making sense of this I reached a conclusion that Zakhele meant that 80% of the time should be given to learners to interact with learning activities. Instead of teachers being the imparters of information, they were now called to be the facilitators of learning. They were given less time to talk and lecture to the learners, which meant that if 80% of time was allocated to the learners then 20% remained for clarification and guidance pertaining to the lesson.

When relating this argument to the theoretical framework of CER, I discerned that certain teachers in this school were depriving learners of their freedom of raising their ideas. That was against CER principles which stress an equal power relation amongst stakeholders and hitherto voiceless learners be heard. As Carmichael (2010:452) found in the USA, direct involvement of the students in their own learning was a priority.

4.3.2.5. Priority 5: Collective capacity to promote learning for the learners

According to Dufour and Marzano (2011:21), the best strategy for improving schools is developing the collective capacity of educators to function as members

of the professional learning community. They regard PLC as a concept based on the premise that if students are to learn at higher levels, processes must be in place to ensure continuing job-embedded learning of the adults who serve them. The forum, therefore, also believed that for the school to effectively implement the LAIP it had to design strategies that would be put in place to support the existing staff in improving the academic performance of learners. The forum understood that for teachers to implement the LAIP effectively it was not necessary for them to work harder at what they had traditionally done. Rather, it called upon all stakeholders, including every teacher, counsellor, principal, central office staff members, and superintendent, to redefine their roles and responsibilities and act differently (Hargreaves, 2004:48).

The forum thus devised collaborative strategies to focus on sustaining quality results. The forum debated this issue of sustaining quality results in terms of what they needed to focus on. They then agreed on curbing late coming and absenteeism among learners as well as addressing the high rate of teenage pregnancy. These factors were seen to have contributed negatively to the academic performance of learners.

Mrs Thabethe was quick to speak on this subject:

> *Awu ziyamitha bo izingane zenu lapha esikoleni. Unyaka no nyaka. Angazi nje zingaki lapha ngakwami. Kwenziwa yini?* (Hey, your girl learners easily fall pregnant here at school. Year by year. I do not know how many of them fall pregnant in my neighbourhood. What is the matter?).

Her concern was that there was a high rate of pregnancy at our school. She did not even know how many of the pregnant girls lived in her neighbourhood. The question made me realise that she was pointing fingers at us as teachers. However, I was not the only one who perceived this. Thobeka remarked:

> *Cha, akungashiwo ukuthi izingane ezethu engazuthi akuzona ezu nani* (Let us not say these learners who get pregnant were the responsibility of us as teachers but it was your responsibility too as the parents).

When I listened to the remark of Thobeka I concluded that there was still much that needed to be done so that stakeholders could be in a position to speak in one

voice when circumstances were not appealing. This was in line with the findings of Dufour and Marzano (2011:198), that "rather than citing problems in the external environment that others need to solve, effective leaders focus their attention on factors within their own sphere of influence and hold themselves accountable for shaping the outcome through their actions".

Zozo then closed this argument and recommended:

> *Kwi case ye late coming yini singaceli iSecurity lilekelelani no thisha osejuthini babahele izingane ezifika late. Then if igama lengane livele amasonto amabili elandelana then kubizwe umzali wayo kuzoxoxiswana naye.* (In case of late coming, what if we ask the security guard to assist teachers who are on duty to write down the names of learners who come late. If the name of learners appears for two consecutive weeks then we call upon a parent to explain).

Here Zozo recommended that to deal with late-coming the team could make use of the security guard, together with the teacher on duty. They would have to take the names of latecomers. If the learner was late for consecutive weeks then the parent would be called to the school.

The principal then added:

> *Kuzomele sicele futhi kothisha ukuthi bayawunikeza ngampela umsebenzi ukuze laba abafika late nalaba abalovayo bezobona ukuthi akudlalwa.* Also, o class teacher kuzomele bayimake ngokuthembeka I attendance register. (We have to plead from teachers that they do give extensive work so that those who come late and absent themselves could see that there is no game to play. Also, class teachers should do justice when marking the attendance registers).

The principal made an appeal that teachers had to ensure that effective teaching was taking place and more written work was being given so that the latecomers and absentees could see that they were being left behind. However, the last remarks of the principal, when I reflected upon them, implied that class teachers were sometimes cheating when marking the attendance registers.

Sipho commented on the issue of curbing teenage pregnancy:

Kubuhlungu ukubona umphakathi wakithi ungakukhuthalele ukufunda. Kunalokho usaqhuba ngoludala lapho ingane *yentombazane isagqugquzelwa ukuthi izale. Ngizozama ukuhlangana nenduna bese sakha ilanga lomhlangano nabazali. Siyocela futhi namanesi ukuthi eze emhlanganweni ezoselekelela kululudaba.* (It is painful to see our community not taking education seriously. Instead, they are dwelling on the olden days where a girl child was encouraged to have babies. I will try to meet with the tribal authorities where we will set up a date to meet with the parents. We will also request nursing staff to attend and have a slot).

His suggestion was that he would have to meet with the tribal authority and set up a meeting with the community. In this meeting they would also invite the professional health representatives to have a slot regarding teenage pregnancy in the area. He further indicated that it brought sadness to the community that girl children were being treated as during the olden times, when they would drop out of school because they had to take care of their families.

When the arguments were raised, I was content to see that the whole community agreed with the proverb that it takes the whole village to educate a child. As stated in Chapter 2, teachers alone could not be in a position to solve the problems our education system is faced with in terms of improving learner performance. Sipho mentioned other stakeholders, such as the tribal authority and professional health staff, who were to play a role in combating teenage pregnancy.

Zakhele said:

Mhlampe lezizinkinga esinazo singakwazi ukuzinqanda uma singanikeza abantwana ebenze kahle ezifundweni zabo kunjalo futhi nothisha ovelele. Ngizonikela ngama trophy kanye nezitifiketi ukuze lokhu kube impumelelo. (Maybe we could be able to curb these problems we are having if we can give awards to learners who performed well in their subjects as well as the outstanding teachers. I will donate with trophies as well as certificates so that this initiative becomes a success).

Zakhele committed himself to donate trophies and certificates that could be given to learners who performed well in their studies and teachers who produced outstanding work. He believed that if teachers and learners were given incentives the problems the school faced would up with would be minimised.

We then agreed that quality results had to be sustained through a collective effort from all stakeholders. We agreed on the above mentioned proposals, that the security guard and teacher on duty would make an audit of latecomers and when the name of the learner appeared for two consecutive weeks the principal together with the SGB members would meet with the parent of such a learner to discuss the way forward. This was a continuing process. The class teachers would ensure that registers were marked and subject teachers make it a point that the number of learners present in their lessons would be recorded then compared each day by the administration clerk and principal. This daily task would be performed to identify those learners who had missed other lessons. To deal with absenteeism, the marked attendance register was used on a weekly basis, with the principal conducting the audit of absentees. Parents of the learners were called and learners made to sign a pledge committing them to their school work. Also, in dealing with teenage pregnancy, the councillor, local authority, and professional health staff would hold meetings with the community, and health staff visit the school on a regular bases to discuss with learners the consequences of having unprotected sex. To encourage teachers and learners to produce good results, an award of certificates and trophies to those who excelled would be introduced.

When all these activities had been designed and executed I reflected on the work of Elmore (2003:67), who cited that the best way to improve the effective implementation of the LAIP was not through individualistic strategies that reinforce educators in isolation, since this does not lead to improvement. Instead, he urged schools to shift their focus from helping teachers become effective in their isolated classrooms and schools. He made a recommendation of creating a new collaborative culture based on interdependence, shared responsibility, and mutual accountability.

4.4.   THE CREATION OF CONDUCIVE CONDITIONS

The basis of the effective implementation of the LAIP is having appealing conditions for all stakeholders to feel a sense of ownership and trust (Kemmis, 2000: 166; Bergold & Thomas, 2012: 12). In order to create conditions conducive to the effective implementation of the LAIP, Bergold and Thomas, (2012: 13) argue that they allow for confident opinions to be made that are not going to be used against the one uttering them. They further claim that conditions be created such that participants do not suffer disadvantages if they express critical or dissenting opinions. Bearing in mind Kemmis as well as Bergold and Thomas, the forum then agreed to pay attention to the effectiveness of collaboration. Also, it felt a need to focus on aspects that would deal with the mindset of stakeholders and finally looked at crafting opportunities for capacity building in the LAIP.

4.4.1. Collaboration

The forum identified collaboration as a key enabler for the school to harness and accomplish its goal of implementing the LAIP effectively. The forum took into cognisance what was highlighted by Kemmis (2000:3), that action research is participative and collaborative.

Hence, Mrs Thabethe was, echoed her views:

> *Ayikho into edlula ukubambisana uma sifuna impumelelo. Ingakho isisho sesiZulu sisho ukuthi izandla ziyagezana*. (There is nothing that goes beyond working together as a team if we want success. That is why the Zulu idiom says izandla ziyagezana, meaning "it takes two to tango").

Here she meant that for every success to be achieved we had to work as a team. Her words "*uma sifuna*" meaning "if we want" indicated that the effective implementation of the LAIP was no longer for the teachers only, but required every stakeholder to be involved.

While we were still making sense of what Mrs Thabethe had said, Pitso added:

Ingakho nje naseBhayibhelini kwabiza ukuthi izinceku zime ukuphasa uMose ukuze abantwana baka Istrael banqobe.

Pitso was drawing on the Bible, relating what had been said by Mrs Thabethe to the story from the book of Exodus chapter 17 verses 8-16, in which Joshua was fighting against Amelek. Whilst the hands of Moses were raised, the Israelites conquered, but when he took them down they were defeated. Seeing this, the Israelites devised a strategy to support Moses. Aaron and Hur stood side by side to support Moses by ensuring that his hands stayed firm for the entire day. That was when and how Joshua defeated Amelek. Had they not worked together as a team leaving Moses alone then the Israelites would have been defeated. The same applied to organisations, of which the school is one. No person can succeed unilaterally in bringing about change to the school. Rather, collaboration amongst stakeholders is vital for the effective implementation of policies such as the LAIP.

This team were working in accord with the work of Beyerlein, Freedman, McGee and Moran (2003:52) on collaboration. They suggested that the team had to focus on achieving desirable outcomes; the participants had to begin with a common understanding of what they needed to talk about, how they must prioritise their time, and the interventions that had to be made. Their opinion on collaboration was also in line with what the forum was doing that of ensuring it had a common vision and topics that were based on their interest in terms of how the LAIP could be effectively implemented by the school. Lastly, the forum intervened by detailing the activities to be performed in order to achieve the desirable outcomes.

When relating to the arguments raised by Mrs Thabethe and Pitso with CER, I reached a point that they were now empowered as they understood that their services were also needed in the school to effectively implement the LAIP. I quickly reflected also on why PAR could have assisted me in acknowledging what is stated in Hosea chapter 4 verses 6, that people are perishing just because of the lack of knowledge. Had I not employed PAR in this study, the community who was marginalised and voiceless would have not known that they could play an important role in our education system.

It was for this reason that Gauteng established special business partnerships with other countries, for example France, to access extra resources, such as exchange programmes aimed at developing the management skills of principals, educators and SGBs. Also it entered into a partnership with the religious fraternities to provide after school programmes and reached special security agreements with the South African Police Services (SAPS) (Ntuta & Schurink, 2010:1). Research in Namibia also found that partnerships happened at different levels in the system and with different purposes. For example, partnerships at the school and community level were formed. These partnerships largely aimed at supporting the delivery of education services, often to the most disadvantaged populations. Moreover, the partnerships shaped development cooperation as an educational aid (NMoE, 2009:27). Moreover, Agba et al. (2011:33) indicated that Nigeria had advocated collaboration among stakeholders for the effective implementation of the curriculum. The same was highlighted by Carmichael (2010:460) that American education believed that the effective implementation of the curriculum was embedded in strengthened collaboration amongst all its stakeholders.

As the case was this, it became evident that for the improvement of learner academic performance all stakeholders had to work collaboratively towards ensuring that a common goal was maintained. For stakeholders to work collaboratively with one another their 'mindset' had to be dealt with.

4.4.2. Mindset of Stakeholders

The team were driven by the words of Abraham Lincoln in his 1862 message to the Congress: "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion piled high with difficulty, and we must rise to the occasion. As our case is new, so must we think anew" (Lincoln, 1953: 537). According to Kumashiro (2012: 5), the mindset of team members reveals opportunities for the stakeholders to intervene, collectivise, and transform.

Hence, Sipho's input unfolded as follows:

> *Ayikho enye indlela bakwethu ukuthi sishitshe ukucabanga kwethu nangendlela ebesenza ngayo izinto. Kumele sizijwayeze ukuthi sihlangane*

njalo ukuze ulwazi lomunye nomunye luzothuthuka. (There is no other way colleagues, we have to change the way in which we think and how we have been doing things. We have to get used to the fact that we meet on regular basis so that we can expand our knowledge).

Whilst Sipho was speaking, Thobekile interrupted:

Lokhu cishe kuzodala ukuthi kungabi nomuntu oyedwa othatha izinqumo kodwa bonke abantu abanemibono kanye nezinqumo bezozithatha ngokukhululekile. (This perhaps will make all individuals to freely make suggestions and take decisions rather than being something done by one person).

Sipho stressed upon the team members the importance of a change in mindset and looked at how they had previously played their roles. He further suggested that it would be vital for them to be constantly meeting so that they could gain experience from one another. Whilst Sipho was talking, Thobekile supported him by saying: "That referring to what Sipho said, could probably allow stakeholders to collectively take decision instead of being one person." She emphasised that stakeholders would be in a position to freely air their opinions.

