CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented guidelines towards a management plan to improve the quality of the design and implementation of school-based assessment. In this chapter, the researcher will consolidate the findings of the study with reference to managing the quality of the design and implementation of CTA, while focusing on being CAPS relevant. This chapter begins with a brief summary of issues dealt with in the previous chapters. Moreover, the chapter provides a synthesis of key findings of the research study; indicates recommendations; and suggests areas for further research.

7.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

7.2.1 Chapter One

In this chapter, the researcher provided an orientation of the planned research study. Firstly, an overview of the relevant literature was given in order to validate the research problem, which focused on examining to what extent the management of the design and the implementation of CTA met with criteria for quality (*cf.* 1.1). This was done by discussing the changes according to the Constitution with regard to education in South Africa, and legislation and policy with regard to how assessment should be carried out (*cf.* 1.1.), specifically in the South African context (*cf.* 1.1).

The purpose statement of the study was worded, indicating that the researcher intended to obtain a perspective on how managing the design and implementation of CTA is presently managed at Sedibeng-East and Sedibeng-West schools (*cf.* 1.*2*). The primary research question was formulated (*cf.* 1.3.1) and from this question, as well as from the background provided (*cf.* 1.1), and four secondary research questions were tabulated (*cf.* 1.3.2):

- What does quality in the design and implementation of CTA entail?

- How is quality in the design and implementation of CTA presently managed?

- To what extent is there a difference between learner and educator perceptions regarding quality in the design and implementation of CTA?

- Which components and processes could be included in the guidelines towards a management intervention plan to support schools in the Sedibeng-East and Sedibeng-West Districts in improving the quality in the management of the design of school-based assessment?

The conceptual framework on which the study was grounded, namely that of establishing the fact that a very specific societal relationship exists within a school, was formulated (*cf.* 1.4). Moreover, central concepts were clarified in the context of this study: quality management; CTA design; CTA development and implementation; assessment tasks; CTA assessment; CTA instrument, management and quality (*cf.* 1.4.1).

Furthermore, the research methodology was described, firstly by indicating the research paradigm pragmatic as mainly positivist with a post positivistic component (*cf.* 1.5.1). Secondly, the research phases, literature review and empirical investigation, were pointed out (*cf.* 1.5.2). Thirdly, the research design was indicated as comprising of quantitative research, with a small dimension of qualitative research (*cf.* 1.5.3). Fourthly, the strategy of inquiry was pointed out as being non-experimental, descriptive survey research (*cf.* 1.5.4). In the fifth place, the selection of the research participants was discussed: the learner participants would be the Grade 11 learners who had completed EMS CTA in 2009 and the educator participants would be the Grade 9 EMS educators (*cf.* 1.5.5). The schools were selected by using convenient and stratified random sampling. The focus on EMS educators and learners implied the use of purposive sampling; and the participating educators and learners were selected by using simple random sampling (*cf.* 1.5.5).

Likewise, the method of data collection was indicated (*cf.* 1.5.6). The quantitative research was conducted by using two structured questionnaires,

one for the learners and one for the educators, consisting of closed Likert scale questions and open-ended questions (*cf.* 1.5.6.1).

Attention was paid to the data analysis and interpretation, indicating the use of descriptive statistics in order to summarize the gathered data with frequencies and percentages. With the aim of determining whether there were statistical differences between responses, the use of inferential statistics made it possible to compare the learner and educator responses on the mean scores for each of the questionnaire sections (*cf.* 1.5.7). T-tests, Cohen's D, a factor analysis, chi-square and Cramer's V were also utilized.

Reliability and validity of the quantitative study were dealt with briefly (*cf.* 1.5.8). A pilot test study determined Cronbach alpha coefficients and inter-item correlations in order to guarantee reliability. For the sake of enhancing validity, the importance of adhering to criteria for validity of the quantitative research design and for the data collection instrument, was indicated. The researcher adhered to specific criteria for validity, which were discussed in Chapter Four later: validity of the quantitative research design (statistical conclusion validity; internal validity; construct validity; external validity) and validity of the questionnaire as research instrument (content validity; face validity; construct validity).

Trustworthiness of the qualitative study was discussed, by referring to guaranteeing such trustworthiness by observing criteria for credibility, transferability, confirmability and dependability (*cf.* 1.5.9).

Ethical aspects such as the ethical principles in the research question, the data collection, the data analysis and interpretation, and disseminating the research were considered (*cf.* 1.5.10).

The researcher pointed out her intent to suggest a plan to manage the quality of the design and implementation of CTA (*cf.* 1.6) and indicated possible contributions of the study *(cf.* 1.7).

Challenges that became apparent during the research were referred to (*cf.* 1.8) and the chapter division of this thesis was provided (*cf.* 1.9).

7.2.2 Chapter Two

Chapter Two was dedicated to the first part of the literature review. The review began with looking at quality management in the design of CTA. An in-depth exploration and a review of appropriate and relevant local and international literature and documents on aspects such as legislation and policy, assessment, educators' guide to the CTA instrument and challenges facing educators regarding the implementation of policies.

This chapter presented a perspective on quality management in the design of CTA, aiming at developing a common understanding of quality within this context by, among others, defining the term and its relevant concepts.

Achieving quality in management implies (1) familiarizing stakeholders with the process, (2) developing and training staff members, (3) evaluating performances through inspection, (4) managing the change process and (5) side-stepping a top-down approach (*cf.* 2.2.3.1).

As part of quality management in the design of CTA, the researcher of this thesis looked at quality in assessment (*cf.* 2.34) in terms of the following sub-categories: validity was named and discussed first as one of the most important aspects of sound assessment and included content, construct, concurrent, face, criterion-related, and consequential *validity* (*cf.* 2.3.1). Secondly, reliability as implying consistency in assessment was discussed by focusing on the relationship between reliability and validity (*cf.* 2.3.2). Thirdly, the researcher looked at authenticity in assessment (*cf.* 2.34.3), presenting a general framework (*cf.* Figure 2.1) and a five dimensional model for authentic instruction (*cf.* Figure 2.2) in order to present the reader with visual viewpoints. The latter comprised the task/physical context/social context/assessment result/criteria (*cf.* Figure 2.2; 2.3.3).

The reader was made aware of the need for educators to deal with *predictive validity*, the educational level of learners and subjectivity of authenticity when trying to develop authentic assessment (*cf.* 2.3.3).

In this chapter, the researcher addressed several other key features of quality assessment that comprised the following: flexibility which underscores feedback regarding learners' achievements (*cf.* 2.3.4); expanded opportunity

in assessment so that learners may be assessed in different ways (*cf.* 2.3.5); assessment as a continuous process that refers to the on-going monitoring of learners (*cf.* 2.3.6); openness, transparency and accountability that imply making the expectations clear to the learners (*cf.* 2.3.7); equity that concerns itself with being free from bias (*cf.* 2.3.8); fairness that concerns itself with taking note of inequalities regarding opportunities, resources and teaching approaches (*cf.* 2.3.9); transferability and generalizability that point to learners being able to transfer classroom skills to assessment situations (*cf.* 2.3.10); cognitive complexity as being grounded in the taxonomy of Bloom (*cf.* 2.3.11.1); meaningfulness in assessment that concerns itself with worthwhile educational experiences (*cf.* 2.3.13); cost efficiency in assessment (*cf.* 2.3.14); and assessment *of* learning versus assessment *for* learning as it mediates between the learning needs in order to balance assessment (*cf.* 2.3.15).

7.2.3 Chapter Three

Chapter Three was dedicated to the second part of the literature review and dealt with managing the quality of the implementation of CTA with a depth review of local and international literature on aspects such as policy and legislation which manages CTA, assessment in NCS, purpose of assessment, assessment tools, strategies and methods, the background of CTA and challenges facing educators and learners with regard to the CTA instrument.

In the first place, relevant concepts were clarified (*cf.* 3.2), a visual structure of assessment and evaluation was designed (*cf.* Figure 3.1) and an adapted version of a possible framework of the various dimensions of assessment purposes and practices was suggested in Table 3.2.

Secondly, the chapter looked at assessment in the context of NCS (*cf.* 3.3) while mentioning assessment standards as grade-specific minimum levels at which learners should demonstrate having achieved Learning Outcomes and Lesson Outcomes, describing what learners should know at the end of a learning experience.

Legislation and policy in the NCS, as they guide assessment and classroom practices, were addressed in 3.3.1. An international perspective on CTA was

presented as the final focus point of assessment in the context of NCS (*cf.* 3.3.2).

In the third place, the focus of this chapter moved to assessment in the NCS (*cf.* 3.4), concentrating on the purpose of assessment (*cf.* 3.4.1), assessment methods (*cf.* 3.4.2; Table 3.2), assessment techniques/strategies (*cf.* 3.4.3; Table 3.3), assessment tools (*cf.* 3.4.4) and assessment methods, techniques and tools in EMS (*cf.* 3.4.5; Table 3.3).

In discussing the purpose of assessment (*cf.* 3.4.1), the content looked at baseline assessment (*cf.* 3.4.1.1); diagnostic assessment (*cf.* 3.4.1.2); formative assessment (*cf.* 3.4.2.3); summative purposes (*cf.* 3.4.1.4) and systemic assessment (*cf.* 3.4.1.5).

The second last part of the chapter addressed CTA as such (*cf.* 3.5); pointing out the background (*cf.* 3.5.1), features of the CTA implementation process (*cf.* 3.5.2) and administering CTA (*cf.* 3.5.4). Summaries of the EMS CTA for both Section A and Section were also presented (*cf.* Tables 3.3 & 3.4).

Finally, this chapter focused on the management of the implementation of CTA (*cf.* 3.6), paying special attention to management at school level (*cf.* 3.6.1) with its relevant SMT (*cf.* 3.6.1.1) and educator responsibilities (*cf.* 3.6.1.2); management at school district level (*cf.* 3.6.2); management at provincial level (*cf.* 3.6.3); and management problems experienced during the implementation of CTA (*cf.* 3.6.4: 3.6.4.1).

7.2.4 Chapter Four

Chapter Four dealt with the research design and comprised detailed information concerning the quantitative research design, data collection methodologies and data analysis. A detailed description of the research sites and target population was provided. The researcher's role, access to research sites and issues such as trustworthiness of the research were presented.

This chapter started off with an introduction (*cf.* 4.1). Thereafter the researcher gave guidance as to the research paradigm in which she revealed that she would be following a positivist and post positivistic approach in her study (*cf.* 4.2). The research design was discussed (*cf.* 4.3). The researcher stated that she was following a quantitative design with a small qualitative

dimension. In the section on the strategies of inquiry (*cf.* 4.3.1)**,** the researcher revealed that the quantitative component focused on descriptive, survey research (*cf.* 4.3.2.1) while a phenomenological approach was followed in the qualitative component (*cf.* 4.3.2.2). Brief mention was made to the comparative education design (*cf.*4.3.2.3) that would be followed, which comprised that learners and educators' perception regarding the design, implementation and management of CTA were established. The methods of choosing the research participants were revealed, namely purposive sampling and simple random sampling (*cf.* 4.3.2.4) and thereafter the researcher made known how she planned and constructed her closed four-point Likert scale questionnaires involving options such as *strongly agree*, *agree*, *disagree* or *strongly disagree* as used in the quantitative research (*cf.* 4.4.1). Open-ended questions were also included in both the educator and learner questionnaires to strengthen data concerning their perceptions on managing the design and implementation of CTA.

