CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The fact that support services are neglected in the Northern Province education system causes a very serious concern. The negative effect on education due to the absence or limited provision of relevant support services is a big concern for the Northern Province. The lack of adequate provision of support services and facilities is most acutely felt in rural and disadvantaged areas and should receive urgent attention.

The summary, findings and recommendations of this research are as follows:

5.2 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 outlined the problem statement that necessitated this research project. The problem question, namely the need for and extent of relevant support services in the education system of the Northern Province is highlighted in this chapter. This chapter also served as the orientation of the research, and outlined the aims, methods and various chapters of the dissertation.

Chapter 2 defined support services, and clearly outlined and discussed these services separately. There are support services for educators, learners and teaching structures and activities. Support services for educators include support regarding academic equipment, support regarding relationship between the educator and the learner, support regarding relationship between the educator and family of the learner, and personal support of the educator. Support services for teaching activities and structures include, teaching activities support in the management task of the school and support to the physical features of the school.

Chapter 3 dealt with the external and internal factors underlying the needs of support services in secondary schools.

Chapter 4 of this study dealt with the empirical component of the research, which included the construction of the questionnaire based on the literature survey. The interpretation of data that formed the main focus of the chapter was discussed.

Findings and recommendations with regard to the aims of this research are discussed in Chapter 5.

5.3 FINDINGS

5.3.1 Findings with regard to objective 1

Findings regarding objective 1, that is, to investigate the theory regarding support services as a component of the education system are the following:

Support services for educators include services regarding (cf.2.3.1):

- academic equipment of the educator such as handbooks, writing materials, library and media centre services (2.3.1.1).
- different relationship in the work situation (2.3.1.2):
    -Relationship with the family of the learner such as parent involvement through governing body, available information regarding responsibilities of parents and available information regarding competence of educators.
    -Support to the educator in relationship with the leaner such as positive and good relationships between the educators and the learners, motivation and helping learners with stress.
- personal support to the educator such as personality and personal problems, problems in the working environment and personal financial advice (2.3.1.3).

Support services for learners include services regarding (cf.2.3.2):

- helping learners with stress;
- personal problems; and
- orthodidactic services.

Support services to education activities and structures include services regarding (cf.2.3.3):

- teaching activities such as examination services, subject advisory services and curriculum development (cf.2.3.3.1).
- support in the management task of the school such as efficient administrative system, courses for administrative personnel and personnel services (cf.2.3.3.2).
- support to physical features of the school such as educational aids, offices and gymnasium and sports field (cf.2.3.3.3).

5.3.2 Findings with regard to objective 2

Findings regarding objective 2, that is, to determine from the literature which internal and external factors underlie the needs of support services in the education system of the Northern Province in secondary schools, are the following:

- **Internal factors that underlie the needs for support services are (3.2):**

-Educative nature that place focus on learners (3.2.1);

-Historic nature where the existing content or condition of the components of the education system stimulates or restricts the provision for the educational needs (3.2.1) ; and

-Internal factors of interactive nature (3.2.3).

The Northern Province Strategic Plan has its own internal factors. The internal factors are:

-Infrastructure, this is the way in which buildings should be (3.2.3);
-Learners, what is the age of the learners and how disciplined are they (3.2.3);
-Educators, how committed they are (3.2.3);
-Curriculum and examinations (3.2.3); and
-School management (3.2.3).

- **External factors that underlie the needs for support services are (3.4):**

-Demography: deals with the numbers, settlement and movement of the target group (3.4.1);
-Geographical and climatic factors: geography refers to the manner in which the educational system is determined by the geographical characteristics of the country where the target group is situated. Climatic factors influence the holiday (3.4.2);
-The physical and psychological characteristics of the target group: refer to the presence of physical or psychological abnormalities in the target group (3.4.3);
-Science and technology: refer to different sciences and to the level of technology used by the target group (3.4.4);
-Language: refers to the language used in the target group, and the development, status and recognition of the mother tongue in the community (3.4.5);
-Socio-economic situation of the target group: refers to the composition and social development of the target group (3.4.6);
-Political and institutional situation: refers to views of people or groups of people as to the way in which the society should be composed and arranged to ensure a sound and safe community (3.4.7);
-Philosophy of life and religion: refers to perceptions of God/god, mankind and the creation of different groups present in the target group of a particular education system (3.4.8); and
-Culture: refers to how people do things, what they do and how people think about themselves (3.4.9).