Gaining insight based on the arguments raised, we concluded that team members were beginning to understand that for the effective implementation of the LAIP they had to change their mindset. Sipho's suggestions were:

Ayikho enye indlela bakwethu ukuthi sishitshe ukucabanga kwethu nangendlela ebesenza ngayo izinto (There is no other way but to change the way we have been thinking and doing things).

This meant that there was no other way they could do things except by changing the way they viewed and did them, indicating that their minds were in a position to accept change. Furthermore, they were willing to meet on a regular basis so that they could learn from one another. That alone indicated that they were advocating the CER principles in such a way that every team member's opinion would be valued.

Thobekile's comment, however, showed that there was only one person who was making decisions in this school. Since they became involved, they felt that it was important for them to change by allowing all stakeholders to freely express their views and make decisions collectively. This too was in line with CER principles, by wich an equal power relation is fostered amongst stakeholders. I then evoked the memory of Martin Luther King, Jr, and his reference to the passage from Romans chapter 12 verses 2, which states: "Be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewal of your minds."

The above-stated argument, coupled with timely references to matters spiritual and psychological, amounted to a refreshing call to redirect our minds towards the effective implementation of policies such as the LAIP if we are to transform educational institutions and societies we are serving. It also meant that the way we live, teach, and work will reflect our joy in cultural diversity, our passion for justice, and our love of freedom (Hooks, 1994:34).

4.4.3. Opportunities for Capacity Building in the Learner Attainment Improvement Plan

According to the Department for the International Development DFID (2010:3), capacity-building involves individual and organisational learning. It is inevitably long-term and should be demand-driven. It further states that if successful, it contributes to sustainable social and economic development, which means that within the context of the effective implementation of the LAIP, capacity-building enhances the ability of stakeholders, schools, and systems to undertake and disseminate high academic performance efficiently and effectively. Although there are three levels of capacity building, namely individual, social, and professional capital, this section focuses on social capital, because of the method used in the study, PAR, incorporating all stakeholders to be actively involved in the day to day running of the school.

Whilst we were informally sitting waiting for refreshments after a parents meeting, Sipho commented:

Yazi wemadoda kumele siqede nya amaxoki. Sazi ukuthi into esivumelene ngayo iyenzeka njengoba sishilo. Sidinga ukwakha izinhlelo lapho sizofundisana khona nokuphucula imfundo yabantwana bethu. (You know guys, we have to deal with traitors. We have to reach a point where what we agreed upon is honoured accordingly. We need to come up with systems to learn from one another and improve the education of our children).

Sipho's comment meant that the community needed to come together so that irrespective of what decision was taken everybody should embrace it. They were going to achieve this by ensuring that programmes for capacity-building were being initiated in order to improve the academic performance of the learners. Sipho's recommendations were supported by Siza:

Ukunanela nje kulokhu okushiwo uzakwethu,ave kubalulekile nje ukuba kwisisinda lapho uzokwazi ukuxoxisana nabantu abehlukahlukene nizokhona ukwakhana ngemibono eyahlukahlukene. Lokhu kwenza ukuthi ulwazi obukade unalo luthuthuke bese ukwazi ukulisebenzisa ngendlela ezothuthukisa abanye abantu. Phezu kwalokho kumnandi ukuba sendaweni lapho imibono kanye nezinqubo uzokwazi ukuzithatha ngokukhululekile. (To add on what my other colleague has said, it is very important to be at a place where you can socialise with other various people in order to share different ideas. This increases the knowledge one has and be able to apply it accordingly to enhance others. Over and above, it feels pleasing to be at the place where you can spell out your ideas and decisions without any fear).

Siza said that it was important to be at a place where one can share his/her opinion with others and learn from them. This opened a platform to broaden one's horizon and thus be in a position to make informed decisions.

When making sense of what Sipho meant, I concluded that he was talking about social capital, whereby everybody was seen to have a role to play towards improving learner performance. I was pleased when he stated that: "*sidinga ukwakha*", meaning that 'we have to create'. That to me indicated that indeed Sipho had acknowledged the involvement of all stakeholders in the effective

implementation of the LAIP, and its yielding desirable outcomes. This confirmed the view of Hooks (1994:186) that hearing each other's voices, individual thoughts, and sometimes associating these voices with personal experience makes people relate more to each other.

Similarly, Siza's arguments led us to understand that she was hoping to see stakeholders being exposed to social capital, whereby it would open opportunities for them to increase their knowledge and so allow them to expand their networks of influence and opportunities. Fullan (2012:90) claimed that this type of capital will enable stakeholders to develop resilience, when they know that there are people to whom they can go for advice. Therefore, allowing such capital to have an impact on our schools will be banking a great deal on transforming our education, because it will enable us to sustain learner performance. He continued to state that when stakeholders are exposed to social capital they appreciate the worth of constructive disagreement, thus creating a healthy and safe environment. This means that learning is the work and social capital is the fuel. If it is weak, everything is destined to fail.

The argument therefore brought us to conclude that when opportunities for capacity-building for the LAIP are created, the stakeholders will be in a position to improve the academic performance of the learners.

4.5. RISK FACTORS

When new programmes are being initiated it is advisable to guard against any factors that could hamper its effective implementation. As this is the case, the forum also took care to identify factors that could impede the effective implementation of the LAIP so that they could circumvent them. Finance was one factor identified as being a limiting factor for us to improve the academic performance of learners.

4.5.1. Finance

The issue of finance is particularly critical for social innovations such as sustaining academic learner performance, mainly due to its particular nature. The principal's comments provided evidence of this.

> *As much as sithanda ukwenza ama programmes abe in place but sizokhona kanjani ukuwagcina esebanza. Lokhu ngikushiso ukuthi isikole si depende kuphela emalini esiyinikwa umnyango njengoba sazi ukuthi awusigunyazile ukuthi siqoqe imali kubazali. Ukuphila ngesibonelelo sika Hulumeni kuzosinqinda amandla okuthi izinhlelo esivumelana ngazo ziphumelele ngendlela esifisa ngayo ngoba kwasona sometimes sifika sekudlule isikhathi.* (As much as we like to put programmes in place but how are we going to sustain them. I am saying this because our school is solely dependent on the department grant since we all know that we are not allowed to collect money from parents. To rely on the government grant will hamper us from implementing that which we have agreed upon effectively since even this grant sometimes comes later than expected).

The principal's concern indicated that the money was the limiting factor for them to sustain the programmes that they put in place. This was evident when he raised the issue that the school only depended on a grant from the government. This situation limited us to put more effort in terms of achieving our outcomes. He pointed out that the reason was that the state's grant sometimes reached the school late. He further highlighted that the school was not allowed to collect any money from the parents.

His words "*ngendlela esifisa ngayo*", meaning 'the way we wish', clearly showed that stakeholders were interested in seeing the school be in a position to sustain the academic performance of the learners. Xolani then made a suggestion:

> *Ukuze izinhlelo zethu zizophumelela bengibona kungcono ukuthi siphume siye kofuna amadonations kosomabhizinisi nakwaabanye abantu abangaba nothando lokulekelela ekufake isandla.* (In order for sustaining our programmes, I suggest that we go all out to look for donations from businesses and any other people who might be interested to help).

Xolani suggested that for the team to be able to put in place programmes, it would be better if we sought donations from business people and any other person who might be interested in helping.

When understanding the arguments of both the principal and Xolani, I understood that the school had not thought of involving other stakeholders, such as business people, in improving academic performance of learners. The school relied on a state grant; therefore I concluded that involving all stakeholders in this study enabled the school to acknowledge the services these other stakeholders could offer.

Ntuta and Schurink (2010:7) argued that there were serious signs of instability of the implementation of the intervention programme Gauteng had put in place. One of the other factors contributing to this was lack of finance. The most severe constraint on the implementation of the strategies put in place was the lack of funding in Namibian schools (UNESCO, 2010:3). Also, Agba et al. (2011:35) reported that a decline in budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria obstructed the effective implementation of school curriculum at all school levels, whilst Moseley (2009:1) pointed to US education having also experienced a deep financial crisis which affected badly the programmes they had initiated.

4.5.2. Commitment

Commitment was identified as the other factor that could have a negative effect on the effective implementation of the LAIP. According to Fullan and Hargreaves (2012:62), commitment is a combination of purpose and passion, and has a direct effect on self-efficacy, and in turn on learner performance. Zozo however showed interest with regards to commitment, as she simply posed a question to the team:

> *Kodwa singenzenjani nje ukuthi senze abantu bazinikele ngokuphelele ekwenzeni lezizinhlelo zethu ukuthi zibe impumelelo?* (How can we do to make all people be fully committed in order to succeed with our programmes).

Thobekile added:

> *Eyi ngoba abantu abanqeni ukuhudula izinyawo noma sivumelene kahle.* (Ey, because people do drag their feet even when they have been in agreement).

Zozo asked the team a question based on how we could make team members and other stakeholders be committed to the programmes that we had initiated, so that they would be a success. However, whilst she was talking Thobekile expressed concern that even though people have agreed upon certain programmes it was in their nature that not all of them would commit themselves as expected. She mentioned that some had dragged their feet.

When hearing this, Mrs Thabethe took this argument to another level:

> *Yazi kumele sazi ukuthi empilweni asiyi nxanye singemanzi. Thina esinhliziyo zivumayo kumele siyiphushe lenqola. Angithi nabantwana baka Istrael bamuhlubuka uMose bafuna ukubuyela eGibhithe. Pho nixakwa yini.* (We have to note that in life we do not accept things all at once. We, whose hearts are willing should drive this wagon. Even the Istraelites did rebuke Moses' order and they wanted to be sent back to Egypt. So what is new now?).

Mrs Thabethe reassured the team that it was true that some people would be hesitant but that this was not new. In the Bible, the Israelites failed to commit themselves to the instructions of Moses (Exodus 14, verses 11-12). She urged those whose hearts are willing to continue rather than being discouraged.

When making sense to the stated arguments it became evident that team members were aware that they could agree on the initiation of innovative programmes to effectively implement the LAIP, but because of the nature of humankind some would not commit themselves as expected. It was for this reason that Mrs Thabethe referred us to the scriptures. When continuing to ponder this passage I concluded that she was trying to motivate us and nurture the emotional aspect of team members, in the sense that if the Israelites failed it was likely some of us would quit on the way, also not having reached the destination. That should not be seen as a failure but rather as natural endeavour, as we are all born of flesh.

Agba et al. (2011: 35), Fullan and Hargreaves (2012: 64), Ntuta and Schurink (2010: 7) Storeng (2001: 57) also attested to a lack of commitment amongst stakeholders that limited the effective implementation of curriculum in Gauteng, Namibia, Nigeria and USA respectively. Furthermore, the team looked at the availability of resources which could hamper our effective implementation of the LAIP.

4.5.3. Availability and Proper Use of Resources

When we spoke about the availability and proper use of resources, 80% of the team members thought of the physical resources and 20% related to the personnel as the most valuable resource in any organisation. Meanwhile, LAIP policy stipulates that one of its goals is to ensure that the physical infrastructure and environment of every school inspires learners to attend school and learn, and teachers to teach. It also calls for a teaching workforce that is healthy and enjoys a sense of job satisfaction; however, this aspect was regarded as limiting to the effective implementation of the LAIP.

Ntombi initiated the discussion with regards to the matter:

> *Kodwa njengoba nje sigunyazwe ile policy 4350 esinqunda amandla okuthi singakwazi ukuba nama subject packages amaningi lapho abantwana bezokwazi ukuzikhethela ngokukhululeka izifundo abafuna ukuzifunda. Nithi kusayikho nje?* (As we are being regulated by this 4350 policy which limits us to have a variety of subject packages to allow learners *to* choose from, is that supposed to be?)

Bukiwe intervened:

> *Kahle zakwethu sisakhuluma ngama resources la",* meaning, wait a little bit colleague, we are still speaking about resources here.

Almost the whole house supported Bukiwe, such that Zakhele said:

> *Kade sidlulile kuma policies kanti wena ubungekho yini.* (We have long done with policies, were you not part of us).

Ntombi's concern was that the policy 4350 was limiting the school in terms of offering as many subject packages as it could. This policy specifies that if the learners are less than 300 then the school should offer only one stream of subject package and that limits the learners to have a wide scope of subjects to choose from. In other words, Ntombi's concern was that they were still offering a curriculum that was too rigid for the learners. However, other members could not see Ntombi's point as relevant to the availability of resources. Bukiwe attested to this when saying to Ntombi:

> *Wait a minute; we are still talking about resources here.*

Even Zakhele joined in:

> *… we have longed discussed the issue of policies. Where were you during that time?*

As the discussion continued I recalled that not all of us had an equal understanding that this policy 4350 was indeed limiting the school to offer a curriculum that was flexible and enabled learners to perform at their best. I further looked at the impact this policy had on the school and concluded that maybe it did play a role in terms of limiting both the members of staff as well as the learners. In chapter 3.4.1 it was highlighted that the total enrolment of the learners in this school was 311, with 11 teachers, including the principal, and only two HoDs, yet it was a secondary school. When relating this information to the availability of resources I deduced that lack of human power could hamper the effective implementation of the LAIP.

Thobekile then took the argument further:

> *Eyi kade sasikhulekela ugesi webantu. Bhekani nje asikwazi ngisho uku photocophela izingane ama tasks sizinike ngoba umshini uhlala emzini wabantu. I high school engena gesi inga functiona kanjani nje kodwa? Angisakubalike nje okwe library ne laboratory. Lezingane zethu into okuthiwa I research zihlangabezana nayo emanyuvesi.* (It has been a while since we requested for electricity. Look, we are even unable to copies for the tasks to be given to learners because the photocopying machine stays

elsewhere. I do not even want to mention the library and the laboratory. To our learners things like research they only meet them in Universities).