The pilot study and the data thereof were mentioned and the actual study was then focused on (*cf.* 4.3.5). Concerning both of these studies, the researcher referred to reliability and validity and the application thereof. Internal validity, external validity, statistical conclusion reliability and validity were considered (*cf.* 4.3.5). The role of the researcher was looked upon (*cf.* 4.3.6) and how the quantitative data analysis was conducted and interpreted (*cf.* 4.3.7; 4.3.7.1). Both descriptive and inferential procedures were used (*cf.* 4.4.3.7.1; 4.3.7.2). The qualitative data were analysed by using three means of codes and themes which were put into sub-categories (*cf.* 4.3.7.2). Finally, the researcher paid attention to ethical considerations (*cf.* 4.3.8).

7.2.5 Chapter Five

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse, categorize and interpret the data collected from questionnaires handed out to educators and learners in Sedibeng-East and Sedibeng-West. The data were organized in such a manner that overall patterns became clear. The researcher of this thesis interpreted their responses and attempted to present them in a coherent, integrated and systematic way. In order to uphold issues of confidentiality and anonymity, the schools were identified as township and ex-Model C schools.

The results from the data analyses were organized into themes for presentation and discussion. The themes were the design of CTA, the implementation and management of CTA. Under these themes, sub-categories were identified. In each, educators and learners' experiences were analysed, compared, cross-referenced and corroborated with evidence from learners and educators in the study for establishing accuracy and rigour in this presentation.

This chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of research results. The researcher provided raw data from participants of the planned research study. Firstly, the introduction referred to the previous chapter (*cf.* 5.1). Secondly, key acronyms used in this chapter were explained (*cf.* 5.2). Thirdly, biographic information of learner and educator questionnaires was highlighted and explained. Educator biographic information (*cf.* 5.3) discussed the following: gender, age, professional qualifications held by educators, teaching experience, position held and experience in present position. Fourthly, learner biographic information was presented (*cf.* 5.3.1). The following was discussed: gender, age, area of school and the language spoken by learners.

Section 5.4 dealt with **the quantitative data analysis of the learner responses**. Learners' responses were clustered by means of a factor analysis which dealt with the construct design and the implementation of CTA. The reliability of questionnaires and a short reflection on the Cronbach alpha of the previous chapter was highlighted.

Concerning the learner responses, factor 1 (*cf.* 5.4.1.1), reported on the construct design of CTA which dealt with the complexity of the CTA; factor 2 (*cf.* 5.4.1.2) dealt with the time constraints; factor 3 (*cf.* 5.4.1.3) dealt with practical skills; factor 4 (*cf.* 5.4.1.4) dealt with learner involvement. Figure 5.1 illustrated managing the design of CTA: learners' positive and negative responses to Section B.

Section 5.4.2 highlighted learner responses to Section C and reported on the following factors: factor 1 (*cf.* 5.4.2.1) dealt with resources under the construct implementation; factor 2 (*cf.* 5.4.2.2) dealt with administrative issues; factor 3 (*cf.* 5.4.2.3) discussed the marking of EMS CTA; factor 4 (*cf.* 5.4.2.4)

discussed access to the Internet; factor 5 (*cf.* 5.4.2.5) dealt with the authenticity of CTA. Figure 5.2 presented a visual presentation of learners' positive and negative responses in the implementation of the CTA.

Section 5.4.3 highlighted challenges related to the implementation of CTA according to learner responses. Table 5.24 indicated the ranking of challenges by learner participants in descending order; they ranged from time allocated for CTA; uncooperative group work; CTA pace too fast; unfinished tasks submitted; learner absenteeism; lack of resources to complete CTA; language difficulty; unclear instructions from the educator and tasks not applicable to real-life situations.

Section 5.5 covered **the qualitative data analysis of the learner responses**. Section 5.5.1 indicated activities that learners would like to be included in the CTA as being real-life activities (such as market day simulations); a variety of assessment tasks 9such as crossword puzzles on EMS terms); and assessment tasks that take the cognitive abilities of all learners into consideration (such as developing tasks that would support achievers to aim higher at completing the tasks). Table 5.25 illustrated the activities that learners suggested they would like to see being included in the CTA. Section 5.5.2 elicited the problematic issues in completing CTA assessment tasks as being language that is too difficult; unsuccessful group work; limited individual attention; unclear instructions; invalid authenticity; heavy workloads; learning programmes not covered in class; complicated time management; difficult content; and the tasks not at Grade 9 level. Table 5.26 illustrated these problematic issues in completing the CTA.

Section 5.5.3 highlighted the changes to the CTA suggested by learner participants as being that the language level must be at Grade 9 level; resources must be made accessible to learners; learners must know the CTA content; learners must be consulted during the design of CTA; and time spent on CTA must be re-visited. Table 5.27 presented the changes to the CTA which learners would like to be considered.

In 5.6 **the quantitative data analysis of the educator participants** were presented and 5.6.1 depicted the data analysis of the educator responses to

the design of the CTA. Figure 5.3 gave a visual presentation of educators' positive and negative responses about managing the design of CTA which were positive and negative concerning the complexity of the design and negative concerning assessment and teamwork / time constraints / learner involvement / educator involvement. Section 5.6.2 discussed the data analysis of educator responses to Section C under the construct implementation. Figure 5.4 depicted a visual presentation of educators' positive and negative responses about managing the implementation of the CTA which pointed to positive responses concerning time allocation for completion of portfolios and CTA, and authenticity. The educators responded negatively to learners being allowed to take the CTA home / having no access to the Internet after school hours / and having to manage overcrowded classrooms.

The data analysis of the resources used in the implementation of the EMS CTA was discussed in 5.6.3 and although most educator participants indicated that their schools had enough resources, the educators who reacted negatively offered valid reasons for their responses. For example, that some schools do not have computer laboratories. The training of educators for the implementation of EMS CTA was dealt with in 5.6.4, with most participants indicating a lack of training in this regard. Adhering to the national timetable was discussed in 5.6.5, with the majority of the educators indicating that the schools followed a national time-table. Section 5.6.6 dealt with the appropriateness of EMS CTA as assessment instrument, with the majority of the educator participants indicating that EMS CTA was not appropriated as assessment instrument. Table 5.33 presented a visual presentation of reasons advanced by educators why EMS CTA was not an appropriate instrument tool to assess learners. The figure pointed to, among others, the level of the questions and the lack of authenticity as reasons why CTA was not an appropriate tool to assess learners.

The data analysis of challenges faced by educators during implementation was highlighted in section 5.6.7. They ranked from the most to the least problematic and involved the following: too much administration; classroom overcrowding; unfinished tasks; Section A not being relevant to Section B; lack of resources; late arrival of the CTA from district offices; time allocated

not being enough; language being too difficult for learners; learner absenteeism and learners not doing their own work.

The qualitative data analysis of the educator responses was dealt with in section 5.7. Section 5.7.1 discussed the data analysis on the administration of internal practical assessment. Table 5.37 indicated educators' recommendations on the administration of internal practical assessment which pointed to teamwork being enhanced between educators, educators being involved in the design of assessment policies and educators being supported in their professional development. Section 5.7.2 discussed the educator data analysis on improving the quality of internal assessment tasks. Table 5.38 indicated the recommendations for improving the quality of internal assessment tasks which pointed to, among others, involving educators in drafting policies to determine how moderation should be carried out and designing assessment tasks in understandable language.

Section 5.7.3 discussed the educator data analysis on the administration of internal practical assessment and Table 5.39 summarised the educator responses: the responses pointed to a general lack of rooms fitted with practical facilities. Section 5.7.4 discussed the data analysis on challenges experienced during the administration of practical EMS assessments. Figure 5.13 indicated issues that could compromise the credibility of the CTA which included overcrowded classrooms and learner absenteeism. In section 5.7.5 the data analysis on educator recommendations concerning improving the administration of practical assessments was discussed. Table 5.41 indicated these recommendations and pointed to the availability of simulated practical rooms and the relevant training of educators as aspects that could improve the administration.

Section 5.7.6 discussed the data analysis on issues that compromise the credibility of CTA marks and Table 5.42 illustrated educators' perceptions of these issues: among others, overcrowding, monitoring of question papers and mark adjustment stood out in the responses. In section 5.7.7 the data analysis on educator recommendations for improving the quality of CTA was discussed. Table 5.5.43 presented educators' recommendations for improving the quality of CTA and these included paying attention to the professional

development of educators, consulting both educators and learners on the design of CTA and considering contextual factors such as the availability of the Internet. Finally, section 5.7.8 discussed the data analysis on educator recommendations for improving managing CTA and Table 5.44 indicated the recommendations that were identified. These recommendations included familiarizing educators with policy and delivering CTA on time.

Table 5.45 summarised the similarities and differences between the learner and educator perceptions for Sections B and C: the table was divided into positive responses and negative responses for both categories of participants. Table 5.45 illustrated the similarities which included that learners and educators held the perception that learners did not have access to the Internet available after school hours and that CTA did not cater for learners' cognitive abilities.

Section 5.8 dealt with a comparison of learner and educator responses on Section B and Section C. Section 5.8.1 focused on a comparison of individual questionnaire statements and indicated whether there was no statistical difference or whether there was a statistically significant difference between learner and educator responses. Moreover, the size of the effect was indicated where it was relevant. The responses revealed differences and similarities of negative and positive responses between learner and educator responses.

In section 5.8.2 the data analysis focused on a comparison of the mean differences that were obtained for learner and educator responses for Section B and C. Table 5.48 presented a summary of the section means and the summary indicated that learners and educators held more or less the same opinion concerning managing the design of EMS CTA. However, the summary revealed a statistically significant difference concerning learner and educator perceptions on managing the implementation of EMS CTA: the reason offered was that learners probably had no extra responsibilities other than studying and writing the CTA, while educators might have had much administrative work to take care of at the same time.

Table 5.45 indicated the aspects that emerged from learners and educators' perceptions on the design and implementation of EMS CTA. According to the responses, the learner participants were less concerned about the implementation of EMS CTA than the educator participants.

The empirical and literature findings were used to suggest a management intervention plan to improve the design and implementation of school-based assessment.

7.2.6 Chapter Six

In this chapter, the researcher suggested novel guidelines for a management intervention plan to improve the quality of the design and implementation of CTA. As the use of CTA was phased out during 2010 (Department: Basic Education, 2011:4), the guidelines were compiled in line with the New Curriculum Statement (CAPS), in order to extend the guidelines to current school-based assessment practices. Although the management intervention plan was based on data obtained for the implementation of CTA, the aims and principles of the CAPS were taken into consideration when the management intervention plan was designed.

In this chapter, section 6.1 outlined the introduction. School-based assessment principles according to CAPS and CTA were highlighted in 6.2. A theoretical participatory framework regarding school-based assessment was highlighted in 6.3. In 6.3.1 a rationale for the significance of a framework was discussed. In 6.3.2 conceptualizing a theoretical framework in education management was pointed out. Section 6.3.4 highlighted what the participatory leadership approach entails. In 6.4 guidelines for improving the management of the design of the school-based assessment were discussed.

