

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present a brief summary and a reflection on the important findings as highlighted in the literature review and empirical research. The research findings and recommendations are presented.

This chapter will also present summaries of aspects highlighted in this research, such as findings regarding the essence of effective management of ECD sites for quality foundational education, and findings regarding the empirical research. Recommendations are based on these findings.

#### 5.2 AIMS GOVERNING THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of management of ECD/Grade R sites in ensuring quality foundational education in Sedibeng Districts. The main aim was operationalised by the following specific aims:

- to investigate the fundamental nature of quality education in Grade R;
- to investigate if the management of Grade R sites in the Sedibeng districts ensures quality education; and
- to provide guidelines for effective management of grade R sites to ensure quality education in the Sedibeng Districts.

#### 5.3 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

In **chapter one** the rationale for this study is outlined. The background and the problem statement highlighted the importance of effective management in ensuring quality. The literature emphasized the importance of quality education especially in the child's earliest years for both the immediate and long time effects. In this chapter the research design and methodology is indicated.

Chapter 1 therefore, served as a springboard for the subsequent chapters. It is stated that managers have an important role to play in ensuring that there were strategies in place to achieve foundational quality education (*cf.* 1.1).

**Chapter two** outlined an overview of ECD, quality assurance and the essence of effective management of quality at schools. The chapter outlined the theoretical perspective from which the phenomenon of quality would be approached. It dealt with quality education which is a transformative process of implementation, accountability and the pursuit of excellence. Indicators of quality, including quality learners, quality education, quality content and quality learning environment are discussed. The need for the provision of quality education is based on the fact that there is evidence that learners who participated in early intervention Programmes perform better in their primary education (*cf.* 2.4).

Literature also indicates that effective managers are those that afford practitioners opportunities through on-going service, to develop social skills and provide a conducive environment that would allow for the implementation and promotion of high quality standards (*cf.* 2.6.2).

**Chapter three** focused on the research methodology. The research design and methodology were explored. The questionnaire formulation and administration, reliability and validity and data analysis were detailed.

**Chapter four** dealt with data analysis and interpretation. The first section was on the biography and demographic data of practitioners and managers. The questionnaire was divided into two, sections A and B. Participants were from both SBS and CBS and comprised of managers and practitioners.

## **5.4 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The following section deals with the summary of findings from empirical study.

In this section, findings from the participants of practitioners and managers from CBS and SBS are given.

The responses of practitioners and managers regarding their biographical data indicated the following:

- More females participated in this research (*cf.* 4.2.1 and 4.3.1); more practitioners aged 31 to 40, while the majority of managers were between 41 and 50 (*cf.* 4.2.2 and 4.3.2). The highest academic qualification for both practitioners and managers was matric certificate (*cf.* 4.2.3 and 4.3.3). The highest academic qualification for practitioners was NQF Level 1-3, while most managers had certificates in education (*cf.* 4.2.4 and 4.3.4).

#### **5.4.1 Findings with regard to research aim 1: The fundamental nature of quality education in Grade R**

Findings on the fundamental nature of quality education in Grade R revealed the following:

- Quality is a single most important issue in education (*cf.* 2.4.1). Quality education is imperative in equipping learners with the requisite basic life skills that will ensure increased access and equality in education and academic success (*cf.* 1.1). Quality education is, therefore, the foundation for future development, health and wellbeing throughout life (*cf.* 2.1).
- There is a growing need especially in South Africa to address early learning opportunities for all learners by providing learners with timely and appropriate interventions for the reversal of the effects of deprivation and maximization of the development of children's potential (*cf.* 2.2.2). If such children are afforded quality education healthy families and communities will be promoted (*cf.* 2.4.2).
- Quality in education can only be achieved if the following important aspects are observed:
  - **Indicators of quality** which include quality education, quality content, quality educators, quality learners and quality learning environments (*cf.* 2.4.1).

- **Models of quality** that will enable an institution to focus on key components that will ensure provision of quality and link it to environmental context and resource input (*cf.* 2.4.2).
- **Quality assurance** which is the total system of activities which provide assurance and objective evidence that an adequate level of quality has been achieved. It is a prevention-based approach which entails products working reliably, and activities being dependable and consistent (*cf.* 2.5).

Managing quality foundational education in ECD sites is seen as executing management tasks in ensuring that quality education is provided by means of effective teaching and learning. This can be done by using all available resources. Effective management of quality education entails planning which is a systemic process aimed at providing a blue print and a road map for accomplishing purpose. Management of quality education entails determining a mission, aims and outcomes, building commitment, implementation of the plan and reviewing, evaluating and monitoring the implementation (*cf.* 2.6).

The study found that sites depend largely on the support of their communities and that provision of quality education is affected by communities in which the sites are.

#### **5.4.2 Findings with regard to research aim 2: Management of Grade R sites to ensure quality education**

Findings on attainment of goals revealed the following:

- There are clear goals in the assessment of learners in Grade R. The specified goals are achieved but not measurable and time-framed. Managers monitor the process and can be approached by practitioners for assistance, if they encounter problems. Learner achievement and attendance rate of learners are high but the drop-out rate is also high (*cf.* 4.4.2 and 4.5.2).

Findings on organizational requirements indicated the following:

- Grade R sites provide quality service to learners and resources are sufficient to provide quality. The status of the community in which sites are has an impact on

the provision of quality. The sites are negatively affected by community/social factors against attainment of educational goals, and as a result learners struggle to achieve because of the low status of the community in which they are (*cf.* 4.4.4. and 4.5.4).