Thobekile was referring to electricity, mentioning that several requests had been made for electricity to be installed to the school, but all their efforts were unsuccessful. She further mentioned that the school did have a photocopying machine but that it was stored in one of their neighbour's buildings since the school did not have electricity. This also hampered the effective implementation of the LAIP, because the school could not make copies of learning material for the learners. Her words "*angisakubalike nje okwe library ne laboratory*" also indicated that the school did not have laboratories. She further commented that learners from this school were struggling to do research tasks due to the unavailability and proper use of resources such as the library.

When going deeper with the arguments I resolved that learners of this school were still deprived of their freedom to access resources, but were expected to perform like any other learners exposed to such shortages. It became evident that there are schools, especially rural ones, which are still very disadvantaged.

Ntuta and Schurink (2010:7) also found serious signs of instability in Gauteng schools, due to severe lack of resources, as did Agba et al. (2011:35) with regards to the Nigerian schools, finding that inadequate resources created a challenge to education and curriculum implementation. Allocation of adequate resources was the main priority of Namibian education, and this confirms that they impacted negatively on the performance of learners, (Storeng, 2001:12). Furthermore, Carmichael (2011:453) reported that schools in the USA had addressed the issue of classroom resources in various schools in order to improve the academic performance of learners.

The team moved on to tackle what everybody thought was important, namely the issue of monitoring and evaluation.

4.5.4. Monitoring and Evaluating

In terms of the LAIP policy, the DoE (2012:1) is quoted as saying one of its focuses is to intensify monitoring, guidance, control and support of the programme. This means that monitoring is not adequate throughout the departmental levels, and hence in the schools. Likewise, Kusek and Rist (2004:180) found that even developing countries encounter challenging obstacles with regards to monitoring and evaluation, and the reason behind the lack of monitoring and evaluation in an organisation is stakeholders failing to understand their roles in terms of who does what. This then results in poor implementation of programmes. As such was the case the team became vigilant and opened a discussion regarding the monitoring and evaluation of systems in place so that the LAIP implementation could be effective.

Betty responded to this matter as follows:

> *Ukuze sikwazi uku treysa ukuthi ama programmes ethu ayimpumelelo yini noma qha I suggest that we task abantu ngokwamakhono abo abazobhekela ukuthi sisahamba kahle na futhi bangachemi. Uma kukhona la okungahambi khona kahle babe nesibindi* sokukusho *lokhu.* (In order to trace our whether our programmes are successful or not, I suggest that we task people who will monitor and evaluate whether we are still on track. These people should also not be biased. If there is something which needs attention, they must be bold enough to say so).

Betty merely made the suggestion that it would be better if the team could task members who would be monitoring and evaluating the success and loopholes of the programmes put in place. She further highlighted that such members should not be biased in terms of reporting their findings.

As soon as she finished raising her concern it became clear that monitoring and evaluation was a contributory factor in the effective implementation of the LAIP, due to the members not being brave enough to tell one another when some of them were not doing the task assigned to them. This was picked up from Betty's word: "*Uma kukhona la okungahambi khona kahle babe nesibindi sokukusho lokhu*", which simply meant, if there was some issue that still needs attention such people had to be bold and say so.

Siza commented:

> *Ukuze kuzongabi khona ukushayisana akube khona I consistency kwesikwenzayo and si artikhulethe amagoals ethu so that wonke umuntu ezokwazi ukuthi kulindelekeni kuyena,* (To avoid any conflict, it would be better if there is consistency in all that we do and we have to ariculate our goals so that everybody knows what is expected from him/ her).

Siza mentioned that for monitoring and evaluation to be a success it would be better if the team maintained consistency in whatever was done. She also indicated that articulated goals would enable every stakeholder to be aware of what was expected of him or her.

I captured Siza's comment as follows: 'Not that monitoring and evaluation was a concern to the team but unclear articulated goals resulted to the programmes not being monitored.' Also, from Betty's comment it became evident that confusing roles of stakeholders resulted in the effective implementation of the LAIP being negatively affected, as it crafted lack of monitoring and evaluation to the processes that were put in place.

4.6. EVIDENCE THAT THE STRATEGY IS WORKING

The following evidence was found that the strategy was working as intended.

4.6.1. Collaborative and Cooperative Teaching Cycle

The discussion on collaborative and cooperative teaching unfolded as follows from the team members, whereby Thobekile was the first person to comment on the issue:

> Thobekile: *Isikole esiphumelelayo ukukwazi ukugcina iperformnce yabafundi isezingeni ileso okunokubambisana ezinhlakeni zonke ezikhona. Ngakho- ke ake sisukumeni sakhe. Izinga lokufika late kwabantwana liphezulu kakhulu, siyafisa ukuthi lokhu kwehle. Kanjalo nezingane zethu ziyakhulelwa lokhu okwenza zingakwazi ukuqhubeka nezifundo zazo.*

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Thobekile meant that a school that is able to sustain the academic performance of the learners well is one in which members work as a team. "So let us stand up and build the image of the school. Late coming of learners is rife as well as teenage pregnancy. That makes them drop out."

Also the principal raised his concern regarding the matter:

> *Sithanda ukusho ukuthi akukho okudlula ukubambisana. Ama saprayzis enza kungabi khona ukwethembana.*

This meant that we would like to point out that there is nothing more important than working together. We do not want surprises as they cultivate an element of mistrust.

Based on these discussions I concluded that the team members were of the opinion that the culture of the school needed to be transformed. Undoubtedly, for the academic performance of learners to be improved the stakeholders adopted the philosophy of "we" and not "I" (Dufour & Marzano, 2011:2). They further claim that questions such as: What is it that we want our learners to know? What knowledge, skills, and dispositions should all our learners acquire? What systems have we to put in place to ensure that we are providing every learner with access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum? How will we respond when our students do not want to learn? and What steps can we put in place to provide students who struggle with additional time and support in a way that is timely, directive and systematic? enabled the stakeholders to work together collaboratively in order to improve the academic learner performance. These questions were in line with the arguments that were brought forward (see paragraph 2.4.2), which stated that the principles of social justice that the teachers should organise in their practice aim to answer questions such as: Who are the learners in my class? What are their hopes, dreams, and aspirations? What are their passions and commitments? What skills, abilities and capabilities does each one bring to the classroom? (Mfeka, 2005:27).

To respond to such questions, Dufour and Marzano (2011:23) encourage institutions to work collaboratively in a collective effort to meet the needs of each student. They suggest that, to bring this idea to life, educators be organised into

meaningful collaborative teams in which members work interdependently to achieve common goals for which they are mutually accountable. Gone are the days where teachers have to sit within the closed doors of their classrooms. Also, Hooks (1994:206) reassures us that the only way we are to achieve a sense of shared commitment and a common goal that binds us is to recognise the value of each individual voice. She further claims that hearing each other's voices, individual thoughts, and sometimes associating these with personal experiences, makes us more acutely aware of each other. That moment of collective participation and dialogue means that we respect each other, which is one of the values of CER which I have adopted in this study.

The second factor that the team took into consideration was that of regular time for collaboration, which became embedded in routine practices of the school. Also, teachers stayed focused on the right work whilst stakeholders provided schools with the resources, training, and continuing support to help them succeed in the effective implementation of the LAIP.

4.6.2. Articulated vision

Reason (2006:190) wrote that vision in action research opens opportunities for the participants to maintain an element of trust. He further maintains that it creates the democratic sharing of knowledge, thus fostering stimulation and enabling of social action. The team members also showed a keen interest in the issue of articulated vision. Sipho led the discussion and raised some issues.

> *Ayi sekuphelile- ke manje ukuthi singazi ukuthi sibhekephi la esiya khona. Zonke izinto sezisobala. Lokhu kuzokwenza ukuthi sisebenze ngokukhulu ukuzimisela nangokubambisana. Ngoba akekho ozofihlela omunye induku emqubeni.* (We no longer have to wonder as to where we are heading to. All things have come to the fore now. This will make us to work diligently and with cooperation because there would be no one with a hidden agenda).

From Sipho's comment meant that it had that in this school stakeholders were rendering their services without having a clear direction as to what they were

expected to do. Sipho's words: *"Sekuphelile-ke manje ukuthi singazi ukuthi sibhekephi"* meant that it was about time for stakeholders to work with a clear vision. "*Zonke izinto sezisobala",* indicated that everything was now transparent. As the vision was articulated, all stakeholders would now be in a position to work cooperatively with one another. He further claimed that nobody would be hiding any information from each other.

Furthermore, when digesting Sipho's comments I concluded that the issue of transparency had been a problem to the school. Also, when he said: "*Lokhu kuzokwenza ukuthi sisebenze ngokukhulu ukuzimisela nangokubambisana*" he was indicating that the poor implementation of the LAIP in the school was due to lack of articulated vision. I concluded that articulated vision had enabled the team members to work with commitment towards sustaining the academic performance of learners.

4.6.3. Professional Learning Communities

Dufour and Marzano's (2011:22) PLC concepts represent "an ongoing process" in which stakeholders work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to sustain the academic performance of their learners. Pitso initiated the discussion based on this issue of PLC.

> *Esikuqaphelayo ukuthi abafundi abasakuthandi ukufunda kanjalo nothisha sebephelelwe umdlandla. Loku kudalwa ukuthi babona beyekelelwe. Ukuze bagqugquzeleke, kunganjani sibuyele emuva lapho wawuthola ukuthi kwakubizwa phambili abantwana abayishumi abenze kahle. Singephikisana nemigomo kaHulumeni ukuqeda lokho kodwa siyafisa ukuthi othisha abenze kahle ezifundweni zabo kanye nabafundi ngokunjalo kube khona imihlomuywana nje emincane abayitholayo. Lokho phela sizobe senzela ukubakhuthaza.* (What we notice from our learners is that they are no longer willing to learn. The teachers too are demotivated to teach. This could be that they see themselves being left alone. To encourage them, how would it be if we go back to the olden days whereby we announce the top ten learners? We do not intend to violate the department's call to

discourage this but we really wish that teachers who have done tremendously well in their subjects as well as learners have some small incentives given to them. We will be just doing this merely to encourage them).

This however, reminded me of what Nelson Mandela once said, "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul, than the way in which it treats its children", (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2012:186). This could mean that the number one factor that makes the greatest difference to the children's future within our schools is the children's teachers. We can also say there is no keener revelation of the society's soul than the way in which it treats its children and their teachers. Often teachers are being blamed for the failure of the system and people forget that teachers alone could not be able to change this world. This is evident when we compare teaching with any other profession. When doctors fail, their failure is taken six feet down and treated in the most dignified manner such that priests could come to silence it. When psychologists fail, their failure is taken to mental institutions whereby it could not be seen however; the teacher's failure is open to public opinion. As such the blame goes to teachers. Once we all realize that the responsibility belongs to all of us; it would be then when we give birth to a world of happy returns to come.

The team therefore understood that the PLC represents an "on-going process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students we serve", as was stated above, (DuFour & Marzano, 2011:22). This was also highlighted in 2.5.3 by Kruse, Louis and Mark (1996:87) claim that the way in which teachers interact with each other outside of their classrooms is critical to the effects of restructuring of educational practices on learners. However, Hargreaves (2004:48) suggests that we have to bear in mind that PLC is not a programme to be purchased but rather a process to be pursued but never quite perfected. It is not an appendage to existing structures and cultures; it profoundly impacts structure and culture. Also, it is not a meeting but an "ethos that infuses every single aspect of a school's operation". Furthermore, PLC does not demand that educators work harder at what they traditionally have done but rather; calls upon all stakeholders to redefine their roles and responsibilities and do differently.

Based on what has been cited it became evident that when stakeholders positioned themselves to strengthen the PLC in order to improve and sustain the academic learner performance in this school.

4.7.   CONCLUSION

This chapter has dealt with the analysis of data, presentation and interpretation of results and findings on the strategies for the implementation of the LAIP. The chapter then focused on how the data was analysed, interpreted, presented and discussed. This was in line with the objectives of the study, as mentioned in Chapter 1. There were many sources of data, including the information sessions in which we jointly, as the participants, explicitly indicated that there was a need for the formulation of such a strategy. The information identified the challenges our public schools were faced with in the implementation of the LAIP. It also considered solutions to address the identified problems regarding the effective implementation of the LAIP.

Furthermore, the above mentioned sessions paid attention to the conditions for effective implementation of the strategy. Similarly, the risks factors that could make the strategy fail were anticipated, so we could circumvent them. Furthermore, the chapter presented action and strategies that would then be developed and prioritised for implementation of each study objective. These were subsequently operationalised as part of the LAIP strategy.

CHAPTER 5

STRATEGIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEARNER ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the strategy that I together with the participants had formulated to enhance the implementation of LAIP at school level. In pursuance of this aim the chapter reiterates the main aim and objectives of the study, with a synopsis of the whole. Thereafter; the chapter presents the findings based on challenges to the formulating of the strategy to implement LAIP. It highlights appropriate systems that are to be in place for the effective implementation of LAIP, thus maintaining the academic performance of learners. Finally, the chapter concludes by giving the summary of the findings, making recommendations for future research and acknowledging a limitation of the study.

5.2. AIM OF THE STUDY

The poor performance of Grade 12 learners was a cause for concern to all stakeholders. Although the LAIP exists, it became evident from the NSCE results that the effective implementation of this plan was still not adequate. Based on the above, the following research question informed this study: How can the Learner Attainment Improvement Plan (LAIP) be effectively implemented by teachers? In response to this the main aim of the study was to formulate strategies to assist teachers in particular towards the effective implementation of LAIP. In pursuance of this aim, five objectives were stated:

- To conduct an investigation into the challenges facing schools, and teachers in particular, in the implementation of LAIP.
- To describe and discuss the strategies which have been tried to date so as to identify gaps that still require attention.
- To understand the contexts within which the evolving strategy could be effectively implemented.