Section 6.4.1 highlighted guidelines for reinforcing the seven strengths that were identified by learner and educator responses concerning managing the design of school-based assessment:

- The guidelines aimed at maintaining factual knowledge in school-based assessment (strength 1) comprised educators discussing criteria and developing assessment tasks; District Officials setting up meetings; SMTs

monitoring assessment; and parents/caregivers providing suggestions relevant to completing assessment tasks.

- The guidelines aimed at setting assessment criteria explicitly for school-based assessment (strength 2) comprised provincial assessors guiding the identification of criteria; District Officials identifying key criteria; SMTs supporting educators in stating criteria clearly to learners; educators stating criteria to the learners; parents/caregivers providing input on supporting learners; and learners being part of identifying criteria for assessments tasks.

- The guidelines aimed at applying skills in real-life situations (strength 3) comprised SGBs setting a resource budget; District Officials encouraging SMTs and educators to oversee learners' practical work; SMTs communicating with parents/caregivers, SGB and businesses on availability of resources; business partners providing resource support; and learners doing assessment tasks practically.

- The guidelines aimed at maintaining the strong link to align teaching and assessment in school-based assessment (strength 4) comprised provincial assessors guiding formal control of alignment of content; facilitators ensuring relevant resources are available; LTSM support staff acquiring proper resources; educators designing tasks beneficial to workplaces; and business partners identifying workforce needs.

- The guidelines aimed at ensuring that marking and moderation of school-based assessment are done effectively (strength 5) comprised provincial assessors identifying moderation criteria; District Officials developing a checklist for moderation purposes (*cf.* Table 6.2); and HODs using the checklist during moderation.

- The guidelines aimed at issuing time-tables to learners (strength 6) comprised SATs addressing learners and parents/caregivers on examination time-tables; SGBs overseeing the drawing up of time-tables; educators handing out the time-tables; learners signing for the time-table; and parents/caregivers being aware of the consequences of late-coming.

- The guidelines aimed at increasing the motivation of learners to learn (strength 7) comprised learners completing assessment tasks using latest

technology; educators engaging learners in worthwhile assessment tasks; and parents/caregivers encouraging learners to follow due dates.

Section 6.4.2 highlighted guidelines for combatting the 12 weaknesses that were identified by learner and educator responses concerning managing the design of school-based assessment:

- The two guidelines aimed at combatting a lack of educator and learner involvement (weakness 1) included following the five steps of committing, gathering data, developing an action plan, implementing the plan and monitoring/evaluating the process. The guidelines also comprised SMTs providing for the inclusion of all learners in assessment; District Officials identifying problems impeding learners' assessment participation; principals reporting to DoE and evaluating the inclusivity goals met; and educators committing to fair assessment and identifying special needs.

- The two guidelines aimed at combatting a lack of expanded opportunities (weakness 2) comprised District Officials convening meetings to discuss re-assessment possibilities; and EMS cluster educators considering possibilities for expanded assessment opportunities.

- The five guiding questions aimed at combatting a lack of educator and learner involvement (weakness 3) comprised district facilitators convening meetings with educators on assessment instructions; educators giving correct assessment instructions to learners; and learners asking for clarification of instructions from educators when necessary.

- The five guidelines aimed at combatting a lack of fairness learner absenteeism and uncooperative group work (weakness 4) comprised SMTs, district support teams, principals, educators, SGBs and parents/caregivers in: communicating learner needs, and ensuring the development of fair assessment tasks.

- The three guidelines aimed at combatting a lack of variety in assessment strategies, methods, techniques or contexts (weakness 5) comprised learners and educators in: using a variety of assessment strategies and tools and application to wider contexts.

- The two guidelines aimed at combatting language problems (weakness 6) comprised EMS District Officials, EMS HODs and EMS educators in: identifying pitfalls and revisiting language usage.

- The four guidelines aimed at combatting overcrowding (weakness 7) comprised educators, learners, HODs and SMTs in: smarter planning for assessment.

- The two guidelines aimed at combatting unfinished tasks and unclear guidelines (weakness 8) learners and educators in: involving peers and the utilization of a checklist.

- The two guidelines aimed at combatting a lack of teamwork among educators (weakness 9) comprised educators and EMS HODs in: group marking and moderation..

- The five guidelines aimed at combatting educators' lack of professional development (weakness 10) EMS HODs, EMS District Officials, Business partners, universities, EMS educators and provincial EMS officials in: assisting educators in dealing with core content and requirements for EMS assessment.

- The three guidelines aimed at combatting a lack of inclusivity of all learners in assessment (weakness 11) comprised principals, SGBs, provincial EMS officials and EMS District Officials in: assisting educators to set appropriate tasks to accommodate all learners.

Section 6.5 highlighted guidelines for improving the management of the implementation of school-based assessment.

For the school-based assessment to be effective all role-players namely, provincial EMS officials; EMS district officials; EMS HODs; EMS educators; SGBs; parents/caregivers; universities and business partners need to participate in order to ensure that assessment meets required standards and quality assurance is taken into consideration to improve the quality of school-based assessment.

7.3   FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE

The following prominent findings came to the fore after completion of the literature review of Chapter Two. These findings are necessary for school

managers, Heads of Departments, educators and policy makers who design school-based assessment and the findings informed the compilation of research questionnaires. The findings below were based on the literature review of Chapter Two: quality in management (*cf.* 2.3) and quality in assessment (*cf.* 2.4).

7.3.1 Findings from the literature overview related to quality management in the design of CTA

Quality management refers to multidimensional aspects (Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002:19): to quality excellence, which is regarded as setting the best goal to meet the required standards, and to quality as fitness purpose, which requires that the product or service meet the customer's needs, requirements or desires. In this thesis, the researcher looked at the CTA instrument to determine whether it fits the purpose of assessing learners (*cf.* 2.2). The literature support indicated that the HOD must check the assessment tools for content validity and mark allocation per activity during the implementation of CTA and establish whether the mark allocation per activity is appropriate for the activity given (Ramotlhale, 2008:40; *cf.* 2.2.3).

The HOD needs to ensure that learners are assessed fairly by the educator. The HOD must also monitor the implementation of both sections of CTA. Moderating assessments will ensure enhancement of the validity of CTA and CASS marks (*cf.* 2.2.3). Ramotlhale (2008:34; *cf.* 2.2.3) indicates that the school and the district office are accountable in effecting the assessment system, in other words: the input and output processes. District offices are responsible for ensuring that schools demarcated to them have adequate staff and provide support through dissemination of policies. In turn, schools should ensure that educators possess the necessary qualifications to deliver quality teaching and learning, as well as the moderation of EMS CTA tasks.

The literature finding based on quality in assessment indicated that CTA and school-based assessment have to conform to quality assurance, which means that educational experts need to collaborate to design assessment tools that identify the features of effective teaching and learning in the classroom. Conforming to quality assurance simply implies that quality specifications are

required to ensure quality assurance of assessments (*cf.* 2.2.3). Gawe and Heyns (2004:162), Govender (2005:37) and Ramotlhale (2008:23) clearly state that the following quality assurance mechanisms need to be followed, namely moderation, verification and quality control to make sure quality assurance on school-based assessment is adhered to.

When assessment tasks are compiled, they have to be in line with contract conformance, which implies that some quality standards have to be specified during the negotiation of a contract or agreement with district offices. For example, when assessors set tasks in CTA or school-based assessment, these assessors have to take note of how to outline the expectations regarding the content and the process of the CTA to learners, as well as how to notify the learners of the deadlines for completing tasks (*cf.* 2.2.3). Badasie (2005:18), Govender (2005:38) and Du Toit and Du Toit (2004:17) indicate that there must be competence development programmes on quality assurance in organizations, such as hands-on workshops prepared by education sectors to provide practitioners with an understanding of quality assurance and the ability to execute quality assurance in their organizations, as well as to offer enough resources which are vital for quality in education (*cf.* 2.2.3). Thus it is preferable that subject experts conduct the moderation, as they are experienced and competent (Sigh, 2004:15; *cf.* 2.2.3).

The CTA and school-based assessment have to be customer-driven. In the context of this research a customer is the learner and the assessment tasks must not only meet the expectations of the learners, but must also fit the purpose of assessing the learners' performance in school-based assessment (*cf.* 2.2.3). The literature review clearly states that the learners must have a say in defining the fitness purpose of CTA and thus of quality, and can, therefore, be described as *fitness for purpose*, where purpose is related to customer needs and where customers ultimately determine the level of satisfaction with the relevant product or service. This includes evaluating the extent to which the institution does what it says it is doing (Thomas, 2003:239; De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:290; *cf.* 2.2.3). Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002:132) define *fitness for purpose* as one of the possible set

standards for determining whether or not a unit meets quality, measured against what is seen to be the goal of the unit (*cf.* 2.2.3).

Quality fitness for purpose is about conformity to set standards according to the Learning Programme in Grade 9 and Assessment Standards and Learning Outcomes (*cf.* 2.2.3.1). The quality assurance management systems refer to the combination process used to ensure degree of excellence by specifying what should be attained. In this regard, Woodhouse (1999:32) clearly points out that fitness for purpose is a definition that allows institutions to define their mission and objectives, so *quality* is demonstrated by achieving these. According to Vlalsceanu *et al.* (2004:47), quality fitness for purpose is about conformity to sectoral standards (*cf.* 2.2.3). Thomas (2003:239), Vlalsceanu *et al.* (2004:47) and De Bruyn and Van der Westhuizen (2007:290; *cf.* 2.2.3) indicate that the *fitness purpose* definition allows variability in institutions, rather than forcing them to be clones of one another.

Assessment practices need to focus on continuous improvement as a form of quality auditing, in order to measure the quality of products or services that has already been made or delivered (Heyns, 2002:6; *cf.* 2.2.3.1). In the context of the CTA, the partners who are working at a school, namely principals, educators, HODs, SGBs and learners need to work together when there are organizational changes in the implementation of policies such as assessment policies (Smith, 2005; *cf.* 2.3.14).

To ensure that learners as customers are happy with the quality of the content of CTA and school-based assessment, there must be a focus on continuous improvement (*cf.* 2.2.2.3.1). Stark (2010:2) asserts that continuous improvement of all operations and activities is at the heart of TQM (*cf.* 2.2.3.1). Once it is recognized that customer satisfaction can only be obtained by providing a high quality product, continuous improvement of quality of the product is seen as the only way to maintain a high level of customer satisfaction.

A quality management focus on the continuous improvement of work processes may put the high regard for people and their achievements, which is associated with the TQM, into perspective. According to De Bruyn and Van

der Westhuizen (2007:311), people feel better about themselves as work processes are improved continuously (*cf.* 2.2.3.1). Relationships among people in the organization are more open and honest, and school managers often feel less isolated, misunderstood and burdened. With organizational changes come opportunities for personal and professional growth, along with pride and joy in their work.

Educators should be given proper training to administer CTA and school-based assessment to make them aware of the GDE expectations with regard to school-based assessment, effective content quality assurance and quality control systems to convince the users of the reliability of the CTA examination results (*cf.* 2.2.3.1). This finding is supported by Rebore (2001:180), the Assessment Reform Group (2002a:9), McMahon (2004:131) and Ramotlhale (2008:42) who assert that validity in assessment is identified according to content, construct, concurrent, criterion-related and consequential validity (*cf.* 2.3.1).