Findings pertaining problems in the Grade R revealed the following:

- Although managers are familiar with the criteria expected for quality education sites are not yet ready to pursue excellent quality. This is due to the fact that they encounter obstacles to basic functionality. The challenges include the fact that practitioners were not familiar with the criteria expected for quality education at their sites and that managers were experiencing problems and difficulties in managing Grade R sites because of lack of knowledge of what is happening in the sites (*cf.* 4.4.5 and 4.5.5).

Findings on the resources for effective management of Grade R indicated the following:

- There are resources in most sites as learners are part of the school nutrition programme. There is out-door equipment in the sites but it is not secured and safe for learners. There is no budget for the outdoor equipment in these sites a situation which makes it difficult for the managers to buy safe out-door equipment. Running water is easily accessible and flush toilets are available for use. Managers also ensure that classrooms have appropriate furniture (*cf.* 4.4.3 and *cf.*4.5.3).
- There are not enough resources to support learners with learning barriers and practitioners are not engaged in diagnostic assessment to identify learning barriers for learners Managers are also of the opinion that practitioners are unable to identify learners with learning barriers (*cf.* 4.4.1 and 4.5.1). Teacher/learner ratio is not according to policy (Circular 28/2005) in classes (*cf.* 4.4.3 and 4.5.3). Practitioners are able to conduct learner assessment continuously in Grade R and use different tools to assess achievement but managers do not monitor assessment of learners. A significant number of

practitioners were not trained to use the learner-centered teaching approach (*cf.* 4.4.1 and 4.5.1).

Findings on the processes affecting Grade R indicated the following:

- Practitioners are supported by managers in dealing with Grade R teaching and learning. There are open communication channels between managers and practitioners, a situation which enables practitioners to participate in decision making concerning Grade R issues (*cf.* 4.4.1 and 4.5.1).

Findings regarding maintenance of legitimacy in Grade R sites revealed the following:

- Grade R sites were accepted and supported by the community and they offer Programmes which conform to the ethical and moral norms of the community. The sites have a good image and good marketing strategies. They are accountable to the community (*cf.* 4.4.6 and 4.5.6).

Findings on satisfaction revealed the following:

- Practitioners are satisfied with their teaching of Grade R learners and they satisfy the expectations of the parents and school management. Managers are satisfied with the way in which sites are managed. A significant number of participants indicated that they are not supported by their managers (*cf.* 4.4.7 and 4.5.7).

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section provides recommendations for the practical implementation of findings and those of further research.

### **5.5.1 Recommendations for the practical implementation of findings**

The results of this research led to the following recommendations which have implications for effective management of quality education in ECD:

- This study revealed that practitioners are under qualified in both the CBS and SBS. There is a need for the Department of Education to focus on the practitioners' qualifications. Although there is a career path that can be followed, practitioners are not motivated to study. In collaboration with higher institutions, each school district can focus on taking a selected number of practitioners each year, through the first year of a three year accredited, incremental ECD practitioner course. Although there is training that some practitioners attend in the Sedibeng districts, it is provided by Non-Governmental Organizations. There is no uniformity in the provision of the training for ECD practitioners. Practitioners would benefit more if Teacher Training Colleges could be re-opened. The Teacher Training Colleges would equip practitioners with skills, knowledge, values and attitudes to implement quality ECD Programmes and manage their sites more effectively. Training colleges would be beneficial to practitioners as they would be exposed to micro teaching and practice teaching.
- The Department of Education should equip the practitioners with skills to upgrade the quality of the programmes offered at their sites. This can be done through workshops and education forums. These forums can also concentrate on information dissemination regarding career paths that practitioners can follow, which institutions of higher learning offer these courses and how to register in the institutions.
- The results indicated a lack of resources. All CBS should be under the Department of Education where provision and access to education would be monitored. School districts are to provide the sites (SBS and CBS) with toys, games, books, art equipment and other educational resources, as well as equipping the practitioners with skills to make their own resources. The School Governing Bodies should not regard Grade R classes as separate entities but as part of the school. Therefore, in their budget at the beginning of the year, important items that are to ensure quality in Grade R are to be included in the budget.

- There is a need to equip the practitioners to develop the capacity of the parents and caregivers of the children in their sites to support those children's optimum development. Involvement of parents in their children's education is crucial.
- Managers of these sites need to be equipped with management skills. It is imperative that managers of sites attend the same workshops that are organized for principals of primary schools. It is in these workshops that CBS managers will have an opportunity to network so as to build a support structure for their sites.

### **5.5.2 Recommendations with reference to further research**

The following could be further research areas:

- The role of qualifications in the management of ECD.
- Reasons for drop-out rates in ECD.
- Parental involvement in ECD and its implications.

### **5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

In acknowledgement of the limitations of the present research, the following are indicated

- The study was performed in two districts in the Gauteng province. There are fifteen districts in this province. Conducting this study in more than two districts would have brought more reliable and valid study of the problem, that is, when the sample was taken broadly.
- Snooping deeper into effective management of Grade R sites would bring greater value to this study, a matter which has been only partly attended to.
- Despite all the attempts made by the researcher to ensure the utmost and appropriate response, some participants had not completed the questionnaires by the time the researcher was expecting them to be submitted. This caused a delay.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter outlined the summary of the study and presented findings and recommendations.

The study explored the effectiveness of managers in ensuring quality foundational education. This was used as a basis for the empirical study which revealed crucial aspect in ensuring quality foundational education. The study revealed significant aspects of ensuring quality foundational education in Grade R sites.

The findings from this research clearly indicated that there were major challenges with regard to practitioners' qualifications and also the training of managers. There were also indications of ineffectiveness in the management of quality in these sites. However, some sites seemed to be doing well in terms of management.