- To anticipate threats that might hinder the strategies to work effectively and then formulate mechanism to circumvent them.
- To monitor the implementation of the strategies so as to determine whether the strategies are working effectively towards improving learner attainment.

To systematise the above it is necessary to provide a synopsis of how the study unfolded.

5.3. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

This study was guided by Critical Emancipatory Research (CER), as compared to positivism, which could be regarded as a competing and dominant perspective in the research currently, treating human beings as molecules in a laboratory (Myer, 2004:111). The rationale behind the adoption of CER was to oppose the positivist view, since human subjects needed to be treated with respect and allowed to speak regarding the matters affecting them (Campanella, 2009:2). As this study dealt with the implementation of LAIP, the most and appropriate people who had been affected by this were to be involved in sharing their experiences and later devising solutions to address the situation. Furthermore, through CER I was given a role of interpreting other people's interpretations and trying to make sense of them. This framework enabled me, as a researcher, and the participants, to be analytical and to search for deeper meaning from all angles of the problem. Hence, to use CER was educative and empowering, changing the lives of people and advancing the agenda for equity in all forms, whilst advocating social justice, peace, freedom and hope (Mahlomaholo, 2002:2). Ideally, the issue of power amongst our institutions has been dominant hence. Francis, Mahlomaholo and Nkoane (2010:32) argue that CER thematises power and is geared towards preventing excess of it. Hence, this study created opportunities for people who have been oppressed and ostracised to participate and have their voices heard.

This study was qualitative in nature, using the principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR). The data was drawn from one the secondary school in a poverty-stricken area with a high rate of unemployment, situated at Umbumbulu under the Ugu district. Dwyer et al. (2010:1434) write that PAR is aimed at

facilitating action and creating knowledge about that action through a spiral process of observation, action and evaluation. They further claimed that a collaborative relationship between research team and educationists in identification of relevant challenges within the education system and potential solutions is a key feature of action research, a process that unifies theory, research and practice. To trail for innovative strategies to be used by teachers in their day-to-day practice was in line with Dwyer et al. (2010:1434), who also stated that the stakeholders therefore looked at the intervention that needed to be put in place in order to assist teachers to effectively implement LAIP. The interventions, however, were designed by the forum that was formed during our strategic planning process. As Kemmis and McTaggart (2000:595) maintained, such a forum empowers stakeholders by engaging them in research then collectively developing or implementing activities to turn the situation around. This meant that no person had power over others, but rather all opinions, initiatives and arguments were valued and respected throughout the research project. Nonetheless, the study also looked at how best practices internationally, particularly on the African continent and in SADEC, and in South Africa, approached the implementation of learner performance improvement plans and/or policies.

5.4.   FINDINGS ON CHALLENGES TO THE STRATEGY TO IMPLEMENT LAIP

There were a number of challenges to the strategy to implement LAIP, as discussed in this section.

5.4.1. Understanding of Learner Attainment Improvement Plan Policy Clearly

The discourses that emerged during our strategic planning with the participants revealed that understanding of policies with special reference to LAIP policy is due to a number of factors. For instance, stakeholders were tired of educational policies because of their constant changes, rousing in certain defiance. Participants claimed not to have been given the opportunity to communicate or reflect on them, hence confusion when LAIP policy was to be implemented. We

developed an understanding that everybody did what he or she pleased, and the educational policies were not owned by the people who were supposed to implement them. The question posed by Participant 1, when asking what LAIP policy was, and what it entailed, clearly indicated that the key implementers of policies no longer gave themselves time to understand the policies as they were not involved in their formulation.

As documented in Chapter 2, a number of authors (Agba et al., 2011:35; Hallinger & 2005:662-663; Ntuta & Schurink, 2010:1; UNESCO, 2010:2) have found that unarticulated policies in education do have a negative effect on teachers in terms of understanding them. Eventually, they affect learners' performance negatively. Also, Sayed and Jansen (2001:11) have found that policy failures arise from non-consultation of stakeholders, hence there is no ownership of them. This confirms that unequal power relations persist, even in the current dispensation, which in turn affects implementation, even of important policies such as LAIP

5.4.2. Problems of School Management Teams Monitoring the curriculum and Providing Support

The monitoring of the curriculum by the SMT was shown not to have been adequate because fewer workshops were given to the SMTs to support them. Sometimes, an HOD was to be in charge of the subject he/she did not know due to the Post Provisioning Norm (PPN). As in the school in which the study was conducted, one HOD had to supervise both Languages and Humanities because the PPN did not allow them to have another HOD for Languages. This then negatively affected the academic performance of learners, as this HOD was not confident in monitoring subjects of which she did not have a full understanding. This confirms the argument of Ntuta and Schurink (2010:1) that one of the main aims of an EAZ programme is to let the SMT undergo intensive training so as to come to terms with curriculum monitoring and giving support to teachers.

Participants also mentioned that they were unable to form subject heads, because one teacher taught from Grade 8 up to 12. The reason for this was the PPN, according to which teachers are employed based on the number of learners in a

school not the subjects being offered. This meant that teachers, most particular the SMTs, were overloaded.

Agba et al. (2011:35) noted that among other factors that limited the effective implementation of the curriculum in Nigeria were syllabus overloading and unrealistic goals and insufficient teachers. This was indicated by the participants in this participating school, which was failing to make subject heads. That one teacher taught all grades was an indication that teachers as well as the SMTs were overloaded, and there were insufficient teachers due to the PPN. This in turn impacted negatively on the academic performance of the learners.

The findings also revealed that the participants were no longer satisfied with the work they were doing, one stating that: "*If I am able I will resign from this teaching profession and look for other job".* As Dufour and Marzano (2011:14) argue, the challenge confronting public education is the creation of powerful systems that allow ordinary people to achieve success but with no support or less support being given to them.

5.4.3. Parents' and Community's Knowledge of their Roles in Supporting the School in the Education of their Children

When the issue of parents' and the community's knowledge of their roles towards supporting the school in the education of their children, the discussions revealed that neither group was actively involved in the activities of the school. This resulted in their being ill-informed of what was expected of them, as evident from one participant's repsonse: "*Siyafisa ukusiza isikole sethu ukuze imiphumela yabantwana izoba mihle. Esikudingayo nje ukuthi kumele sifundiseke ukuthi iliphi iqhaza esingalidlala".* Meaning, we are willing to assist our school so that the performance of learners could appeal. What we need is to be empowered as to what role we could play. This clearly indicated that parents and the community were willing to participate in structures of the school but they were not given an opportunity to be actively involved resulting in them distancing themselves. This meant that the gates for the parents and community were still closed to them, and the school operated in isolation rather than involving the community. The school

had not realised that it was an extension of the community, or that it could not function in isolation.

Hertz-Lazarowitz et al. (2010:271) revealed that PAR came into existence merely:

> to support the programs or organizational decision-making and problem solving as well as the transformative approach which is founded upon the principles of emancipation and social justice, seeking to empower members of community groups who are less powerful or are oppressed by dominating groups.

Accordingly, this study provided opportunities for stakeholders to realise that they were dependent on one another for the academic performance of learners to improve and be sustained.

5.4.4. Content Knowledge of Teachers

Under this topic the discussions exposed that there was a content knowledge gap of teachers, because 45% did not have the basic minimum teaching qualification. This meant that these teachers were teaching subjects they were not qualified to teach, and therefore had no confidence in them, and their knowledge of the subject matter was minimal. This in turn hampered effective implementation of LAIP in this school.

Hargreaves (1994:54), Harwell (2003:87) and Mkhwanazi (2007:14) argued the need for professional development in the education system, and for it to be taken seriously if we are to improve the academic performance of learners. Professional development for educators involves the provision of activities designed to advance the knowledge, skills and understanding of educators in ways that lead to changes in their thinking and classroom behaviour. Meanwhile, Dufour and Marzano (2011:23) stress the importance of schools becoming professional learning communities (PLCs), as this impacts and improves teaching. They claim that a PLC is specifically intended to create conditions that help educators become more knowledgeable and skilful in their teaching.

5.4.5. Pedagogical Knowledge of Teachers

During our strategic planning process it became evident that teachers in particular thought that they were being overloaded with paperwork. One said that making lesson plans was too taxing, whilst the issue of analysing question by question after the assessment tasks were administered was a waste of their time: "*Engathi isikhathi esiningi manje la ka education esokwenzana no lesson plan no item analysis I task ne task. Sikuphi lesosikhathi? Ayi cha, ungathi sengiyabona !*" Meaning, it seems as if most of the time here in DoE is spent on lesson planning and item analysis. Where are we going to get that time? Based on this statement alone, one could conclude that teachers were aware of what LAIP policy required them to do but had decided to develop resistance to implementing it. One of the most likely reasons was that it was not theirs, but rather the Department had merely imposed it on them with the expectation that they would implement it. Hence, the teachers saw no need to change their way of teaching to ensure effective implementation of the policy.

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012:xvii) write that for the pedagogical knowledge of teachers to improve all stakeholders are called to push, pull, and nudge individuals, the group, and the system, thus making the development of professional capital a common quest for improvements in learning and achievement. Furthermore, according to Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006:280), "Many a teacher is knowledgeable of his or her subject matter without necessarily being able to decompress it in a way that makes it accessible to their students". Having pedagogical knowledge is the way to "decompress" the subject matter knowledge so that learners understand what is being taught and make sense of it.

5.4.6. Collective Capacity to Promote Learning for the Learners

The participants revealed that not all stakeholders regarded our meetings as fruitful, with one even raising a concern that some of the team members were absenting themselves or arriving late. This also indicated that in general not all people accept the initiatives that are being put in place. One of the reasons could be that they do not want to move from their comfortable surroundings or change

familiar habits, or are simply afraid of change. This confirmed the recommendations of Dufour and Marzano (2011:22), Huffman and Hipp (2003:4), Hodd and Sommer (2008:10), Meyer (2006:221), that schools need to work towards PLCs. They further claim that through these our communities would be in a position to share and critically interrogate their practice in a continuing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning- oriented, growth-promoting way. As the communities reach that point they would be applying the principles of CER, whereby everybody would be valued as an equal partner in any decision being taken, eventually, promoting peace and hope.

Even the relatively prosperous Guateng, according to Ntuta and Schurink (2010:5), reported a need for PLCs to be strengthened, hence it initiated teambuilding and conflict-resolution workshops for its stakeholders in its EAZ programme. Namibia also discouraged its institutions from operating in a hierarchical manner, instead calling for institutions that would effect a flattening mode of power across the education system (Geckler, 2001:11; Hopkins (2000:82); Iipinge & Likado, 2012:43). Also of relevance to the findings of this study was Hallinger's (2005:662, 663) noting that in the USA students and parents are taken as equal partners in the planning process. They believed that nothing would assist them in sustaining the implementation of the curriculum effectively, except the collective capacity of its stakeholders. Nonetheless, also pertinent here is the African saying that 'it takes the whole village to educate a child'. The schools alone will not be able to implement LAIP effectively without the involvement of all stakeholders.

As Fullan and Hargreaves (2012:144) argue, the days when individual teachers feel they can do as they please, whether good or bad, right or wrong, are numbered, and in many places are now an attitude of the past. The authors claim that teaching is a profession with shared purposes, collective responsibility, and mutual learning. They also maintain that teaching is no longer a job where one can demand total attention from the learners, and vice versa. Such beliefs or behaviour should make one leave for another profession, because unless one shares the responsibility and emotional rewards with colleagues, one is no longer a professional educator.

5.5. STRATEGY FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNER ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN POLICY

It must be noted that the strategy for the effective implementation of LAIP policy could not reflect only on things that are tangible, or even on processes and systems that are put in place. This section concludes on the strategy required for implementing LAIP policy. Todd (2010:7) attests to that an action research helps teachers to improve instruction in their classrooms. It allows them to look critically at what goes on in their classrooms and impact that very small changes can make in learner (and teacher) success. Todd (2010:7) further claims that an action research helps teachers to focus on specific issues and address them with a plan.

5.5.1. Collaboration

From the discussion, participants said that for every success to be achieved it was vital to work as a team. One indicated that the effective implementation of LAIP was no longer an individual enterprise, but rather required every stakeholder to work together. As Beyerlein, Freedman, McGee and Moran (2003:52) claimed, collaboration involves focusing on the achievement of desirable outcomes, as participants begin with a common understanding of what they need to talk about, how they must prioritise their time, and the interventions that have to be made.

Similarly, Perry and Thomson (2006:20) maintain that collaboration is the act or process of "shared creation" or discovery. It involves the creation of new value by doing something new or different. It is transforming in the sense that you don't leave the same way you came in. There's some sort of change. You give up part of yourself. Something new has to be created. Something happens differently because of the process. Collaboration is when everybody brings something to the table (expertise, money, ability to grant permission). They put it on the table, take their hands off and then the team creates from there. Therefore, collaboration advocates the involvement of stakeholders to yield the desired outcome. This confirms the applicability of CER to this study.

5.5.2. Mindset of stakeholders

The discussions showed that positive 'mindset,' that is psychological perspective and attitude of stakeholders, had an effect on the implementation of LAIP. One participant stressed upon the team members the need to 'change their mindset' in order for the team to accomplish the desired outcome, namely that of improving the academic performance of learners. For this reason I then drew on Martin Luther King Jr's allusion to the argument in Romans chapter 12 verses 2: "Be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewal of your minds."