Findings related to the design of assessment

Based on the literature review, the finding on content validity of assessment would result from comparing the content assessed with the content of the curriculum it was intended to assess. In CTA, content validity refers to whether it measures what it is supposed to measure (*cf.* 2.2.4.). The literature reports on the fact that assessment should comply with assessment criteria (Moerkerke *et al.*, 1999:121; *cf.* 2.2.4.3; Reddy, 2004:34; *cf.* 2.2.4.2).

In the context of CTA and school-based assessment, construct validity involves seeking evidence that the assessment task actually provides a trustworthy measurement of the underlying content which the examiner was interested in (*cf.* 2.2.2.4.1; Gulikers *et al.*, 2004:74).

The assessment task must be designed to fit the learners' age, development and experience. To be fair, assessment must not be discriminatory against any learners in terms of their gender, race, culture, and religion, geographic and socio-economic circumstances. Fair assessment should provide all learners equal opportunities to achieve (*cf.* 2.2.4.9; Vandeyar & Killen,

2003:126). The assessment strategy must match the methods used in teaching and learning.

Furthermore, concurrent validity is derived from the correlation of the outcomes of one assessment procedure with another that is assumed to assess the same knowledge or skill (*cf.* 2.3.1; Le Grange & Beets, 2005:116-117). So concurrent validity is demonstrated where a test correlates well with a measure that has previously been validated. The two measures may be for different, but presumably related constructs (Brady & Kennedy, 2001:9; Killen, 2003:2; Le Grange & Beets, 2005:17; *cf.* 2.3.1).

Face validity is based on the expert judgement of what an assessment appears to assess: whether it assessed what it is supposed to assess (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; *cf.* 2.2.4.1). In terms of CTA, tests, surveys and memos must be sent to moderators to obtain suggestions for modifications (*cf.* 2.2.2.4.1; Yung *et al.*, 2008:11). The assessors of school-based assessment must ensure that the tasks developed in school-based assessments evaluate what they are supposed to measure.

Another aspect of measuring quality in the design of assessment tasks is reliability which includes the following:

- Clear criteria must be created and communicated.

- The assessment procedure should focus clearly on the outcomes to be tested so that valid inferences can be drawn about learning.

- All assessments should be reliable.

- An assessment must measure what it is intended to measure (*cf.* 2.2.2.4.2; 6.2; Table 6.1). Du Toit and Vandeyar (2004:133) and Vandeyar and Killen (2006:384) state that assessment should measure what it is intended to measure.

Authentic assessment involves interesting real-life or authentic tasks and context as well as multiple assessment opportunities to reach a profile score determining learners' learning and development (Muller, 1998; *cf.* 2.3.3).

Educators and learners might perceive authenticity differently. Assessors may try to develop authentic assessment but learners may perceive it

differently as not authentic (Duffy *et al.*, 1993:88; Pretaglia, 1998:17; Huang, 2002:29; Department of Basic Education, 2011:5; *cf.* 6.2). Furthermore, the Scottish Government (Scottish Qualification Authority, 2010:3) and SAQA (2001:12) indicate that moderating needs to be conducted once per term (*cf.* 6.5.2). Moderating takes place at national level. The General and Further Education and Training and the Quality Assurance Council (UMALUSI) moderate all the different components of assessment at Grade 9 level. UMALUSI attests to the standard appropriateness and applicability of both the Continuous Assessment and the CTA. Moderation mechanisms should be put in place at school, provincial and national level. The moderation of both CASS and CTA are done per Learning Area / Learning Programme by the Learning Area specialists.

The Provincial Departments of Education oversee that appropriate moderating procedures at school and district levels are in place to verify and moderate CTAs. A sample of at least 3% should be moderated at school district or cluster level and at least 2% at provincial level. Provinces should ensure that a representative sample is drawn at each level (Department of Education, 2007c:26).

Ramotlhale (2008:39) indicates that HODs at schools should be able to offer support to EMS educators, as well as advice and supervision in interpreting policies and explaining how quality in the moderation of CTA tasks should be carried out (*cf.* 2.2.3). The South African Qualification Authority (SAQA, 2001:12) and Ramotlhale (2008:15; *cf.* 2.2.3) point out moderation is not only linked with outputs which are outcomes of teaching and learning during assessment of learning, but is also supposed to be conducted continuously and not as the last part of the recurring nature of quality.

It is imperative for schools to have resources such as the EMS Learning Area Policy Grade R-9, educator assessment plans and the National Protocol on Recording and Reporting (NPRR), the National Curriculum Statement Assessment Guidelines for the General Education and Training Phase and learning programme, as well as the CAPS policy document. These documents are necessary since they contain Outcomes and Standards that need to be addressed at Grade 9 level (*cf.* 2.2.3). The Department of

Education (2007c:10) and Ramotlhale (2008:40) indicate that the NCS Assessment Guidelines for the EMS in the GET phase contain useful guidelines on how to develop learning programmes within a learning framework, using the work-schedule and lesson plans for EMS (*cf.* 2.2.3)*.*

Educators should be familiar with the meaning, definitions and language of assessment. The Gauteng Department of Education (2002a) and Gauteng Institute on Education and Development (2004:25-26) indicate that significant improvement in assessment conducted needs to take place in order to make assessment practices acceptable and compatible to provincial frameworks (*cf.* 2.3).

Staff development is a prerequisite since it will help educators to implement the CTA and school-based assessment by following correct guidelines and by adhering to quality-related issues, such as moderation, double marking, and verification of learner attainment to ensure that the CTA tasks are marked correctly and learners get marks they deserve *(cf.* 2.2.3). Managing these guidelines and quality-related issues help to ascertain that the output authenticity, reliability and validity are adhered to, improving learner performance. Ramotlhale (2008:40) indicates that the Department of Education should regard staff development as a priority. If the training programmes are offered by the department, they can bridge the gap that exists between pre-service and in-service educator training. Educators will automatically be able to use assessment methodologies and moderation tools properly, which will contribute to improved learner achievement.

Having discussed the literature findings on the quality management of the design of CTA, the researcher now discusses the findings that became clear from the literature review in Chapter Three.

7.3.2 Findings from the literature overview related to managing the quality of the implementation of CTA

Finding from managing the quality of the implementation of assessment indicated that assessment and evaluation both describe a process of collecting and interpreting evidence for some purpose. Differences, as outlined by Harlen (2006b:12), refer to *evaluation* as individual learner

achievement and to *assessment* as collecting information relating to outcomes, such as evidence of learners' achievements and making judgments relating to learners' outcomes. While the process of assessment and evaluation are similar, the kinds of evidence, the purpose and basis on which judgments are made, differ.

Harlen (2006b:12) points out that evaluation is more often used to denote the process of collecting evidence and making judgments. Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002:31) describe evaluation as a general term indicating signs of any process leading to judgments or recommendations regarding the quality of assessment. Moreover, Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002:31) clearly state that evaluation could be an internal process of self-evaluation or it could be externally done by external bodies, peers or inspectors (*cf*. 3.2).

Another literature finding was that the learners were nervous about the formality of the testing of the CTA. The learners were used to writing one section, Section B; the learners were not familiar with Section A. *(cf.* 3.3.2). Poliah (2006:14) indicates that learners need to write one section only, namely Section B, which if it is formally supervised, will then be aligned to CAPS because only a formal supervised exam is written. The educators questioned the credibility of CTA: these educators were not so sure whether CTA accurately measured the learners' abilities based on the CASS and learning programme covered during the year (Fidler *et al.*, 1997:108; *cf.* 3.3.2). Assessment tasks should cater for a variety of learners with difficult backgrounds and aptitudes. Assessment tasks should provide opportunity and inner motivation to low-achieving learners while continuing to challenge the high achievers (Fidler *et al.*, 1997:109; *cf.* 3.3.2). The main aim of CTA was to cater for the full variety of learners with difficult backgrounds and aptitudes, providing opportunity and inner motivation to low-achieving learners while continuing to challenge the high achievers (*cf.* 2.2.4.8; 3.2; 3.3.2; 6.2; Fidler *et al*. 1997:109). According to the literature (SAQA, 2001:13), account should be taken of issues pertaining to the inequality of opportunities, resources and appropriate teaching and learning approaches in terms of acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills, need to be addressed. Here, issues of not being biased in respect of ethnicity, gender, age, social

class and race in the assessment approaches, instruments and materials are important when conducting assessments.

Literature highlights positive perceptions and negative perceptions from the educators regarding the implementation of CTA. Educators raised concerns related to challenges they face while implementing CTA. Fidler *et al.* (1997:108; *cf.* 3.3.2) report challenges related to large classes which created supervisory problems and managing large classes that led to unmanageable administration work. Record keeping and paper work took up a great deal of educators' time. Many of the challenges are due to a number of factors, such as educator shortages and large classes.

A lack of basic facilities such as photocopying machines, computers and libraries also pose a serious problem for educators to carry on with the smooth implementation of the CTA (*cf.* 3.2; Ramotlhale, 2008:39).

Du Toit and Vandeyar (2004:140) point out the different purposes of assessment that need to be considered when dealing with school-based assessment (*cf.* 3.4). These include baseline, diagnostic, formative, summative and systemic purposes. Gardner *et al.* (2008:110) explain baseline assessment as a method used by educators to determine learners' needs at the beginning of the year. Diagnostic assessment needs to be administered to determine the assessment areas of the content where learners need support, formative assessment to be taken to assess learners continuously and summative assessment to be conducted at the end of the year to evaluate the learning programme covered during the year.

Learners must be given assessment criteria as evidence of what needs to be assessed beforehand, namely what is being assessed, why it is being assessed, and how it will be assessed (*cf.* 6.2). In short, assessment must comply with the principle of transparency (Department of Basic Education, 2011:5-6; 23-26).

Having briefly discussed the literature review on managing the quality of the implementation of CTA, the empirical findings which are related to the research aim and objectives are now elucidated. The main research question for this thesis as noted in the introduction (*cf.*1.3.1) was to what extent the

management of the design and implementation of CTA met with criteria of quality.

7.4 FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

In the following section findings related to the management of the design of CTA are reported.

7.4.1 Major findings from the empirical investigation on managing the design of CTA

The researcher identified seven strengths that deserved reinforcing in order to sustain quality in managing the design of school-based assessment. These strengths included the following:

- 1: Factual knowledge (*cf.* 5.4.1.1; Figure 5.1).
- 2: Criteria for assessment made explicit (*cf.* 5.4.1.1; Figure 5.1)
- 3: Application of skills in real-life situations (*cf.* 5.4.1.3; Figure 5.1)
- 4: Content of CTA in line with EMS CTA (*cf.* 5.4.1.1; Figure 5.1)
- 5: Effective marking and moderation procedures (*cf.* 5.4.2.1; Figure 5.2)
- 6: Time-tables were given to learners (*cf.* 5.4.2.2; Figure 5.2)
- 7: Increased motivation to learn (*cf.* 5.4.2.1; Figure 5.2)

The next section highlights the weaknesses that were identified in managing the design of school-based assessment.

The researcher identified weaknesses that deserved to be managed in order to sustain quality in managing the design of school-based assessment:

- Lack of learner and educator involvement (*cf.* 5.4.1.4; Figure 5.1; 5.6.1; Figure 5.3)
- Lack of teamwork among educators (*cf.* 5.6.1; Figure 5.3)
- CTA not catering for different cognitive abilities of learners (*cf.* 5.6.1; Figure 5.1; 5.6.1; Figure 5.3)
- CTA not using a variety of assessment strategies; methods, techniques or contexts (*cf.* 5.6.1; Figure 5.3)

The next section focuses on the major findings from the empirical investigation on managing the implementation of CTA.