5.3.3 Findings with regard to objective 3

Findings regarding objective 3, namely, to determine empirically which support services are needed to enhance education in the Northern Province are the following:

- Support services for educators (cf. 2.3.1/4.3.2).

-Support regarding academic equipment (cf. 2.3.1.1/4.3.2.1).
-Support regarding different relationships in the work situation (cf. 2.3.1.2/4.3.2.2).

-Personal support to the educator (cf. 2.3.1.3/4.3.2.3).

- Support services for learners (cf. 2.3.2/4.3.3).

- Support services for education activities and structure (cf. 2.3.3/4.3.4).

-Teaching activities (cf. 2.3.3.1/4.3.4.1).
-Support in the management task of the school (cf. 2.3.3.2/4.3.4.2).
-Support of the physical features of the school (cf. 2.3.3.3/4.3.3.3).

- Priorities regarding the need for support services are the following (4.4.1-4.4.3):

-Library and media services;
-Roll films;
-Media centres and media services;
-Subject advisory services and subject courses;
-Partnership between educators and parents;
-Parent involvement through governing body;
-Available information regarding responsibilities of parents;
-Information regarding the competence of parents;
-Motivation of the learners;
-Occupational guidance;
-Maintenance of discipline;
-Helping learners with stress;
-Promotion opportunities;
-Support and help regarding drug and alcohol abuse;
-Training in the handling of stress;
-Seminars and courses to help the educator improve his quality of life;
-Services for vocational guidance;
-Handbooks;
-Writing material;
-Education media services;
-Libraries;
-Environmental subjects;
-Examination services;
-Relations of school personnel with education department;
-Technical support;
-Sufficient communication channels between the school/educator and education department;
-Efficient administrative system;
-Management information services;
-Sports equipment;
-Furniture;
-Telephones; and
-Offices.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are based on the literature survey and empirical research findings.

Recommendation 1

The Department of Education must provide equipped libraries and media services to all schools regardless of whether they are in rural or urban areas.

Motivation

School libraries and media services are regarded as the core elements of support services provided for educators and learners in the school.

Recommendation 2

The Department of Education must provide its educators with subject advisory services and subject courses. The education department should never assume that the upgrading of educator's subject skills is an inappropriate or unreasonable form of an educational investment.

Motivation

Subject upgrading is an essential and central part of an educator's professional development. Educators should undergo subject courses because in many situations they are unable to answer the examination which their pupils may be set.

Recommendation 3

Educators must undergo training on how to handle stress. This can be done through in-service training or by encouraging educators to do the course through universities which offer this course.

Motivation

Learners are affected by different problems. It may be at home, where there are daily quarrels between parents. This can cause stress to the learner. The peer group, socio-economic conditions and changes also play a role that can cause stress to learners. Educators can also be affected by stress by the effort of coping with day to day exigencies of operating within the school and their interactions with learners.

Recommendation 4

Parents should get involved in the education of their children through governing body.

Motivation

This helps them to be partners in education not spectators in the education of their children. Parents can share information, sense of purpose, mutual respects, responsibility and accountability with the educators.

Recommendation 5

The Department of Education must build offices with telephones and hire administrative staff to man those offices.

Motivation

If educators can be assisted with administration, they can commit themselves hundred percent to teaching the learners. The principals can supervise educators without any mishaps. If there are telephones, it will be easy for the educators to communicate with parents of the learners if there are problems. They can also use telephones to raise funds for the development of the school.

Recommendation 6

Learners need to be motivated by educators and educators must receive support and training on how to help learners with stress. This can be done by professionals outside the Department of Education if the Department of Education cannot provide sufficient training.

Motivation

Learners are supposed to be motivated in order to foster in a feeling that their achievements are valued and they can provide an educational environment that allows students to concentrate in developing skills and understanding. In fact motivation is one of the most important pre-requisite of learning.

Recommendation 7

It is recommended that the most needed services according to priorities receive urgent attention.

Motivation

Most of rural schools are in dire need of support services. The Department of Education should provide for support services to these schools by prioritiesing the needs of these schools for effective and quality education.

5.5 RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The Northern Province is lagging far behind other provinces in the provision of support services. Further research can be done in other provinces in order to determine whether or not the Northern Province is the only province that does not provide enough support services to its educators, learners and teaching activities and structures.

With inclusive education a reality in South Africa, the education system should be responsive to the diverse needs of learners. Further research in the need for support services that ensure a range of options for the provision of cost-effective education is also recommended.