In the context of this study, and a country struggling to come to terms with its recent divisive history, in which attitudes of the powerful elite were set against such change and the disadvantaged equally resistant to the imposition of controlling ideals, this notion of transformation calls upon all citizens to renew our perspectives of the effective implementation of policies such as LAIP, if we are to transform educational institutions and the society we are serving. This also meant that the way we live, teach, and work will reflect our joy in cultural diversity, our passion for justice, and our love of freedom, as Hooks advocated (1994:34).

5.5.3. Opportunity for Capacity-Building

Perhaps the most important finding of the study is that the opportunity for capacity-building in LAIP plays a vital role. This was shown when the participants argued that: "*it is important to be at the place where one can share his/her opinion with others and learn from them too. This opens a platform to broaden your horizon thus be in a position to make informed decisions.*" This statement was evidence that participants were in a position to see themselves being exposed to social capital, whereby it would open opportunities for them to increase their knowledge. It also suggested that stakeholders would be in a position to expand their networks of influence and opportunities. As Fullan (2012:90) claimed, this type of

capital will enable stakeholders to develop resilience when they know that there are people to approach for advice and to be their advocates. Therefore, allowing such capital to have an impact on our schools will be a great impetus to transforming our education, and will enable us to sustain learner performance. Fullan (2012:90) continued to state that when stakeholders are exposed to social capital they tend to appreciate the worth of constructive disagreement, thus creating a healthy and safe environment. In figurative terms, learning is the work and social capital the fuel. If it is weak, everything is destined to fail.

5.5.4. Finances

The participants contended that if programmes were to be sustained they would require more funds, as evident in one participant's statement: "*As much as sithanda ukwenza ama programmes abe in place but sizokhona kanjani ukuwagcina esebanza? Lokhu ngikushiso ukuthi isikole si depende kuphela emalini esiyinikwa umnyango njengoba sazi ukuthi awusigunyazile ukuthi siqoqe imali kubazali. Ukuphila ngesibonelelo sika Hulumeni kuzosinqinda amandla okuthi izinhlelo esivumelana ngazo ziphumelele ngendlela esifisa ngayo ngoba kwasona sometimes sifika sekudlule isikhathi.*" (As much as we like to implement programmes but how are we going to be able to sustain them? We are dependent on the grant from the Department as we all know that we are not allowed to collect money from parents. To rely on this grant would hamper our programmes to be implemented the way we have agreed upon).

Similarly, Ntuta and Schurink (2010:7) have detected serious signs of instability on the implementation of an intervention programme Gauteng had put in place. One of the other factors contributing to this was lack of finance, whilst in Namibian schools the most severe constraint on the implementation of the strategies put in place was lack of funding (Storeng, 2001:14). Also, Agba et al. (2011:35) reported that a declined in budgetary allocation to education in Nigeria obstructed the effective implementation of school curricula at all school levels, whilst Moseley (2009:1) reported that education in the USA had also experienced its worst financial crisis, and that had badly impacted on the programmes they had initiated.

5.5.5. Commitment

The discussions further revealed that commitment from all stakeholders was needed for the systems to be sustained effectively. However, Fullan and Hargreaves (2012:60, 61) reveal that commitment is attached to some key factors, such as career stage, in which teachers are involved in lifelong learning as the NCS policy envisaged teachers to be. Also, it means that teachers take part in professional development so as to achieve professional growth. These scholars posit that leadership has an influence on the commitment of stakeholders and that stakeholders remain committed to the work tasked to them if their leaders show that they have clear vision. This necessitates treating them like adults, being open and approachable, trusting stakeholders and demonstrating personal care for people.

The stakeholders agreed upon establishing the homework centre where learners would be assisted with their school work, (see paragraph 4.3.3.3). Furthermore, suspension of sporting activities to accommodate for the staff development programmes indicated that the stakeholders indeed commit themselves towards the effective implementation of the LAIP. According to Todd (2010:1) teachers need to know what is actually happening in their classrooms, what learners are thinking, why learners are reacting in the ways they do, what aspects of the classroom teachers should focus on to develop their teaching most effectively, how they should change in these aspects, and what the effects of such a change are. This means that for teachers to comprehend all the stated facts by Todd they need to be fully committed to their school work. If they truly do not understand their classroom situations first, their choices of new approaches to implement are likely to be based on personal fancy and whimsy rather than on what is most likely to have beneficial effects in the situation.

5.5.6. Availability and Proper use of Resources

The participants indicated that since public schools were being run by the state there were some factors that impeded effective implementation of the LAIP policy. Such factors were the inclusion of policy 4350, which limited high schools to offering subject packages as they wish and according to their learners' needs. Also, the limited and proper use of resources, such as library and laboratory, were identified as factors that impeded effective implementation of LAIP.

Ntuta and Schurink (2010:7) also found serious signs of instability in Gauteng schools arising from severe lack of resources, whilst Agba et al. (2011:35) also reported on this in Nigerian schools, where inadequate resources had created a challenge to education and curriculum implementation. Allocation of adequate resources was the first priority of the Namibian education system, whereas a lack impacted negatively on the performance of learners (Storeng, 2001:14). In the USA, Carmichael (2011:453) reported on various schools addressing the issue of classroom resources in order to improve academic performance of learners.

5.5.7. Monitoring and Evaluating

The participants reported that monitoring and evaluation was central to determining any loopholes of a programmes. However, the literature revealed that even developing countries encounter obstacles to monitoring and evaluation. The reason for lack of monitoring and evaluation in an organisation is lack of understanding by stakeholders of their roles (Kusek & Rist, 2004:180).

5.5.8. Collaborative and Cooperative Teaching Cycle

Participants were unanimous that there was nothing more important than working together to avoid surprises, and in turn cultivate an element of mistrust. This also revealed that the team members believed that the culture of the school needed to be transformed. For the academic performance of learners to be improved it is necessary for institutions to adopt the philosophy of "we" and not "I", (Dufour & Marzano, 2011:2), which is also in line with the philosophy of PAR. Dufour and

Marzano (2011:2) further claim that questions such as: What is it that we want our learners to know? What knowledge, skills, and dispositions should all our learners acquire? What systems have we to put in place to ensure that we are providing every learner with access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum? How will we respond when our students do not want to learn? and what steps can we put in place to provide students who struggle with additional time and support in a way that is timely, directive and systematic? enable the stakeholders to collaboratively work together in order to improve the academic learner performance. These questions were in line with the arguments brought forward in Chapter 2, which stated that the principles of social justice that the teachers should organise in their practice, aim to answer questions such as: Who are the learners in my class? What are their hopes, dreams, and aspirations? What are their passions and commitments? What skills, abilities and capabilities does each one bring to the classroom? (Mfeka, 2005:27).

To respond to such questions, Dufour and Marzano (2011:23) encourage institutions to work collaboratively in a collective effort to meet the needs of each student. They suggest that to bring this idea to life the following factors have to be considered. Educators are to be organised into collaborative teams in which members work interdependently to achieve common goals for which they are mutually accountable. No longer do teachers have to sit behind closed doors in their classrooms. Also Hooks (1994:206) claims that the only way to achieve a sense that there is shared commitment and a common goal is to recognise the value of each individual voice. She further claims that hearing each other's voices, individual thoughts, and sometimes associating these with personal experiences, makes us more acutely aware of each other. That moment of collective participation and dialogue means that we respect each other, which is one of the values of CER which I adopted in this study. The other factor that needed to be taken into consideration was that of creating regular time for collaboration, which was to be embedded in routine practices of the school. Also, the fact that teachers stay focused on the right work and that stakeholders provide schools with the resources, training, and continuing support to help them succeed in the effective implementation of LAIP, were reported to be factors for sustaining academic learner performance.

5.5.9. Articulated vision

Based on the discussions it became evident that stakeholders needed goals to be articulated clearly to avoid the confusion on the roles. This was revealed by one participant: "*Ukuze kuzongabi khona ukushayisana akube khona I consistency kwesikwenzayo and si artikhulethe amagoals ethu so that wonke umuntu ezokwazi ukuthi kulindelekeni kuyena."* (To avoid conflict let us be consistent and articulate our goals so that everybody should know what is expected of him or her).

According to Dufour and Marzano (2011:201), anyone can write a vision statement describing a better future for the organisation, but it requires effective leadership to create a shared vision that addresses the hopes and dreams of people within the organisation. Therefore, relating this to the CER view that the role of the critical researcher and the participants is to research *with* people rather than *on* people, therefore allowing them to be more human and be listening thus maintaining reflexivity and respect among participants, was also in line with what Dufour and Marzano (2011:201), when stating that effective leaders position themselves *among* those they serve rather than *above* them.

5.5.10. Professional Learning Communities

Professional learning communities (PLCs) were also reported as a factor that could assist teachers in effectively implementing LAIP. Kruse, Louis and Mark (1996:87) claim that the way in which teachers interact outside of their classrooms is critical to the effects of restructuring of educational practices on learners. However, Hargreaves (2004:48) suggests that we bear in mind that a PLC is not a programme to be purchased but rather a process to be pursued, albeit never quite perfected. It is not an appendage to existing structures and cultures but rather impacts profoundly on structure and culture. Nor is it a meeting, but rather an

"ethos that infuses every single aspect of a school's operation". A PLC does not demand that educators work harder at what they traditionally have done but rather calls upon all stakeholders to redefine their roles and responsibilities and act differently.

5.6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Recommendations that could be made then from this research study could therefore be that education to be elevated from being a departmental issue, or even a government issue, to a societal issue. This means that it should be the one that occupies the attention and energy for all our South African people (DoE, 2011:20). In order to achieve this, we can follow what the Nigerians did when they established a free democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; a land, full of bright opportunities for all citizens (Agba et al., 2011:39).

5.7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As highlighted in Chapter 3, the study was qualitative in nature, employing most principles of PAR. This however created a problem since I had to cater for participants with refreshments without funding. It must be noted that, initially, not all stakeholders were keen to contribute since they were still unclear about this kind of research. I sensed that some were afraid to contribute to the discussions, however, that fear gradually lessened. Also, all stakeholders had to be involved during the entire research process so it became impossible for some who had prior engagements. However, we had to continue and agreed that they would be given feedback when they joined us.

5.8. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Having undertaken the research study, I now state how CER as the theoretical framework that couched it assisted in achieving the objectives of the study. We could have not managed to obtain the objectives of the research study had we not worked together as research participants, and as equal partners in the formulation

of the strategies to assist teachers in order to improve learner academic performance. The process was educative and empowering to me and the research participants, and we became content to achieve what was intended, namely to see our Black communities, fellow brothers and sisters reach a point at which they could stand up and speak about the challenges they were experiencing in the education system. Significantly, we could then devise solutions to resolve them.

It became evident that one of the greatest impetuses to freedom is education, and that this is a powerful tool in liberate citizens and freeing their minds, particularly from mentalities of coloniser and colonised, from the legacies of apartheid. Despite almost two decades of universal suffrage, Black communities are still being held like sardines in closed cans because they cannot stand up and raise their voices, even on matters pertaining to their lives. Through CER we managed to push those boundaries. It was only then, having been exposed to CER that we claimed to have been liberated. However, we were still enthralled by the exercise of power and authority within our mini-kingdom classrooms, as Hooks (1994:17) might have predicted.

On reflection, traditionally, when learners want us to see them as whole human beings, with complex lives and experiences, we have shattered them and rather perceived them as seekers after compartmentalised bits of knowledge. We even went further and blamed these young people (learners) and their parents for their problems, ignoring the institutional imperfections and barriers, and silencing any 'negative' student voices.

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Appendix A

45 Gumtreee Crescent

Q1011 Umlazi

4031

22 July 2011

The Head of Department

KZN Department of Education

Private Bag X3437

Pietermaritzburg

3200

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON THE TOPIC: STRATEGIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING LEARNER ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN.

This letter serves to seek permission to conduct research at one of the secondary schools in the UGU District.

I am a student studying towards M.Ed degree specialising in Educational Leardership and Management, at the University of the Free State As part of the requirements of this degree, I will have to submit a dissertation. I have chosen to do my dissertation on the stated topic above.

The main aim of the study is to present strategies that will assist teachers towards the effective implementation of LAIP.

The study will be guided by the critical emancipator research values such as respect, equity, social justice, peace and hope. I will adhere to ethics considerations ensuring that the names of the participants are pseudonyms.

Participants in this study are the principal of the school, the head of departments, educators, and the chair-person of the representative council for learners, the chair-person of the SGB, the local councillor and the business person.

Consent letters will be issued to participants. I also request permission to use any other material that could assist me to obtain and analyse data.

The information that will be provided will be used for research purpose only.

Thank you,

Yours in Education

B.B. Shangase

Student no. 2000071668

Persal no. 61276103

Cell no. 0837472720

Appendix B

45 Gumtreee Crescent

Q1011 Umlazi

4031

22 July 2011

Dear Research Participant

This letter serves to request your participation in the study described below. A brief description of how the study will be conducted is provided.

I am a Masters student studying at the University of the Free State. As part of the requirements for this degree, I will have to submit a dissertation. The study aims at presenting the strategies to assist teachers towards the effective implementation of the Learner Attainment Improvement Plan (LAIP).

I therefore request you to participate in the study based on the information that you are the principal of the school chosen.

It is important that you as the participant for the study understand the following:

1. Your identity will remain anonymous when reporting on the results.
2. If at any time during the period of the research you wish to withdraw, you can do so.
3. You are not obliged to answer any questions you do not wish to.

For more information, you can contact me on 0837472720 or my supervisor (Prof Mahlomaholo) on 0711375106.

Appendix C

THE PRINCIPAL

Strategies for the implementation of Further Education and Training Learner Attainment Improvement Plan.