7.4.2 Major findings from the empirical investigation on managing the implementation of CTA

The following strengths were noted for managing the implementation of CTA:

- GDE familiarized educators during the implementation of school-based assessment and the GDE communicated with SMT's timeously (*cf.* 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

- Sufficient time was allocated to complete tasks that was discussed as strength 3 (*cf.* 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

- Educators were involved in the implementation of the school-based assessment (*cf.* 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

- Educators were familiarised with the content of the implementation of the CTA (*cf.* 5.6.2; Figure 5.4).

The following weaknesses in the implementation of CTA were derived from the data:

- Learners were allowed to take CTA home (*cf.* 5.4.2.2; Figure 5.2; 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

- Educators did not manage the quality of the implementation of CTA (*cf.* 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

- Learners did not have access to the Internet and/or library facilities after school hours (*cf.* 5.4.2.; Figure 5.2; 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

From the empirical research, additional findings that were not directly related to the literature review were also derived. The findings were derived from Figure 5.3 (ranking challenges in descending order) and from Table 5.28 (factor five implementation: authenticity of the CTA).

The additional findings are listed in the section below.

7.4.3 Additional findings from the empirical research

- Data in question C38.6, revealed that 178 (49.9%) of the learners responded that they did not get **individual attention** from their educators.

- In response to question C38.3, 168 (47.1%) of the learners indicated learner absenteeism as problematic during the implementation of CTA. Perhaps schools that are faced with this absenteeism challenge must enforce a strict policy which will reduce learner absenteeism during examinations. A sound example is treating this exam as a matric examination.

- The majority of the educator participants disagreed in question B10.2 (42; 60 %) that **CTA covered all the themes** in EMS. This response might imply that some of the themes were not covered in the CTA, which brings into question the content validity of CTA (*cf.* 2.3.1).

- The majority of the educator participants in question B14 (37, 52.8%) did not agree that the EMS CTA encourages teamwork among educators. This response might imply that CTA does not promote teamwork because the educators might have a heavy workload and do not want other people to interfere in their work.

- According to the data represented Table 5.28, there were 37 (52.8%) educator participants in question B15.5 who disagreed that the EMS CTA **gathers reliable information about learners' performance using the correct CTA context.** This response implies that the participants were possibly not satisfied with the context of the CTA. The EMS CTA might not have met the requirements they were expecting.

- In response to question B17.3, 43 (61.4%) of the educator participants agreed that they **adjusted the marks of learners**. This response could imply that there was an irregularity, and that learners possibly got marks they did not deserve.

- In response to question C32.2, the educator participants were divided 50/50 about the matter whether the **libraries were available after school hours**. 35 (50%) agreed and 35 (50%) disagreed with this statement. This

response implies that at some schools there were library facilities after schools hours, while at other schools there was no access to the library after school hours.

- The majority of the educator participants in question C42.2 (68.6%, 48) were affected by **the late arrival of CTAs from the district office**. This might imply that the time-plan issued by the district office was not followed. The activities were obviously carried out late, which affected the common table of administration of the CTA as well. So the district office needs to find a better way of managing the distribution of the CTA so that no changes occur which were not planned for.

- The majority of the educator participants (64.3%, 45) for question C42.10 were concerned about the time allocated **not being enough to administer the CTA**. It implies that there might be a need for the designers of CTA to revisit the time allocation of tasks in EMS CTA.

- In response to question C42.3, 39 (7%) of the educator participants indicated that they had **problems with absenteeism** during the administering of the CTA which might have had an impact on the group work because each learner in a group is given a role or a section to work on. If he/she is absent, the group is left with the section not allocated to them. This causes a backlog in educators' work because they are working on a time-line. Being given a section of the work might even find learners playing truant from classes intentionally, because they want to avoid group work. The best way to deal with the matter is to make the learners aware of the impact of absenteeism on their end achievement. They need to be made aware of the fact that they might fail the CTA and if their CASS mark is also low, they might fail EMS.

- A small number of the educator participants (47.1%, 33) indicated in response to C42.8 that learners **did not do their own work.** This implies that some learners got help from peers or from home. Such a response raises doubt about the authenticity of CTA. It brings into question the credibility of CTA as an assessment instrument.

- The majority of the educator participants rated question D44 with a 5 or 6 on the semantic scale (25, 40.4 %; *cf.* Table 5.36); indicating that they were unsure **whether the policy makes provision for administration of internal practical assessments**. This might imply that the participants need to read and familiarize themselves with these policies because they are important in order to know how practical assessments should be conducted.

- In question D45, the majority of the educator participants rated this question 5, 6 or 7 on the semantic scale (*cf.* Table 5.36), and 44.8% indicated that they **were unfamiliar whether the policy makes provision for the administration of internal practical assessments**. This might imply that the participants need to read and familiarize themselves with these policies because they need to know how practical assessments should be conducted.

- In question D47, the majority of the educator responses (20; 29.9%; *cf.* Table 5.36) rated this question 4 on the semantic scale which indicated that the participants were undecided about the matter. This implies that the educators **were unsure whether the policy does cover** the monitoring of practical assessment, so they are really undecided about how monitoring should be conducted.

- Referring to Table 5.36, the responses indicated the pressures that participating educators are faced with. **The issue of practical assessment to be done in spite of the lack of facilities at school should be revisited** to find a way as to how best this could be managed. Moreover, it should be possible to avoid putting educators under enormous pressure because they do not know where to conduct the assessment if there is no practical room and appropriate tools for assessing learners. The responses revealed by this qualitative data on relevancy, budget, reduction of educator-learner ratio as per educators Act (minimum one to 30 or 35 in a classroom), overcrowding and simulated practical rooms form a new contribution made by this study.

- A comparison of the learner and educator means obtained for Section B revealed no statistical significant difference regarding the management of the design of EMS CTA, $p > 0.05 = 0.794$ between the two groups. They held more or less similar opinions about the management of the design. The difference that was noted was thus due to chance.

- A comparison of the learner and educator means obtained for Section C, revealed a statistically significant difference regarding the perceptions about the management of the implementation of EMS CTA, $p < 0.05 = 0.000$, with a small effect in practice, $d = 0.119$. The difference in mean noted for learners (2.399) and educators (2.479) indicated that the learners responded more favourably than educators to all the items in this section related to the implementation of the EMS CTA. It might imply that the learners were more convinced about the quality of the implementation than the educators. A possible reason might be that the learners had to study and write the CTA and had no extra responsibilities in terms of administration as compared to the educators. The educators had a lot of administrative work to do, for example, the handling of large overcrowded classes, which could have influenced their perceptions negatively.

The next section below discusses findings regarding the aim and objectives of the study.

7.5 FINDINGS REGARDING THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall aim was to establish to what extent the management of the design and implementation of CTA satisfies criteria of quality.

7.5.1 Objective 1: To indicate what quality in the designing and implementation of CTA entails

This objective was achieved through the literature review (*cf.* 2.2). It was necessary to achieve this objective prior to any of the other objectives, as the achievement of this objective determined the focus of the study and provided the framework for the compilation of the questionnaire. The objective was further achieved by analysing the data from the educator and learner

responses in Section C, to establish what quality in the design and implementation presently entail in the implementation of assessment.

In this study, quality comprised adhering to criteria for reliability and validity; as well as (1) whether CTA met the criteria indicated by the literature of *fitness for purpose*; (2) whether learners were given criteria beforehand when the CTA was conducted (transparency in assessment; *cf.* 2.2.3); (3) authentic assessment practices; (4) fairness; (5) flexibility; (6) expanded opportunity; (7) continuous assessment; (8) equity; (9) transferability; (10) complexity; (11) content quality; (12) meaningfulness; and (13) cost efficiency (*cf.* 2.3.3-2.3.15).

Criteria for validity referred to face, content, construct, concurrent and criterion validity (*cf.* 2.3.1).

7.5.2 Objective 2: To determine how quality in the designing and implementation of the CTA was managed at the time

This objective was achieved through the empirical research (*cf.* 5.6.2).

The empirical research (*cf.* 5.6.2) educator responses revealed that the quality of learning programmes was moderated at district level by the EMS facilitator prior to classroom implementation as the facilitator highlighted that what a district did was to request each school to submit exemplars of their learning programmes to the specific district.

The data showed that consensus moderation was used during the provincial moderation of CASS, as observation data gave evidence that educators exchanged portfolios among themselves to conduct moderation. This situation outlines two advantages of consensus moderation: firstly, it helps educators to meet in groups and compare their school assessments to either adjust or confirm initial assessment. Secondly, consensus moderation also strengthens the validity and reliability of the final scores, contributes to the literacy of markers and provides staff development in both instruction and assessment.

The study found that an internal moderation procedure was done by HODs at schools only when the portfolios were requested together with the CTA marks. This situation implies that the moderation was a once off thing. The data supported that the moderation occurred once off (*cf.* 5.6.2).

The matter highlights the question of inadequacy in the moderation process. The moderation looked at technical aspects, such as the number of tasks or forms of assessment covered. Circular 60/2007 stipulated that the responsibilities of the SMTs in monitoring and verifying the quality of assessment tasks, ensuring the prescribed tasks, were completed. The memorandum on provincial moderation of School-based and Continuous Assessment (SBA/CASS) and CTA for Grade 9 states that school and cluster moderation must be conducted per learning area by the Learning Area specialist every term (Department of Education, 2007c).

Data linked to criteria for quality: Objective 2

Examples of how the data supported quality in assessment are provided below.

1. Fitness for purpose (*cf.* 2.2.3)

The majority of the educators noted that the CTA was not an appropriate assessment instrument (*cf.* 5.6.6) due to, among others, language difficulties; it did not clearly reflect only the learners' capabilities; and did not cover all learning outcomes.

2. Transparency (*cf.* 2.3.7)

All role players were not consulted in the design of CTA (*cf.* 5.4.1.4), thus threatening transparency. However, assessment criteria were seemingly made explicit to learners (*cf.* 5.6.1).

3. Authenticity (*cf.* 2.3.3)

The physical context of authentic assessment was compromised (*cf.* 5.4.2.4; 5.6.2), influencing the reliability of CTA. Reliability was guaranteed by educators' performing double marking (*cf.* 5.6.1).

4. Fairness (*cf.* 2.3.9)

Learners' backgrounds were apparently not considered in the setting of assessment tasks, threatening fairness as a component of quality assessment. Assessment also did not cater for disabilities (*cf.* 5.6.1).

5. Flexibility (*cf.* 2.3.4)

Various assessment tasks were apparently not used in the implementation of CTA (*cf.* 5.6.1), thus compromising flexibility as an important characteristic of quality assessment.

6. Expanded opportunity (*cf.* 2.3.5)

Many of the responses confirmed multiple assessment opportunities (*cf.* 5.6.1).

7. Continuous assessment (*cf.* 2.3.6)

The majority of the educators indicated continuous assessment as being in place (*cf.* 5.6.1).

8. Equity (*cf.* 2.3.8)

Apparently not all learning barriers were catered for during assessment (*cf.* 5.6.1).