2000071668

This is to confirm that I …………………………………………………(Name and surname in full) understand the consent of this document and the nature of the research project. I therefore consent to participating in the research project entitled: Strategies for the implementation of Further Education and Training Learner Attainment Improvement Plan.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I desire.

Signature………………………………………………………

Date……………………………………………………………

Contact number………………………………………………

Appendix D

THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM (SMTs)

Strategies for the implementation of Further Education and Training Learner Attainment Improvement Plan.

2000071668

This is to confirm that I ……………………………………………………(Name and surname in full) understand the consent of this document and the nature of the research project. I therefore consent to participating in the research project entitled: Strategies for the implementation of Further Education and Training Learner Attainment Improvement Plan.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I desire.

Signature……………………………………………………………

Date………………………………………………………………

Contact number……………………………………………………

Appendix E

SGB MEMBER/ LOCAL MUNICIPALITY COUNCIL/ BUSINESS PERSON

Strategies for the implementation of Further Education and Training Learner Attainment Improvement Plan.

2000071668

This is to confirm that I ……………………………………………………(Name and surname in full) understand the consent of this document and the nature of the research project. I therefore consent to participating in the research project entitled: Strategies for the implementation of Further Education and Training Learner Attainment Improvement Plan.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I desire.

Signature……………………………………………………………

Date…………………………………………………………………

Contact number……………………………………………………

Appendix F

PARENT/ GUARDIAN/ LEARNER

Strategies for the implementation of Further Education and Training Learner Attainment Improvement Plan.

2000071668

Consent forms to be completed by Parent/ Guardian to give permission for child/ learner to participate in formulating the strategies for the effective implementation of Learner Attainment Improvement Plan in the Further Education and Training Band. Participants agreeing to take part in this Research must also sign.

This is to confirm that the parent/ guardian and child/ learner whose names and particulars are reflected here, have agreed for the child/ learner to participate in this research under the conditions explained in the accompanying letter.

A. PARENT/ GUARDIAN

NAMES   :

ADDRESS   :

CONTACT NO(S).   :

SIGNATURE   :

DATE   :

B. CHILD/ LEARNER

NAME   :

GRADE   :

ADDRESS   :

UMZALI/ UMGCINI WENGANE/ UMFUNDI

Izindlela Zokwenza Kangcono Imiphumela Yamabanga Eshumi Kuya Kwishumi nambili.

2000071668

IFOMU LOKUZIBOPHEZELA ELIZOGCWALISWA UMZALI/ UMGCINI WENGANE UKUNIKEZA IMVUME INGANE/ UMFUNDI UKUBA AZIMBANDAKANYE EKUBAMBENI IQHAZA KUCWANINGO OLULOTSHWE NGENHLA.

Ngiyaqinisekisa ukuthi uMzali/ uMgcini wengane egama layo nemininingwane ebhalwe lapha, ngivumile ukuthi ingane/ umfundi abambe iqhaza kucwaningo oluchaziwe kulencwadi.

A. Umzali/ uMgcin wengane

Amagama   :

Ikheli   :

Izinombolo zocingo   :

Ukusayina   :

Usuku   :

B. Umfundi   :

Amagama   :

Ibanga   :

Ikheli   :

Izinombolo zocingo   :

Ukusayina   :

Usuku   :
IFOMU LOKUZIBOPHEZELA

Mina……………………………………………………..(igama
nesibongo ngokuphelele) ngiyaqinisekisa ukuthi ngiqonda konke
okuqukethwe ilomqulu nohlobo locwaningo. Ngiyazibophezela ukubamba
iqhaza kulolucwaningo olusihloko esithi: Izindlela Zokwenza Kangcono
Imiphumela Yamabanga Eshumi Kuya Kwishumi nambili.

Ngiyakuqonda futhi ukuthi nginenkululeko yokushiya noma inini
kulolucwaningo uma ngifisa.

Ukusayina…………………………………………………..

Usuku…………………………………………………………

Izinombolo zami zocingo…………………………………

Appendix H

Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar   Tel: 033 341 8610   Ref.:2/4/8/384

Ms Blossom B. Shangase
Q1011 Umlazi
45 Gumtree Crescent
4031

Dear Ms Shangase

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct a pilot and research entitled: **Strategies for the Implementation of the Further Education and Training Leaner Attainment Improvement Plan,** in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 May 2012 to 30 April 2013.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mr. Alwar at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in Ugu District of the Kwazulu Natal Department of Education.

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education

23/04/2012
Date

Zozo: *Mahle impela ama policies ase South Africa kodwa kunzima ukuqalisa ukuwasebenzisa ngoba ashintshashintsha njalo kakhulukazi la kwezemfundo.Asisazihluphi nje ngawo. Sithi sisazama ukuqonda inqubomgomo esuke ikhona ngalowonyaka sithole ukuthi sekumele siyishintshe ngoba sekukhona enye.Iyipho yona le LAIP policy futhi idila nani? Loko kusiphoqa ukuthi sibambelele olwazini oludala esinalo ngoba asinikwa nesikhathi esanele ukuthi siwaqonde kahle. Siya emakilasini singenakho ukuzethemba okuphelele. Asinikwa isikhathi esanele ngokuqeqeshwa ngalamapolicies futhi asibandakanywa ekwakhiweni kwawo. Bheka nje kade kuyimanje njengoba siqalisa ama 'CAPS' siqeqeshwe nje amahora amathathu nje vo uma singaphosisi kodwa lapho silindeleke ukuthi senze izimangaliso kwiziphumo zikamatikuletsheni. Lokhu kusinika enkulu inkinga kakhulukazi emfundweni yezingane zabansundu ngoba abazali bayantula futhi abanamandla okuthi bakhokhekhele izingane zabo ukuba ziyothekela ulwazi kwezinye izikhungo nakulabo abanamava athe thuthu.*

Bukiwe: *Kunzima kakhulu ukuba semkhakheni wezemfundo kulesisikhathi ngoba noma izinkinga ezikhungethe lomkhakha zaziwa kodwa lokho kushaywa indiva.Asisawaqondi amapolicies kangangoba nje mina ngizifundisela ngendlela yami endala. Uma imiphumela ingasemihle amehlo onke abheka kothisha nakubaphathi bezikole. Izidingo zomphakathi zishaywa indiva nokubaluleka kwawo ukuthi ubeke izimvo zawo akukaze kwenzeke.*

Thobekile: *Isho futhi ukuthi sikhathele iwona futhi ayasicika manje. Ama 'policies' aqhamuka esedwetshiwe sekufuneka siwalandele. Lokho kubeka engcupheni imfundo yabantwana ngoba noma sifisa ukukwenza ngendlela ezosithuthukisa njengomphakathi kodwa uthola ukuthi amandla amaningi anga kuHulumeni bese awethu amandla ayanqundeka. Isibonelo; bheka nje I 'policy' 4350 elawula izikole zamabanga aphezulu ngohlelo lwezifundo okumele zizifundise. Icindezela kakhulu abantu abampisholo ngoba abazali ngenxa yokwentuleka kwemisebenzi kanye nobubha angeke babanamandla okukhokhela othisha abanamakhono.Siyavuma ukuthi izikole zinikiwe iqhaza lokwenza ama 'policies' azo kodwa nakhona lapho kumele ahambisane nokushiwo uHulumeni.*

Zozo: *Angithi siyakha manje asiyeke ukugxeka. Kunjena kunjena nje kwaphela. Yini singavumelani ngesikhathi esizohlangana ngaso uku unpacka ama policies esinawo la ka education?*

Indlu yonke yavungaba kwezwakala abanye bethi: We kambe unjalo wena uyathanda nje ukuphuma eceleni njengojosaka. Awusiyeke.

Zozo: *Yini singavumelani ngesikhathi esizohlangana ngaso uku unpacka ama policies esinawo la ka education?*

Principal: *Mina ngicabanga ukuthi kunganjani uma singahlalela ukuqonda this LAIP policy ngoba impela engathi iqukethe konke esikudingayo.*

Betty: *Ayi cha engathi ngihambisana nawe Thishomkhulu. Mhlampe loko kuzokwenza ukuthi sikwazi ukuba ne direction.Ake siyibambe ngezimpondo.*

Ntombi: *Kodwa njengoba nje sigunyazwe ile policy 4350 esinqunda amandla okuthi singakwazi ukuba nama subjects packages amaningi lapho abantwana bezokwazi ukuzikhethela ngokukhululeka izifundo abafuna ukuzifunda. Nithi kusayikho nje? Sithi sikhululekile kodwa sisacindezelwa. Uqinisile yazi uThobekile ichemile le policy. Sizozithathaphi thina inqwaba engaka yezingane ngoba ziya ko Sbusisiwe nasemaNdiyeni.*

Sipho: Ayikho kodwa enye indlela bakwethu ukuthi sishintshe ukucabanga

Principal: *Siyalwakha uhlaka lwethu siyisikole kodwa njengoba kade sesikubekiwe ngenhla ukuthi silawulwa uHulumeni. Loko nje kukodwa kutshengisa ngosobala ukuthi noma ngabe yini esiyihlelayo uma ingahambisani nezinhlelo zikaHulumeni angeke sakwazi ukuphumelela ukukwenza ngoba asizimele. Ukuhlela kulahleke nje kusuka lapha phezulu. Sithi siphuma emakhaya sibheke ukuyosebenza ukwakha kangcono ikusasa labantwana uthole ukuthi usuyaphazamiseka ngoba sekumele ugijimele umhlangano obungaziswanga ngawo ngesikhathi. Kunjalo nje abaphathi baphoqelelwe ukuthi babe ngabafundisi. Ngamafuphi, singasho nje ukuthi izinhlelo zikhona kodwa azilandeleki ngokugcwele.*

Sha: *Izinhlelo zomnyango zikhona ezifana nama "workshops" kodwa okusikhathazayo ukuthi kumele sinikele ngesikhathi sethu siphinde futhi sinikele*

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nangemali yethu ukuya ezikhungweni lapho kusuke kwenzelwe khona lama "workshops". Umnyango wezemfundo awusibhekeleli ngalutho futhi sewashaya nomthetho wokuthi izikole zingabe zisabakhokhela othisha abasuke beye kulezizikhungo. Isibonelo: Kade kufuneka sihambe njalo ngezimpelasonto siyokwethekela ulwazi imali ilanganiselwa cishe enkulungwaneni ngenyanga othisha abayikhipha emaphaketheni abo. Nesikole ngokunjalo, akukho mizamo eke yayenza ukuhlangabeza othisha. Ukube kuyenzeka nje ngabe ngiyashiya phansi mina la ka education ngiyoziqalela omunye umsebenzi.

Thobekile: *Siyavumelana nalokhu osekubekwe ozakwethu. Esifuna ukuthasisela kukho ukuthi siyathanda ukuzimbandakanye nabanye ozakwethu ukucobelelana ngolwazi nokunye kodwa izindleko zisinqunda amandla. Siyafisa ukuthi umnyango ubuye ukubhekisise lokhu ngoba ekugcineni kukhinyabezeka izingane ezilangazelele ukuthola ulwazi zibe utho empilweni. Nakuba- ke isikole naso sinazo izinhlelo eziba ngoLwezine ukuthi sithuthukisana zibuye zingalandeleki kahle ngenxa yezinto ezivuka esikhaleni okumele kuqaliswa ngazo ngoba zisuke zifunwa umnyango. Ohlangothini labantwana umnyango waqalisa uhlelo alubiza nge "orphans and vulnerable children"- OVC. Lapho izintandane nabantwana abahlwempu babenikelelelwa ngezidingo zesikole. Njengoba umnyango wakhipha izinkulungwane eziyishumi nambili – R12000 ukubhekelela labantwana, ngenxa yobubha esibhekene nabo kulendawo abatholanga bonke abantwana. Kulabo bantwana abaphumelele kahle kumatikuletsheni bengenamandla okuqhubekela phambili, isikole sibe nenhlanhla sokuthola usomabhizinisi owakhelene nesikole owazivolontiyela ngokubaqhuba ezikhungweni zemfundo ephakeme.*

Zinhle: *Zincane kakhulu izinhlelo ezikhona lapho sibizelwa khona ukuthi siyoqeqeshelwa ukukwazi ukubhekana nezingqinamba ekubhekeleni I "curriculum". Futhi uthola ukuthi njengoba nje siyizikole zomphakathi iHoD iyodwa kulindeleke ukuthi ibhekane nenqwaba yezifundo ngenxa yokuba khona kohlelo lwe PPN. Lokhu kudala enkulu ingcindezi ngoba ezinye izifundo zisingethwe I HoD engazazi nokuzazi futhi engenelo nothando lwazo. Usizi olubheke thina nabanye bayolibona. Ukuba kuyenzeka nje ngabe ngishiya phansi mina la ka Educationngiyoziqalela omunye umsebenzi. Pho-ke angikwazi ngoba nanka nama responsibility asemakhaya athe bhe.*

Sha: *Asikwazi ngisho ukuba nama subject heads ngoba uthisha eyedwa ufundisa isifundo kusukela lapha ka grade 8 kuze kube ugrade 12 ngenxa ye teacher pupil ratio. Kunzima kanjaloke ukuthi sisizane ngoba usuke kunguye yedwa owenzisa isifundo kusuka emabangeni aphansi kuya phezulu. Sisebenza kuwo lowomnyama ngoba akukho okungenziwa. Size sethembe ukuthi usizo baluthola kwabanye ozakwabo ngaphandle ngoba siyagqugquzela ukuthi bazimbandakanye kulokhu okubizwa ngokuthi phecelezi ama "cluster" kanye ne "networking".*

Fah: Ikhona yini into elungayo kodwa lana ngoba sikhuluma size some amathe. *Sekukaningi sisho ukuthi i- Mathematical Literacy ayibe nephepha elilodwa ngoba u "paper two" wakhona kunzima nakuwe uwuthisha ukuwu "understenda" ngoba icontent yakhona is based on the context that you as a teacher have not been exposed to. Kangakanani-ke ezinganeni?* Uma nje besahlulwa iloku okulula khohlwa nje ngokuthi niyoke niqashelwe abanye othisha. Kunalokho nansi iPPN ngiyibekile. Kukhona abazophuma.