9. Transferability (*cf.* 2.4.10)

The data provided evidence of the application of subject knowledge and skills to demonstrate the achievement of outcomes (*cf.* 5.6.1).

10. Complexity (*cf.* 2.3.11)

CTA did not cater for different cognitive abilities, thus threatening cognitive complexity as a component of quality assessment.

11. Content quality (*cf.* 2.3.12)

The majority of the educator responses confirmed a strong focus on content in the CTA (*cf.* 5.6.1), advancing content quality as a characteristic of quality assessment.

12. Meaningfulness (*cf.* 2.3.13)

CTA apparently involved real-life challenges (*cf.* 5.6.1) and the application of relevant skills (*cf.* 5.6.1), advancing meaningfulness as a component of quality.

13. Cost efficiency (*cf.* 2.3.14)

The CTA took up a lot of time (*cf.* 5.5.3) and involved a lot of administration (*cf.* 5.6.7).

14. Assessment of and assessment for learning (*cf.* 2.3.15)

Evidence of both summative and formative assessment opportunities were noted among the responses (*cf.* 5.6.1).

15. Validity (*cf.* 2.3.1)

Content validity

All learning outcomes were apparently not covered during CTA assessment (*cf.* 5.7.8), threatening the content validity of CTA.

Construct validity

Educators did not work as teams to reflect whether tasks appropriately focused on the competencies that need to be addressed (*cf.* 5.7).

Criterion validity

Criterion validity was not considered in the study.

Face validity

The data reported that Section A and Section B of the CTA were not relevant to each other (*cf.* 5.6.7), which poses a threat to the face validity of the CTA.

Concurrent validity

Concurrent validity was not adhered to, as CTA test scores seemingly were not correlated with the scores on other similar test instruments.

- In summary, it appears that the following characteristics or components of quality were supported in the implementation of CTA:

  transparency, expanded opportunity, content quality, meaningfulness, content validity, transferability, reliability, assessment of and assessment for learning

- The following components/characteristics of quality were seemingly not supported in the implementation of CTA:

  Authenticity, fairness, flexibility, equity, complexity, construct validity, concurrent validity, fitness for purpose, face validity, transparency and cost efficiency

With reference to Objective 2, the strengths and weaknesses reflected on the following:

Strengths regarding the design of CTA

- 1: Factual knowledge (*cf.* 5.4.1.1; Figure 5.1).

- 2: Criteria for assessment made explicit (*cf.* 5.4.1.1; Figure 5.1)

- 3: Application of skills in real-life situations (*cf.* 5.4.1.3; Figure 5.1)

- 4: Content of CTA in line with EMS CTA (*cf.* 5.4.1.1; Figure 5.1)

- 5: Effective marking and moderation procedures (*cf.* 5.4.2.1; Figure 5.2)

- 6: Time-tables were given to learners (*cf.* 5.4.2.2; Figure 5.2)

- 7: Increased motivation to learn (*cf.* 5.4.2.1; Figure 5.2)

Weaknesses regarding the design of CTA

- Lack of learner and educator involvement (*cf.* 5.4.1.4; Figure 5.1; 5.6.1; Figure 5.3)

- Lack of teamwork among educators (*cf.* 5.6.1; Figure 5.3)

- CTA not catering for different cognitive abilities of learners (*cf.* 5.6.1; Figure 5.1; 5.6.1; Figure 5.3)

- CTA not using a variety of assessment strategies; methods, techniques or contexts (*cf.* 5.6.1; Figure 5.3)

Strengths regarding the implementation of CTA

- GDE familiarized educators during the implementation of school-based assessment and the GDE communicated with SMT's timeously (*cf.* 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

- Sufficient time was allocated to complete tasks that was discussed as strength 3 (*cf.* 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

- Educators were involved in the implementation of the school-based assessment (*cf.* 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

- Educators were familiarised with the content of the implementation of the CTA (*cf.* 5.6.2; Figure 5.4).

Weaknesses regarding the implementation of CTA

- Learners were allowed to take CTA home (*cf*. 5.4.2.2; Figure 5.2; 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

- Educators did not manage the quality of the implementation of CTA (*cf.* 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

- Learners did not have access to the Internet and/or library facilities after school hours (*cf*. 5.4.2.; Figure 5.2; 5.6.2; Figure 5.4)

7.5.3 Objective 3: To establish the authenticity, reliability and validity of CTA

Objective 3 was achieved through the literature review (*cf*. 2.2.4) and the empirical research (*cf*. 5.6.2). To establish the authenticity, reliability and validity of CTA (*cf*. 2.2.4.3), the literature revealed that a reliable test makes it possible for one to make reliable comparisons. The literature indicates that reliable assessment is authentic in nature and characterized by the following (Vandeyar & Killen, 2003:121; Falchikov, 2005:71): learners take responsibility for their own learning; the learners reflect and collaborate; and learners conduct a continuous dialogue with the educator (*cf*. 2.2.4.3).

Comparisons may be made between the performance of learners (norm-referenced) and the attainment of outcomes (criterion-referenced). Reliability seems to be difficult to attain, as there will always be variables (Reddy, 2004:38; *cf*. 2.3.2). Validity refers to the integrated evaluative judgment of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores or to the modes of assessments (Killen, 2003:1; Reddy, 2004:35; Ebbutt, 2006:4; *cf*. 2.3.1). Airansian (2001:423) and Vandeyar and Killen (2006:384) express validity as the degree to which assessment information permits correct interpretations of the desired kind. The literature clearly states that there is considerable evidence that many current assessment practices are still guided by vague conceptions of validity that are based on measurement theories (Stiggins, 2002:758; *cf*. 2.3.1).

Validity, however, is not a simple concept and various forms of it are identified according to the basis of the judgment of validity. Validity comprises six criteria, namely (1) content, (2) construct, (3) concurrent, (4) face, (5) criterion-related, and (6) consequential validity (Reckase, 2008:13-15; Killen, 2003:3-5; Reddy, 2004:35; Le Grange & Beets, 2005:117; Yung *et al.*, 2008:11; Cohen *et al.*, 2007:109; *cf.* 2.3.1).

It was found from the data that the learners indicated that the educators did help them to answer some of the question of the CTA. This observation leads to doubt about the reliability and authenticity of the instrument since learners are not given a chance to find answers by themselves or given a chance to be critical thinkers (*cf.* 5.7).

The data obtained from the educator participants disagreed about whether the criteria and assessment standards were reflected correctly, indicating that the assessment guidelines were not followed by the designers of the CTA (*cf.* 5.7). The data that was deduced from the educator responses contradicted the literature. The EMS NCS and CAPS Policy are useful to educators as they contain all the Outcomes and Standards that must be addressed at Grade 9-level. The NCS and CAPS Assessment Guidelines for EMS in the GET phase contain useful guidelines on how to develop learning programmes within a learning framework, using the work-schedule and lesson plans for EMS (Department of Education, 2007b:10).

Educators disagreed that CTA covered all learning outcomes in EMS, which reveals a threat to content validity and which might cause learners to doubt EMS CTA because they might be knowledgeable about which EMS content should be covered (*cf.* 5.7.8; Table 5.45). The data contradicted literature findings of Ramotlhale (2008:40; *cf.* 2.2.3) which clearly state that it is the duty of the Learning Area district facilitator for EMS to ensure that the quality of the learning programmes developed by educators is controlled through the process of moderation to validate its contents. The facilitator must ensure that the content of the learning programmes and assessment plans are relevant, and that they address the relevant Outcomes and Standards.

The assessment principles in CTA indicates that assessment should involve the learning needed for the achievement of Learning Outcomes which are taking place when learners are assessed and whether any obstacles are being experienced (*cf.* 2.2.4.3).

Learners and educators had a different opinion on the time allocated for completion of CTA: educators indicated that time was not sufficiently allocated for school-based assessment; yet the learners indicated that the time was sufficient to complete the assessment tasks. The researcher's empirical investigation revealed that the learners' backgrounds of social-economic status were not considered, so learners from disadvantaged backgrounds could find themselves left out, not supported, because they might not have access to the extra resources needed to complete the CTA (*cf.* 5.7). It appears that assessment did not adhere to criteria for fairness (*cf.* 2.3.9) and equity (*cf.* 2.3.8).

There was no teamwork among educators. The educators also indicated that the CTA did not promote teamwork among educators, because educators have too many administrative duties. Educators therefore focused on what they cared doing as individuals and as not as teams (*cf.* 5.7), which could compromise the setting of assessment tasks that adhere to construct validity (*cf.* 2.3.1).

An empirical finding revealed that the educators indicated that CTA is not a valid and reliable tool to gather a team's performance according to clearly deferred criteria (*cf.* 5.6.1; Table 5.28). These educators also indicated that the various assessment tools were not used in the implementation (*cf.* 5. 6.1; Table 5.28), while the literature clearly states that various assessment tools should be used (NCS Orientation Programme Grades 8 & 9; 2.2.4.6; 3.4.2). The literature indicates that assessment can be undertaken using different assessment strategies. Educators can select these, depending on the purpose of assessment. These strategies will also depend on a specific learning area and learning activity. It is of the utmost importance that the strategies used should be appropriate for the target or learning outcomes being assessed (Gauteng Institute on Education and Development, 2004:237; *cf.* 3.3.4). Various assessment techniques were also not used (*cf.* 5.6.1; Table

5.28), which raises concerns about reliability in that a wide range of evidence can then not be generated about the competence/performance of a candidate (Reddy, 2004:34; *cf.* 2.3.2).

The learners were not consulted about the design of the CTA (*cf.* 5.4.1.4). This learner perception contradicted the literature which clearly indicates that the designing of assessment should involve the consideration all role players, take into consideration economic conditions, equity and social issues, and call for accountability (SAQA, 2001:13; Vandeyar & Killen, 2003:12; Scherman *et al.*, 2006:178; *cf.* 2.2.4.9). The key role-players include learners, educators, parents/caregivers, principals, the education system, affiliated interest groups, the school community and the government. Learners are a focal point as assessment needs to include learner performance, and as such, learners need to have input into assessment on as many levels as possible. Educators have a vested interest in assessment, as data gained from assessment may determine the effectiveness of teaching strategies and programmes. All role players need to be involved to provide transparency during assessment.

Assessment data may also be used to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, aiming at improved learning (Marais *et al.*, 2008:152; Woolfolk Hoy 2006:375; *cf.* 2.2.3). Most parents/caregivers are interested in their child's achievement in particular subject areas. Assessment results are reported to parents/caregivers to provide information about their children's performance (*cf.* 6.2.4.1).

The data obtained for learners and educators revealed that learners did not have access to the Internet after school hours (*cf.* 5.4.2.4; 5.6.2), compromising the physical context of authentic assessment (*cf.* 3.5.3) and influencing the reliability of the assessment (*cf.* 2.3.3). The finding was not supported by the literature, because the literature indicates that provincial Departments of Education have to ensure that schools can plan for conducting CTAs by developing the necessary management plans and ensuring that appropriate resources are available (Department of Education, 2007c:25-26).

Both learner and educator data revealed that the learners did not have access to a school library after school hours (*cf.* 5.4.2.4; 5.6.2), compromising once more the physical context of authentic assessment (*cf.* 3.5.3), and threatening the fairness of the assessment. This finding was contradicted by the literature review where Ramotlhale (2008:36; *cf.* 2.2.3) indicates that input such as resources should be available to the system, for example buildings, books and the number of qualified educators.