Thobekile: *Hhawu thina we Fah asisazixaki. Sigxila kakhulu kulokho esi comfortable kukona.*

Principal: *Kodwa nithi kuyalunga nje uma kunjalo? Angiboni kahle. Kodwa khona ziyaphasa nje izingane uma nenza noma ikanjani?*

Zozo: *We mina lelicebo la Thobekile liyangisebenzela ngoba angikakaze ngingawushayi u 100 per cent esifundweni sami. Nani niyakwazi loko.*

Sipho: *Uma kunjalo yini singazibekeli nje ukuthi sifuna ukuthi imiphumela yabafundi ibe u 100 percent ngoba sifisa ukuthi bonke abafundi baphase. Futhi kahle. Kungabi esika Zozo yedwa isifundo esidabula o 100 per cent. Izindlela-ke ezizokwenza lokookufanele siqhamuke nazo.*

Zozo: *Bengicabanga ukuthi kungangcono uma singagxila ku 10,11 and 12. Phela ibona bantu esijajwa ngabo labo. Uma siyibambe lapho kuyobe siqedile.*

Thobekile: *Uma kunjalo ke mina ngicela ukuzihlalela lapha otshanini. Ngingangeni ku FET band.*

Fah: *Uma kunjalo- ke madoda kuzomele siqinise ukuthi sina ma weekend classes and holiday classes.* Zozo emphasized: *Kanti nakho nje ukuthi labo sixty minutes lessons sibasebenzisa effectively and productively.*

Thobekile: *Ngike ngasho ngisasho furhti namanje kungcono ngizihlalele otshanini.Okwakobani ukungabi namaholidi futhi thina ngemiGqibelo siyangcwaba siyashadisa. Ingane ingahluleka ukungizwa izinsuku ezinti ngesonto bese ucabanga ukuthi izokuzwa ngoMgqhibelo. Khohlwa. Ziya emaceceni lezi. Engabe nizothola ezingaki.*

Thobeka: *Kwasha emthini omanzi. Akobe abantu bayezwa njalo. Okusho ukuthi kuzophela manje ukuthi uma kushintswa iperiod uthole ukuthi umuntu uqala phansi aye ekhabetheni ebemba eyeka.*

Zinhle: *What if we make a deadline that the syllabus is completed in June ukuze sizoba na enough revision programme with the learners?*

Zinhle: *Ngo June? Ngeke it is too early. Kunganjani uma kuba uAugust noma before trial examinations. Phela ama languages anomsebenzi omningi.Anobuye nisicabangele phela sibulawa nayi marking amaphepha amathathu onke.*

Pitso: *Engathi ngiyawuseka lombono kaTHobeka. Ngoba akusizi ukuthi uthisha agijime yedwa ashiye izingane ngasemuva. Kukaningi sibabona thina athi umuntu uqedile ngoJune kodwa uma sekuphuma ama results abantwana bafeyilile. Loko kusho ukuthi uqede yedwa what about izingane.*

Principal: *Isho mfoka Pitso. Uthi ni hhe. Kumele uhambe nazo izingane ungazishiyi emuva. Hhayi ukhulumile nsizwa yamadoda. Ngeke sisasho lutho.*

Mrs Thabethe: *Bengicabanga ukuthi mhlampe kungasisiza ukuthi singacela izingane lezi esezaphothula esikoleni kodwa ezihleli zingasebenzi mhlampe zilekelele lezi zesikole uma isikole sesiphumile. Mina lapha kwami izingane zingahlanganyela khona. Anginankinga.*

Xolani: *Uma ucabanga Ma loko kungenzeka? Ngisho ngoba phela abanye balaba obashoyo kade baqeda esikoleni abayazi iNCS. Futhi o bantu !*

Principal : *Yebo kungenzeka. Phela abazokufundisa kodwa bazobasiza nje ngokuthi umsebenzi abanikezwe wona esikoleni ukuthi bayowenza emakhaya bayawenza yini. Icishe ifane nje lento nale eyenziwa esilungwini e after care.*

Thobekile: Ayi kuyasho bandla ukuthi umkhulu usegugile. E aftercare Thishomkhulu zisuke zidlala zilala futhi. Kodwa uma sezinadala bese ziya e homework club.

Principal: *Kodwa angithi ningizwile ukuthi bengisho ukuthini kona loko ke.*

Ntombi: *Noma lokhu kuzosho extra work to teachers but ngifisa sengathi ama tests angabhalwa noma kabili enyangeni. Lokhu kuzokwenza ukuthi sisheshe sithole izinkinga bese siyazilungisa. Phezu kwalokho engathi othisha bastikha kuma Programme of Assessent ukuqinisekisa ukuthi u CASS wabafundi u tiptop iterm ne term.*

Zozo: *We mame ubani kodwa ozomaka umsebenzi ongaka.*

Principal: *Kahle Zozo sathi siza nezinto ezinhle nje wawusufuna ukuzifaka unyawo. Phela akusho ukuthi wonke amatest azomakwa uwena. Kukhona phela nalawa amafundi abangazimakela bona.*

Zozo: *Oho hhayi besengishilo ukuthi ingxaki kaSam phela le. Futhi ngiyazi ukuthi akumina kuphela obenalenkinga ukuthi nje abantu bafuna ukuba ongcwelengwele. Kubonakale mina kuphela nje umuntu omubi.*

Zinhle: *Angiqondile ukwenza I competition among learners but I feel kungangcono uma abantwana singaba groupa emakilasini according to their abilities.*

Thobekile: *Hhayi-bo uthini u White paper 6 na? Sabuyela emuva manje? Senifuna ukuboshwa?*

Zinhle: *No, angisho ukuthi izingane with barriers zidiscrimethwe but I mean if sakha amagroups eklasini lokho will mean ukuthi uma si prepare for our lessons we know ukuthi for this group sibahlelela muphi umsebenzi based kwi ability yabo.*

Bukiwe: *Okusho ukuthi manje sekuzoba compulsory to come up with enrichment and remediation programmes ko lesson plan? Wanda wemsebenzi.*

Zinhle: *Ayi ngike ngasho ukuthi ukuba ngiyazenzelangabe ngiyofuna omunye umsebenzi. Ukugqhilazwa phela lokhu. Kanti thina sasoneni kubani?*

Ntombi: *Sizobenza kanjani-ke labo lesson plan sekuvela wonke lama activities?*

Zozo: *Engathi kuzofanele siplane together, akukho okunye.Inkinga phela la. Uma uwedwa uzothi webani kusabele bani?*

Siza: *Thina emakolishi esasi treynwa khona kwakuke kube nama demonstration lessons. Lapho ama lecturers ayeplana ama lessons and deliver them in front of us ukuze sizobona indlela okufundiswa ngayo ezinganeni. I suggest ukuthi nathi sikuzame mhlampe kabili enyangeni. Othisha be department bazohlangana babukele uzakwabo efundisa bese emveni kwalokho make ama comments and discussions about his or her lesson.*

Thobeka: *Abangayang emekolishi bona ke benze njani?*

Fah: *Kade ngilalele kukhulunywa. Sengithi angibeke nje engike ngikuzwe kushiwo abafundi. Kona basuke bengagxeki kodwa basuke beqhathanisa nabanye. Ukuthi abanye bayabavumela babe active uma kufundwa njengokuthi nje uthisha ngesinye isikhathi athi uzofundiswa abafundi ngoba efuna ukubona ukuthi bayakuqonda yini okusuke kufundwa. Kanti abanye ibona ababa active, bakhulume kakhulu kuze kuyephela iperiod. So uma kufika imiphumela, abafundi bazithola bengenzi kahle kulezizifundo lapho benganikezwa ithuba lokuthi ba participathe. Angazi noma ikhona yini indlela esingaxazulula ngayo lenkinga ngoba bayangena impela emaklasini but asiku understandi abasuke bekufundisa.*

Zakhele: *Okusho ukuthi othisha kumele isikhathi esiningi basinikeze abafundi kunokuthi kube ibona aba spoonfida izingane. Izingane kumele zizitholele zona manje ama facts and information.*

Zozo: We niyadlala ke nina manje. Kuziphi zona. Lezizingane zingamavila kabi. Into eziyaziyo nje uku chata umsebenzi wesikole ngeke uwunuke. F

Mrs Thabethe: *Awu ziyamitha bo izingane zenu lapha esikoleni. Unyaka no nyaka. Angazi nje zingaki lapha ngakwami. Kwenziwa yini? Futhi zifika late. Ingoba anisazishayi phela. Zenza noma kanjani.*

Thobeka: *Cha, akungashiwo ukuthi izingane ezethu engazukuthi akuzona ezenu nani.*

Zozo: *Kwi case ye late coming yini singaceli iSecurity lilekelelani no thisha osejuthini babhale izingane ezifika late. Then if igama lengane livele amasonto amabili elandelana then kubizwe umzali wayo kuzoxoxiswana naye. Uqinisile impela ke Ma ukuthi asisazishayi. Phela umthetho singaphelelwa nayisinkwa. Okuxakayo ukuthi nasemakhaya azishaywa kodwa bese nfuna thina sizishaye.*

Principal: *Kuzomele sicele futhi kothisha ukuthi bayawunikeza ngampela umsebenzi ukuze laba abafika late nalaba abalovayo bezobona ukuthi akudlalwa.* Also, o class teacher kuzomele bayimake ngokuthembeka I attendance register.

Sipho: *Kubuhlungu ukubona umphakathi wakithi ungakukhuthalele ukufunda. Kunalokho usaqhuba ngoludala lapho ingane yentombazane isagqugquzelwa ukuthi izale. Ngizozama ukuhlangana nenduna bese sakha ilanga lomhlangano nabazali. Siyocela futhi namanesi ukuthi eze emhlanganweni ezoselekelela kuloludaba.*

Principal: *Ake sikubeke eceleni nje loko enikushoyo. Sike sibuke nansi inkinga la ikhona. As a school, Mathematics and Science department has been the department which used to produce good results. Eyi…Kodwa manje iyona department esenzela phansi ngohlobo olumangalisayo njengoba sonke sazi ukuthi we are the underperforming school. Angisazi kumele kwenziwenzenjani? Njalo uma ngiyoverifaya ama results ka matric eMarburg ngisuke ngazi ukuthi akukho neyodwa ingane yaka Science ezophasa uma ngithole eyodwa noma ezimbili cha kusuke kuyinhlanhla. Nokuqeda le combination ye Science and Maths Lits kwasibulala. Bheka nje oLondeka base University kodwa ngayo le combination.*

Sipho: *Uma ngingabuza nje bothisha, yini le esidala ukuthi imiphumela yabantwana baka Science ingabi mihle njengakokwejwalekile? Yazi nathi nje sesiyakuqaphela lokho ukuthi nje lezingane ezenza lezizifundo zombili iMaths ne Science cha aziphumaphumi ephepheni ekopheleni konyaka.*

Bukiwe: *Kuzomele sikuqonde lokhu ukuthi Izifundo ezifana nalezi zidinga abafundi abakhuthele nabazokwazi ukuyocobelela ulwazi kwezinye izikhungo. Kodwa lapha esikoleni uthola ukuthi abafundi bagcina la esikoleni kuphela.*

Zakhele: *Kusho ukuthi kuzomele kube khona enye indlela okumele senze ngayo. Mhlampe lezizinkinga esinazo singakwazi ukuzinqanda uma singa nikeza ama awards kubantwana ebenze kahle ezifundweni zabo kanjalo futhi nothisha ovelele. Ngizonikela ngama trophy kanye nezitifiketi ukuze lokhu kube impumelelo. Abantwana abaphase kahle ka matric ngizobakhokhela uma befuna ukuqhubekela kuma institution of higher learning. Nesikole ngizosixhasa njengoba bese ngishilo nangezitifiketi ezizonikwa othisha kanye nabafundi abenze kahle Phela loku akulungile neze neze. Kusho ukuthi iyogcina ingasafundiswa phela iScience layikhaya. Kanti phela lesisikole sasakha siwumphakathi ngoba sifuna izingane nabazali baphumule ukugibelisa izingane ziye kwaJabula ngoba kukude.*

Thobekile: *Cha nathi iyasixaka lendaba ngoba kusukela ngo two thousand and eight if not two thousand nine, ukuthi imiphumela yaka Science ingabi mihle. Loko kungenzeka ukuba kudalwe ukuthi othisha balezizifundo baye bahamba. Abanye kube ingenxa yama promotions kanti abanye ingoba bathola imisebenzi ezobaholela kangcono. Since then nike besiloku siba nothisha abangaqeqeshiwe ngokugcwele ebebesisiza. Sidlulisa ukubonga okukhulu ngoxhaso esizolithola sithemba ukuthi sizoqhubeka njalo nokusebenzisana. Vele iskole siyaludinga usizo lwenu. Size sifune abantu bangaphandle bezokwenza izinto nibe nikude nesikole. Bukani nje imalini esikhokhela umuntu ngegceke kodwa nibe nikhona. Namanje sizofaka ama tiles ema office sizokhokha enhle imali le engabe siyinikeza nina ngoba futhi siyakholwa ukuthi nina angeke nasibiza kakhulu ngoba niyathanda ukubona abantwana benu befundela endaweni enhle. Ake nisondeleni nje siyanicela.*

Pitso: *Siyafisa ukusiza isikole sethu ukuze imiphumela yabantwana izoba mihle ngokuzimbandakanya nezinhlelo zesikole kodwa inkinga esibuye sibe nayo ukuthi sinolwazi oluncane ekutheni kumele sihambe sigcinephi ngoba asifisi ukubona sekukhona ukushayisana ngemibono kithina kanye nasohlangathini lwesikole.Esikudingayo nje ukuthi sifundiseke ukuthi iliphi iqhaza esingalidlala.*

Ngokwemihlangano esike sibizelwe yona iziphathi mandla zezemfundo ukuzosiqeqesha ekutheni sikwazi ukusebenzisana nabaphathi besikole kanye nothisha nokusichazela ukuthi yini elindeleke kuthina; singasho ukuthi sinalo ulwazi noma phela lunganele ngokungako. Singathokoza uma ngase nesikole sisakhele izinhlelo zokuthi nathi sikwazi ukulekelela ngaphandle ngokugxambukela ezintweni ezingahlangene nathi siyisigungu sokuphathwa kwezikole.