From the data obtained, it became clear that learners and educators were in accord with learners' socio-economic status that was not considered when designing CTA (*cf.* 5.4.1.1; 5.6.1), thus threatening fairness and equity as characteristics of quality assessment. With reference to the finding about socio-economic status of the learners that was not considered by CTA designers the practice is regarded unfair (*cf.* 2.3.9). This statement contradicts information found in the literature that indicates that the learners' needs must be identified and be given support (Department of Education, 2007c:1; *cf.* 3.4). The result indicated that there is room for improvement to increase resources to help the learners who experience socio-economic problems.

CTA did not cater for different cognitive abilities of learners (*cf.* 5.7). It appears that cognitive complexity as a feature of quality assessment was not adhered to. The literature clearly states that the different cognitive abilities have to be catered for (*cf.* 3.3.1; 3.4). The data contradicts the literature by Fidler *et al.* (1997:109; *cf.* 3.3.2) who highlight that CTA should cater for a variety of learners and learners with difficult aptitudes, providing opportunity and inner motivation to low-achieving learners while continuing to challenge the high achievers.

According to both the educator participants, EMS CTA did not cater for learners with learning disabilities (*cf.* 5.6.1). This finding is not supported by the literature, because the literature (Joan *et al.*, 1991:1; Scherman *et al.*, 2006:174; *cf.* 2.3.9) reveals fairness as taking into account and addressing issues pertaining to the inequality of opportunities, learning disabilities, resources and appropriate teaching and learning approaches in terms of acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills.

7.5.4 Objective 4: To establish to what extent there was a difference between learner and educator perceptions regarding the management of the quality in the design and implementation of CTA

This objective was achieved by analysing the data obtained from the educator and learner responses to the questionnaire items in Section B and Section C that focused on quality management in the design and implementation of CTA and school-based assessment (*cf.* 5.7; 5.8).

However, the educators advanced the following perceptions concerning the design of CTA: assessment standards were not correctly reflected in the CTA; Section A was not relevant to Section B; not all EMS learning themes were covered; the time allocated for Section A was not enough; the time allocated for Section B was not enough; CTA does not encourage teamwork among educators; CTA does not gather reliable information about learners' performance against clearly defined criteria; CTA does not gather reliable information about learners' performance using a variety of assessment methods/tools/techniques/context; CTA does not measure application and does not measure understanding (*cf.* 5.7).

A comparison of the learner and educator means obtained for Section B (design) revealed a non-statistical significant difference, $p > 0.05 = 0.794$ with a medium effect in practice, $d = 558$. The difference noted was thus mainly due to chance.

Learners' perceptions regarding the quality of the implementation of CTA elicited the following perceptions which differed from those of the educators: learners were allowed to take the CTA home; peer assessment did not happen; self-assessment did not happen; and educators helped learners to complete answers in Section A of the CTA (*cf.* 5.7).

A comparison of the learner and educator means obtained for Section C (implementation), revealed a statistical significant difference, $p > 0.05 = 0.000$ with small effect in practice, $d = 0.119$. The difference in mean noted for learners (2.399) and educators (2.479) indicate that the learners responded more favourably than educators to all the items in this section related to the

implementation of CTA. The data might imply that the learners are more content with the implementation than the educators. The reason for this might be that educators have a lot of administration re tasks linked to the implementation of CTA which could have impacted negatively on their perceptions, for example when handling large overcrowded classes.

The following were the top five challenges reported by the learners during the implementation of CTA (*cf.* Table 5.24):

- **Time allocated was not enough**. Learners possibly did not manage their time planning well and did not check the time allocated for the activities (*cf.* 5.4.3)

- **Uncooperative group work of learners**. Learners were sometimes not loyal to their group members when given a task or parts to complete, and they did not co-operate which killed the group morale to work towards the completion of tasks. (*cf.* 5.4.3).

- **CTA pace too fast + No time for individual attention**. An equal number of learner participants pointed out these aspects as challenges during the implementation of CTA. Most of the learners complained that the pace for completion of the CTA was too fast for them because educators gave them work repeatedly and EMS was not the only learning area where CTA was involved. (*cf.* 5.4.3). Moreover, in some township schools individual attention to learners was not possible due to overcrowding (*cf.* 5.4.3).

- **Unfinished tasks submitted.** Half of the learner participants did not hand in completed tasks, which pointed to the forfeiting of marks. The latter could affect learners' promotion to Grade 10 (*cf.* 5.4.3).

- **Absenteeism**. Some of the learners were not attending classes regular during the implementation of the CTA, this led to learners having backlog of work and delaying group progress where there was group work done (*cf.* 5.4.3).

The following were the top five challenges reported by the educators during the implementation of CTA (*cf.* Table 5.35):

- **Too much administration**. The amount of paperwork impacted negatively on the educators: educators had to take care of CASS with its compiling of portfolios and manage CTA at the same time (*cf.* 5.6.7).

- **Classroom overcrowding**. Educators from ex-Model C and township schools were affected by oversized classes, obviously minimizing opportunities to pay individual attention to learners (*cf.* 5.6.7).

- **Unfinished tasks submitted + Section A and B not relevant to each other**. An equal number of educator participants (49; 70%) pointed out these two aspects as challenges during the implementation of CTA. These educators were equally concerned about (1) the unfinished tasks that learners handed which pointed to learners finding the work overwhelming, and (2) the two sections not being applicable to each other (*cf.* 5.6.7).

- **Lack of resources + Late arrival of CTA from district offices**. An equal number of educator participants (48; 68.8%) pointed out these two aspects as challenges during the implementation of CTA. These educators were equally concerned about (1) their schools not having resources available, and (2) CTAs arriving late at their schools. Both these incidences point to the common table of CTA administration being affected negatively (*cf.* 5.6.7).

- **Time allocated not being enough**. Educators were aware of the time constraints when administering CTA, pointing to the need for re-adjustment in this regard (*cf.* 5.6.7).

A brief reflection on the learner and educator top five identified challenges during the implementation of CTA highlights the fact that both groups were concerned about the time allocation for CTA not being enough; individual attention by educators to learners being jeopardized; and learners handing in unfinished tasks.

7.5.5 Objective 5: To suggest components and processes to be included in guidelines towards a management plan to be used at schools in Sedibeng-East and Sedibeng-West to improve quality management of the design and implementation of their school-based assessment according to CAPS

This objective was met by suggesting guidelines for designing school-based assessment aligned to the CAPS assessment policy.

In Chapter Six, assessment principles according to CAPS, CTA and school-based assessment were highlighted (*cf.* 6.2). A theoretical participatory framework relevant to managing school-based assessment was highlighted (Leithwood *et al.*, 1999:12; Bush, 2006:508-511; *cf.* 6.3.4). The significance of selecting the participatory framework was necessary in the essence that school-based assessment needs the consultation of different role players, namely parents/caregivers, SGBs, learners, educators, School Assessment Teams (SATs), SMTs, District Facilitators, provincial assessors, universities, the government, the school community and different business organisations. Such consultation would ensure that learners are not disadvantaged, since including each role player's input would enhance the possibility of considering the needs and characteristics of all learners.

Guidelines for reinforcing the strengths in managing the design of school-based assessment were discussed (*cf.* 6.4; 6.4.1) while highlighting guidelines for combatting weaknesses in managing the design of school-based assessment. The guidelines for improving the management of the implementation of school-based assessment were highlighted (*cf.* 6.5). The guidelines served the purpose of suggesting processes concerning how school-based assessment can be designed, which included various role players as the different components in the various processes.

For school-based assessment to be effective, all role-players need to participate to ensure that the assessment meets the required standards and that quality assurance is taken into consideration to improve the quality of school-based assessment.

The next section will discuss the recommendations that flowed from this study.

7.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this research was to investigate the managing of the quality of the design and implementation and management of CTA, while remaining CAPS relevant. In order to realize this aim, a literature review was undertaken which served as the foundation on which the empirical research could be based. The findings of this research are incorporated in the following recommendations

Recommendation 1

A finding revealed that the language usage in the assessment tasks was difficult. The designers of school-based assessment need to consider different racial groups. Language usage must be simple to read and to understand. Furthermore, the language should not be too scientific. Policymakers also have to intensify programmes aimed at improving the learners' level of English.

Language can be a learning barrier, if the learners do not understand the language. It will be difficult for the learners to engage with the content of the assessment tasks. Scherman *et al.* (2006:174; *cf.* 2.2.4.8) point out that one example of inequity that prevails today is not considering the levels of proficiency of learners in English Second Language and its possible effect on academic language achievement. Without the necessary cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), learners could be severely hampered in trying to internalize a mass of established concepts. (Scherman *et al.*, 2006:174; *cf.* 2.3.8; Table 5.24; Table 5.35).

Recommendation 2

The findings from the learner and educator data revealed that the time that was allocated for learners to complete the assessment tasks was not enough, which posed a challenge to learner participants (*cf.* 5.4.3; 5.6.7).

Time plays a very important role, since learners needs to be given enough time to think about how they are going to answer questions. If the time is not

sufficient, they might be disadvantaged, and not complete their assessment tasks. The response could not be matched with literature, since it was a new contribution made by the study (*cf.* 5.4.3; 5.6.7).

Recommendation 3

The data revealed that resources such as computers with Internet facilities must be made available (*cf.* 5.7) so that learners can succeed in writing assessment tasks. Cluster meetings should be held each term to communicate the common content that educators need to teach according to the Learning Programmes, even if they use different textbooks. The educators can also discuss ways of ensuring that libraries and Internet facilities are accessible after school hours, using a rotational time-table to supervise the learners for the use of the Internet. This response does not confirm any literature (*cf.* 2.3.3). For example, McDowell (1995:309-310) argues that most school tests involve memory work, while out-of-school activities often intimately engage tools and resources (calculators, tables, standards), making such school tests less authentic. Segers *et al.* (1999:195) are of the opinion that it is not appropriate for assessors to deprive learners of requirements that are important for providing an authentic physical context when learners are given the opportunity to tackle the tasks.

Recommendation 4

According to the data, learners must be involved at cluster level in the designing of school-based assessment (*cf.* 5.7).

It is important that assessment activities are familiar to the learners. Participation of role-players in education is also important in order to identify problems that might arise during the implementation of school-based assessment. The role players can plan to address problematic contextual factors that might arise at school when assessment tasks are completed. Learner involvement in designing the assessment tasks is essential. Learner representatives at cluster level could also be considered, to obtain their input in the designs of the assessment tasks. Learners could perhaps suggest topics that could be covered by the assessors.

This accords with the literature which indicates that, If the policymakers decide to amend the assessment instruments, they must work together with all partners in education to ensure a smooth transition where there are changes in the implementation of policies, so that they certify that the required resources are available and efficient (Smith, 2005:25; *cf.* 2.3.14).

Recommendation 5

Based on the data, school-base assessment needs to take the cognitive abilities of learners into consideration (*cf.* 5.7).

The assessment tasks should cater for different cognitive abilities for assessment to comply with the principle of fairness. Bloom's Taxonomy (Wilson, 2006:2-3; *cf.* 2.3.11.1) must be applied by the entire schools to make sure that the task level caters for all cognitive abilities, and that all the levels in the hierarchy of the newly revised Bloom's Taxonomy are represented in the tasks compiled. HODs should select the learners' work they want for monitoring so that educators do not only select the best tasks for moderation.

Segers *et al.* (2003:2) indicate that assessment tasks should be constructed according to Bloom's Taxonomy which uses a hierarchy of cognitive skills that is used to categorize the levels of cognitive involvement (thinking skills) in an educational setting (Nitko & Brookhart, 2007:25; *cf.* 3.3.4). Assessment tasks should balance questions that focus on lower order thinking and higher order thinking to allow all learners to achieve the assessment outcomes.

Recommendation 6

Flowing from the data, the instructions to learners during assessment need to be clear (*cf.* 5.7). Educator training is crucial to make sure that educators have been trained thoroughly when new policies are implemented and to ascertain that the educators are sure of what they are doing, so that they might not give conflicting information and unclear instructions, as revealed by this research (*cf.* 2.2.3; 2.2.3.1).

This response does not support the literature, because the latter states clearly that the educators have to contextualize CTA and explain instructions to learners on how to complete the activities of CTA (*cf.* 3.6.1).

Recommendation 7

Based on the data, moderation must be done once per term (*cf.* 5.7). One moderation per term should be carried out, which brings the annual number of moderation meetings to four in order to check whether the educators are following the prescribed tasks and content for the benefit of learners at the end of the year. The moderation process should also evaluate whether learning programmes were correctly followed by the educators. The process serves as benchmarking for school-based assessment and external examinations. Weekly supervision by EMS HODS should focus on monitoring the educator and learner progress by checking whether the assessment plan and work schedule have been followed. If not, the educator needs to have extra time, such as after school hours or during the weekend, to catch up.

The literature shows that the Department of Education (2004b:5) indicates moderation as the process of validating the outcome of school-based and external assessment. Gawe and Heyns (2004:162) and Ramotlhale (2008:23; *cf.* 2.2.3) indicate that organizations must visibly show their processes concerning internal moderation, while policies and procedures must be accessible and give significant feedback to learners and other professional or education bodies concerned. The researcher therefore recommends more than one moderation per term to be able to give significant feedback to learners and the Department of Education.

Recommendation 8

According to the data, learners need to receive individual attention (*cf.* 5.7). Educators need to be dedicated in doing their work. They need to adhere to policy implementation and not teach to test memorized knowledge only, but also go beyond that to expand learner knowledge about the content they teach in class, making provision for slow learners as part of individual attention to ensure that all learners succeed academically.

This finding was not supported by any literature and is a new contribution of the study.

Recommendation 9

Derived from the data, complete coverage of the learning programme by educators needs to be secured (*cf.* 5.7). Educators have to cover the work according to work schedules provided by EMS facilitators from district offices. An improvement is needed on the external assessment of tasks, because some assessors are not well trained to do the job.

The observation is confirmed by the literature study where the Department of Education (2006b:5; *cf.* 3.3) indicates that lesson outcomes and content need to contain a description of what learners should know, demonstrate and be able to do during a learning experience.

Recommendation 10

The data highlighted the need for early arrival of school-based assessment tasks. It is advisable for the GDE to make sure that school-based assessment arrives early to avoid overloading learners and educators with too much work. It will also help to meet the time-plans that the GDE wants the schools to adhere to when implementing school-based assessment.

This recommendation is a new contribution of the study.

Recommendation 11

Flowing from the data, safety measures in keeping assessment document confidentially and safely should be considered. Safe keeping of question papers to avoid irregularities, was noted. (*cf.* 5.7) All schools should have access to question papers one day prior to the assessment, in order avoid leaking the papers.

This recommendation is not supported by any and it is a new contribution of the study.

Recommendation 12

According to the data, school-based assessment must take the learning barriers of learners into consideration (*cf.* 5.7).

The designers of school-based assessment should bear the following in mind when designing assessment tasks. Learners are different: there are auditory

learners who learn by listening and who love oral presentation more than anything else. They should therefore consider allocating marks for oral presentation. Other learners learn by touching: these are kinaesthetic learners who they like practical work. Lastly we have visual learners who learn by pictures and making associations. If the designers consider all these types of learners when they design tasks, the assessment tasks will be valid and reliable, because they will be catering for the needs of the learners. Such attempts should be made to ensure that policymakers are in touch with the practical, every-day realities faced at schools.

The literature states that the teaching methods and strategies which the educator applies and the learning styles he/she accommodates among learners, determine the effectiveness with which learning outcomes will be achieved by learners (Department of Education, 2006b:12; *cf.* 2.3.12).

Recommendation 13

The data revealed that learners' socio-economic status should be considered when setting assessment tasks (*cf.* 5.7). School-based assessment should consider learners with learning disabilities, and apply the principle of inclusivity. It is important to cater for different learners because the learners do not complete tasks at the same pace due to differences in ability. When the assessment tasks are designed, the designers should consider the socio-economic status of learners. They should make sure that the school provides all necessary resources to carry on with and complete the task. Learners should not be requested to bring extra material from home, because some learners might not have access to such material due to their socio-economic backgrounds.

The literature clearly supports the recommendation that the learners' socio-economic status needs to be considered (*cf.* 2.2.4.8; 3.3.2). SAQA (2001:6; *cf.* 2.3.9) explains fairness as taking into account and addressing issues pertaining to the inequality of opportunities, resources and appropriate teaching and learning approaches in terms of the acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills.

Recommendation 14

From the data it became clear that the learner:educator ratio should be reduced (*cf.* 5.7). The most common proposed solution is the employment of more educators and building more classrooms to reduce class size and high learner:educator ratios.

This response is supported by the literature which indicates that assessment such as CTA was problematic because it was not designed for large classes *(*Fidler *et al.*, 1997:108; *cf.* 3.3.2).

Recommendation 15

Based on the data, school-based assessment must include using different contexts and a variety of techniques and assessment strategies (*cf.* 5.7). For assessment to be valid and reliable, the assessment must measure learners' knowledge using a variety of assessment methods, strategies, tool/techniques, using the correct context and a variety of assessment strategies. Educators can make their selection depending on the purpose of assessment, the specific learning area and the learning activity. It is of the utmost importance that the strategies used should be appropriate for the specific target or learning outcomes being assessed (Gauteng Institute on Education **and** Development, 2004:237; Kotze, 2004:51; *cf.* 3.4.3).

The literature clearly indicates that assessment strategies are the ways followed to assess a learner's performance, using a number of assessment forms appropriate to the task and the level of the learner's understanding (Gauteng Institute on Education and Development, 2004:237; *cf.* 3.4.3).

Recommendation 16

Based on the data, familiarising and encouraging educators to read policy documents are imperative (*cf.* 5.6.8). Educators should be able to implement policies, having knowledge of what the assessment policies entail to make their work easier when these policies have to be implemented (Department of Education, 2007b:10; *cf.* 2.2.3).

This recommendation is partially a new contribution, since the educator participants' knowledge of whether the policy provides for (1) the

administration of internal practical assessment; (2) the administration of practical assessment; and (3) monitoring practical assessments was determined without any literature being available.

The next section will focus on pointing out limitations of the study that the researcher became aware of.

7.7   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A number of limitations were identified during completion of the research. Bearing these limitations in mind, the researcher acknowledges that the conclusions regarding the management of the quality in the design and implementation of the CTA and school-based assessment are tentative in nature.

- To a large extent quantitative research was used. Only a small qualitative dimension formed part of this study. This means that the researcher had a limited amount of data to work with. If the researcher integrated a stronger qualitative component in her data collection, such as interviews and observations, a more comprehensive and holistic understanding of the management of the quality in the design and implementation of CTA could have been obtained.

- Due to the small sample used in this research, generalization was problematic. However, the findings obtained from the data may be useful for similar contexts and participants with similar biographical characteristics.

The next section will focus on suggesting topics for further investigation.

7.8   SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Linked to the present study, the researcher suggests the following research topics:

- To establish how educators can be empowered through professional development to deal with the design and implementation of school-based assessment in the context of CAPS.

- Research in other districts to observe how the quality of school-based assessment is ensured.

- The application of assessment principles in the context of CAPS.

- Evaluating the merits of the researcher's participatory guidelines for enhancing the quality in the design and implementation of school-based assessment.

The next section will focus on pointing out the contribution of this study to existing theory.

7.9   CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY TO THEORY

The contribution of the study to existing theory on management and assessment is mainly found in that the suggested guidelines towards a management plan for improving the design and implementation of school-based assessment (*cf.* Chapter Six) constitutes a fresh perspective on existing theory concerning managing assessment. Suggesting a participatory approach as backbone of the guidelines was an attempt at directing the intended action in order to underpin practice at schools.   The ultimate intention of this approach is to contribute towards alleviating the burden of leadership by adopting participatory strategies such as including education partners during the process of, for example managing assessment.

The next section will focus on pointing out the contribution of this study to current practice.

7.10 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY TO PRACTICE

The contribution of the study to management and assessment practice is mainly found in the significance of the guidelines formulated towards empowering Grade 9 educators and SMTs to improve their current classroom and management practices respectively.   Educators who are involved in quality assurance structures such as *inter alia* School Assessment Teams, School Support Teams, Whole School Development Teams, District Assessment Teams and Provincial Assessment Team, may find this study useful because it highlights problems around management of assessment, which occupies a prominent position on the schooling agenda.   the study

contributes towards raising awareness among District Officials who can support schools and train principals, SMTs and Grade 9 educators more meaningfully in areas of need. Assessment and management material developers will benefit because it could help them to deepen their understanding and knowledge, enhancing quality in managing assessment. The study is important because it can be used to inform the Examination and Assessment, and the Curriculum Developers Directorates in the GDE and DoE to make informed decisions in order to streamline and strengthen school-based assessment.

7.11 CONCLUSION

One of the primary purposes of school-based assessment is to be summative. In its summative role, the purpose of assessment is to judge the quality and dimensions of the assessment of learners. The policy-makers must bear the following considerations in mind when designing assessment tasks according to the new CAPS curriculum. Assessment should measure whether the learning and programme coverage happened in schools. The designers of school-based assessment should also consider that assessment needs to grade learners and allow learners to progress further through assessment standards. The school-based assessors should therefore design assessments to be motivating to learners when they tackle their tasks. Assessment should also give learners expanded opportunities in areas where the learners performed badly or obtained low marks in order to improve learners' performances.

Although the task of managing the design and implementation of school-based assessment seems daunting and presents a formidable challenge to educationalists, it is not an insurmountable task. If principals increase their commitment to their work and strive vigorously towards effective management, the goal of establishing efficient management practices can be attained. SMTs that are not yet competent in learner assessment and management only exacerbate this problem. This is the result of a plethora of obstacles and challenges they face; largely due to their inadequate, incoherent and unsatisfactory management training.

As a result of the aforementioned problems, it is incumbent on all educators and SMTs to make a conscious effort to improve the way they understand, apply and manage assessment in not only Grade 9, but across grades. This is necessary for entrenching good quality education management and assessment practices at schools. Principals and education managers play a vital role in the pursuit of effective and efficient management practices. Therefore it is critical for them to increase their competency levels continuously and consistently persevere to find ways in which excellence in managing the school-based assessment instrument can be achieved. If quality is not part of managing the design and implementation of school-based assessment, authenticity, validity and reliability will be compromised, defeating the purpose of such assessment.