Sipho: *Okokuqala ayikho into emnandi yokuthi uma usendaweni ube nokuzethemba futhi uzizwele ukuthi ubalulekile futhi kuneqhaza elikhulu ongalidlala ekwenzeni ngcono isimo. Kuzomele siwaqede nya amaxoki Sifuna ukuzazi kuqala ukuthi yiliphi iqhaza esingalibamba emfundweni yabantwana. Sidinga ukuthi sikwazi ukusebenzisa amatalente ethu ngokuhlukahlukana ngoba siyazi ukuthi asifani. Sithanda ukuba sendaweni lapho sizoqonda isimo sabanye abantu futhi nokudlala indima ephakeme ekusebenziseni ulwazi lwethu kanjalo nokuqonda ukuthi abantu esisebenzisana kanye nabo kuhlanganisa nabantwana singabasingatha kanjani ngokomoya nango komphefumulo.Sidinga ukuthi sazi ukuthi into esivumelene ngayo iyenzeka njengoba sishilo.*

Principal: *Awusho kakhulu lapho Nkosazane khona sizozwa sonke.*

Siza: *Oh cha, thishomkhulu bengithi nje kunganjani uma kungaba khona imonitoring tool ezosho ukuthi yini elindelekile. Uthisha no thisha azoba nayo. Ngoba loko kwenza kungabikhona ukuxabana ngokwemibono. Ukunezela kulokhu okukade kushiwo ozakwethu bokuqala, singathanda ukusho ukuthi kubalulekile futhi ukuba kwisisinda lapho uzokwazi ukuxoxisana nabantu abehlukahlukene nizokhona ukwakhana ngemibono eyahlukahlukene. Lokhu kwenza ukuthi ulwazi obukade unalo luthuthuke bese ukwazi ukulisebenzisa ngendlela ezothuthukisa abanye abantu. Phezu kwalokho kumnandi ukuba sendaweni lapho imibono kanye nezinqubo uzokwazi ukuzithatha ngokukhululekile.*

Bukiwe: *Wawusuqhamuka no monitoring tool nje. Kahle kahle yini esifuna ukuthi ibhekwe na?*

Ntombi: *Uku implimentwa kwe curriculum.*

Thobekile: *Uku implimentwa kwe curriculum.*

Principal: *Okokuqala nje imali njengoba umnyango ungasigunyazile ukuthi siqoqe imali kubazali. As much as sithanda ukwenza ama programmes abe in place but sizokhona kanjani ukuwagcina esebenza. Lokhu ngikushiso ukuthi isikole idepende kuphela emalini esiyinikwa umnyango. Ukuphila ngesibonelelo sikahulumeni lokho kuzosinqinda amandla okuthi izinhlelo esivumelana ngazo zingaphumeleli ngendlela esifisa ngayo ngoba kwasona sometimes sifika sekudlule isikhathi.*

Xolani: *Ukuze ke sikwazi ukuqhubekela phambili ngezinhlelo zethu noma ngibeke kanje: Ukuze izinhlelo zethu zizophumelela bengibona kungcono ukuthi siphume siye kofuna ama donations kosmabhizinisi. Siyazibophezela ukuthi siphume siye kofuna iminikelo kosomabhizinisi nakwabanye abantu abanothando lokulekelela ekufakeni isandla ukuze kube nenqubekela phambili kuzinhlelo zethu.*

Zozo: *Okwesibili ukungazinikeli ngokupheleleyo kwabantu ukwenza loluhlelo ukuthi lube impumelelo esingathi phecelezi ukuhudula izinyawo ngasohlangothini lwethu ukuqalisa izinhlelo esivumelene ngazo. Kodwa singenze njani senze abantu bazinikele ngokuphelele ekwenzeni lezizinhlelo zethu ukuthi zibe impumelelelo? Okunye futhi ukungabi khona kwemithetho enqala yokubhekelela inqubekela phambili yalezizinhlelo kanye nengqalasisinda.*

Thobekile: *Eyi, ngoba abantu bahudula izinyawo noma kuvunyelenwe kahle. Ukuhlangana kwethu kudalwe ukuthi sifuna ukuba nemiphumela emihle kubantwana. Kumele sicubungule iziphumo zango June ukuthi abantwana benze njani. Vele asikholelwa ukuthi imfundo isemadolobheni nasezikoleni zabamhlophe kodwa sinethemba lokuthi nasezindaweni ezifana nalezi zasemakhaya ikhona imfundo. Zonke lezizikole ziphethwe umnyango owodwa futhi othisha baqeqeshwe ezindaweni ezizodwa. Ukubona ukuthi izinhlelo zethu ziyimpumelelo kuyomele ukuthi sibone ngemiphumela yabafundi iba ngconywana. Kumele sibambandakanye abazali uma kukhishwa imiphumela. Umzali afike lapha esikoleni ezolanda imiphumela yengane yakhe. Kwakhiwe nohlelo futhi lapho umzali nothisha wesifundo bezohlala khona phansi babonisane ukuthi umfundi angasizakala kanjani ngokwesifundo sakhe.*

Mrs Thabethe: *Thina bantu sibuye sikhohlwe yazi kumele sazi ukuthi empilweni asiyi nxanye singemanzi. Thina esinhliziyo ezivumayo kumele siyiphushe lenqola.*

Ngizonikhumbuza nje nangomlando eBhayibhelini. Angithi nabantwana baka Istrayeli bamuhlamuka uMose bafuna ukubuyela eGibhithe. Pho nixakwa yini manje? Uma bakwazi ukuhlamuka inceku yenkosi singobani ke thina? Yazi ayikho into edlula ukubambisana uma sifuna impumelelo. Ingakho isisho sesiZulu sisho ukuthi izandla ziyagezana.

Pitso: *Ingakho nje naseBhayibhelini kwabiza izinceku zime ukuphasa uMose ukuze abantwana baka Istrayeli banqobe. Kodwa phela ke esikuqaphelayo ukuthi abafundi abasakuthandi ukufunda kanjalo nothisha sebephelelwe umdlandla. Loku kudalwa ukuthi babona beyekelelwe. Ukuze bagqugquzeleke, kunganjani sibuyele emuva lapho wawuthola ukuthi kwakubizwa phambili abantwana abayishumi abenze kahle. Singephikisana nemigomo kaHulumeni ukuqeda lokho kodwa siyafisa ukuthi othisha abenze kahle ezifundweni zabo kanye nabafundi ngokunjalo kube khona imihlomuywana nje emincane abayitholayo. Lokho phela sizobe senzela ukubakhuthaza.*

Zozo: *Ungeke ungapheli umdlandla bo. Engathi isikhathi esiningi manje la ka education esokwenzana no lesson plan no item analysis I task ne task. Sikuphi lesosikhathi? Ayi cha, ungathi sengiyabona ! Kanti bakhohlwa into eyodwa nje ukuthi laba abalibala uku beautifaya amafile abenzi lutho emakilasini. Thina sikhuluma ngomsebenzi wengane qha. Olesson plan abafundisi kodwa uthisha ofundisayo. Nizobona manje sekuthiwa aku submithwe ama file no subject advisor baze bachithe usuku lonke bebhekana nefile nje uma uke wathi akakusize ekilasini unenkinga nge topic ethile bagxume uhhafu.*

Thobeka: *Okwani nje ngampela ukugqilazwa okungaka uma sisetha amaphepha? Manje sekuzofanele sibheke ukuthi ama levels siwakhave wonke.*

Thobekile: *Isikole esiphumelelayo ukukwazi ukugcina iperformance yabafundi isezingeni ileso okunokubambisana ezinhlakeni zonke ezikhona. Ngakho- ke ake sisukumeni sakhe. Izinga lokufika late kwabantwana liphezulu kakhulu, siyafisa ukuthi lokhu kwehle. Kanjalo nezingane zenu ziyakhulelwa lokhu okwenza zingakwazi ukuqhubeka nezifundo zazo.*

Sipho: *Ayikho enye indlela bakwethu ukuthi sishitshe ukucabanga kwethu nangendlela ebesenza ngayo izinto. Kumele sizijwayeze ukuthi sihlangane njalo ukuze ulwazi lomunye nomunye luzothuthuka.*

Thobekile: *Lokhu cishe kuzodala ukuthi kungabi nomuntu oyedwa othatha izinqumo kodwa bonke abantu abanemibono kanye nezinqumo bezozithatha ngokukhululekile*

Sipho: *Ayikho enye indlela bakwethu ukuthi sishitshe ukucabanga kwethu nangendlela ebesenza ngayo izinto.*

Principal: *Sithanda ukusho ukuthi akukho okudlula ukubambisana. Ama saprayzis enza kungabi khona ukwethembana*

Sipho: *Niyabona ke banje izinto sezisobala kuhle kwezinqa zesele. Uma kumi kanje kusho ukuthi sekuphelile- ke manje ukuthi singazi ukuthi sibhekephi la esyi akhona. Zonke izinto sezisobala. Anganhlanhlatha-ke ofuna ukunhlanhlatha. Lokhu kuzokwenza ukuthi sisebenze ngokukhulu ukuzimisela nangokubambisana. Ngoba akekho ozofihlela omunye induku emqubeni. Sonke kawufela manje.*

Betty: *Sesikhulume kakhulu kodwa manje akukho okuzosiguarda ukuthi izinhlelo zethu ziyimpumelelo. Ukuze sikwazi ukutreysa ukuthi ama programmes ethu ayimpumelelo noma qha I suggest that we task abantu ngokwamakhono abo abazobhekela ukuthi sisahamba kahle na futhi bangachemi. Ngoba phela siyakhana futhi kumele sikwamukele ukusolana. Angathi? Uma kukhona la okungahambi khona kahle babe nesibindi sokukusho lokhu. Kuyobe sikhulileke nje uma senze njalo. Akusizi ukuluma siphozisa sibe sibona ukuthi kuyonakala.*

Siza: *Awu wakhuluma ma oledi. Mina ngibona ukuthi ukuze kuzongabi khona ukushayisana akube khona I constistency kwesikwenzayo and si arthikhulethe amagoals ethu so that wonke umuntu ezokwazi ukuthi kulindelekeni kuyena. Akuve kukuhle ukwenza into ube wazi ukuthi wenzani kunokubhukuda emswanini nje.*

Bukiwe: *Eya- ke mina manje sengilambile. Kanti kudliwa nini lakhaya. Ukuba kwethu* ingxenye *la kanti siziyalile. Sizobulawa ngendlela?*

Principal: *Awukahle Bukiwe. Kodwa wabanjani ukuthi kuthi lapho kusetshenzwa wena ube ukhala ngendlala. Oyowuyeka nini lomkhuba wakho?*

Bukiwe: *Hhayi- ke ngenzenjani mina uma sengilambile? Phela kushaywa kubuye kukhunyukwe. Asibulale muntu.*

Zakhele: *Nibhizi nje lapho nilokhu nikhuluma ezokudla ugesi kanti uyofakwa nini la kulesisikole. Bheka nje nalapha phesheya izigxobo sezifakiwe kodwa lutho lana esikoleni.*

Thobekile: *Eyi kade sasasikhulekela ugesi webantu. Bhekani nje asikwazi ngisho ukuphotocophela izingane ama tasks sizinike ngoba umshini uhlala emzini wabantu. I high school engenagesi nje inga functiona kanjani nje kodwa? Angisakubalike nje okwe library ne laboratory. Lezizingane zethu into okuthiwa I research zihlangabezana nayo emanyuvesi.*

Zozo: *Sorry ukukungena emlonyeni. Phela uma ukhuluma ngamalibrary bazokutshela ukuthi enza ikhona library. Kunjalo phela la eSouthern. Okwelaboratory bathi improvise. Uthanda kanjani ke?*

Sipho: *Niyabona nje ukuba sonke lapha siyakubona ukubaluleka kwalemihlangano yethu ngabe sihleze siphelele futhi sifike ngesikhathi kuyo. Manje abanye bethu babona kuyizinto zabo ezibalulekile. Kanti phela nathi kuyatshoda emakhaya.*

Thobeka: *Uqinisile, baphi nje o Pitso? Uzoqhamuka eseshaya kancane lapha kaQumbu.*

Zinhle: *Niyamazi nje lowo kuhlezwe kulindwe yena. Uyangixaka ngoba before ngiphume ekhaya ngiqale ngimufonele athi uselungile.*

Zozo: *Kodwa naye uzogcina esengenile egiyeni, kancane kancane. Asiyi sonke singemanzi.*