

CHAPTER 5

THE SUMMARY OF THE INVESTIGATION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the summary of the investigation is provided in order to show that the aims of the research expressed in chapter one have been achieved.

The theory underlying the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in secondary schools in the North West Province is given. The literature is integrated with the experiences of the principals and educators as they manage HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in the secondary schools in the North West Province. Some of the main findings are synthesised in this chapter. Recommendations for improving the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in the schools derived from the research are briefly stated. In conclusion, the identification of limitations of the study as well as possible areas for further research are stated.

Data collected were analysed (cf 3.7.2) coded (cf 3.7.2) and processed (cf 3.7.5). The main themes, relating to the training of educators (cf 4.5.1) and improvement of the learners' knowledge about HIV/AIDS (cf 4.4.1) emerged from the data.

5.2 HIV/AIDS PANDEMIC IN SOUTH AFRICA

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is also having a devastating effect on South Africa. There are more people living with HIV/AIDS in South Africa than in any other country in the world (cf 2.3). It is estimated that 3,2 million women of child bearing age between 15-49 years are HIV positive (cf 2.3.1). In total, the United Nations estimates that more than five million of the total of 45 million South Africans are HIV positive.

According to Coombe (2000:22) the government of South Africa has implemented the following strategies to deal with HIV/AIDS epidemic: The HIV/AIDS/STD Strategic Plan for South Africa 2000-2005, as well as the South African Strategic and Implantation Plan and the National Integrated Plan for Children Infected or Affected by HIV/AIDS (cf 2.3.2). In spite of these plans, the number of infected people continues to rise.

5.2.1 Education and the effect of HIV/AIDS

In schools the HIV/AIDS pandemic is affecting both learners and educators (cf 2.4). Coombe (2000:1), postulates that HIV-infection among educators is likely to be above the national average for South Africa (cf 2.4). Hepburn (2002:91) adds that infection among educators cause their performance to drop, as many struggle to come to terms with the infection which is affecting them and their families (cf 2.4).

According to Tillotson and Naharaj (2001:88), South African learners are aware of HIV/AIDS but are confused by the many myths relating to HIV/AIDS. This prevents them from protecting themselves (cf 2.4). Therefore, it is apparent that the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes is of vital importance in schools.

The Department of Education offers guidelines to ensure that affected educators (cf 2.5.2) and affected learners (cf 2.5.3) are supported in schools. Louw et al (2001:8) agree with this adding that the Department of Education should be willing to assist both affected educators and learners, even if it is only by giving emotional support. Likewise, the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes will give learners the opportunity to restructure their lives and take precautionary measures to avoid contacting HIV/AIDS.

5.3 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

In chapter two of the research, the necessary background to the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in the North West Province is provided. The role of the principal in the managing of the effects of HIV/AIDS on education in schools (cf 2.6) as well as the effect

of HIV/AIDS on the supply of educators in South Africa (cf 2.7) are provided in detail. Likewise, the effect on learners and the need to assist them in making informed life decisions is discussed. It is against this background that a qualitative approach was deemed an appropriate method for an exploratory study of the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in secondary schools in the North West Province (cf 1.9.1). Three schools situated in a platinum mining area were identified (cf 3.5.4). Individual interviews with the three principals (cf 3.3.1.1) and focus group interviews with three groups of educators from each school were conducted (cf 3.3.1.2). Furthermore, one class of grade ten learners in one school wrote essays on their views of the HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in their school (cf 3.3.2). All the data were analysed according to procedures appropriate to qualitative research.

5.4 THE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings derived from the qualitative research relate to the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in secondary schools in the North West Province. Some of the main findings relate to the following two issues.

5.4.1 Providing training for educators

Most educators dealing with HIV/AIDS awareness programmes stated that they need to be trained to handle the programme efficiently and acquire skills to help learners who are affected or infected (cf 4.5.1). Coombe (2000:378) agrees that educators need constant in-service training. However, although many educators have attended workshops in HIV/AIDS awareness programmes, they feel that there is a need for further training to keep abreast with the development of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes.

Sergiovanni (1994:211) agrees that training educators in HIV/AIDS awareness programmes will empower them to meet the challenges posed by the HIV/AIDS programmes in school.

However, during the interview most educators stated that they had never received training on the use of HIV/AIDS awareness programme (cf 3.6.2.2). Adding to the problem the material they use is not sufficient and they generally need to improvise (cf 4.5.1).

Recommendation

South African schools are being increasingly affected by HIV/AIDS. More and more educators are faced with affected and infected learners in their classrooms (cf 1.4). The Department of Education is integrating HIV/AIDS awareness programmes into the school curriculum of the national educational system (cf 1.4). Therefore, it is recommended that the Department of Education develop a proper structure to train educators concerning the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes. Although many educators attended workshops in HIV/AIDS awareness programmes, this has proved insufficient. Materials must be provided to the educators to use in their classrooms. It is also recommended that educators study with distance education institutions to keep abreast of the development of HIV/AIDS.

5.4.2 Improving the learners' understanding of HIV/AIDS

Learners know much about HIV/AIDS. They know how it is transmitted, the symptoms and disease related to HIV/AIDS as well as how to prevent becoming infected (cf 4.4.1). Porteus (2001:35) confirms that young people have a fairly solid understanding of the disease and preventions methods. However, a large number of them do not act on this knowledge and the incidence of HIV infections among the youth continue to rise.

According to Tillotson and Maharaj (2001:87), young people begin to be sexually active from 13-15 years. This aptly illustrates that the link between knowledge and behaviour is weak (Porteus 2001:35). Therefore, the need to intensify the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in secondary schools is great.

Recommendation

Information about HIV/AIDS needs to be updated regularly. For example, latest statistics on HIV/AIDS are often included in the newspapers (cf 1.1). Educators need to obtain this information and use it in their classroom situation. Moreover, educators need to vary their method of teaching and make learners participate more. By doing so, the gap between what learners know and their commitment to act on this can be narrowed.

Educators should encourage learners to visit HIV/AIDS hospices to see HIV/AIDS patients and volunteer to help there during the holidays. In this way the reality of HIV/AIDS will strike them and they will begin to take HIV/AIDS awareness programmes serious. Likewise, in schools a support group can be formed for learners affected by HIV/AIDS so that they can support each other in school. This can be linked with the similar support groups in the community.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The findings of this research on the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in secondary schools in the North West Province suggest the following aspects for further research:

- **The use of qualitative research methodology in issues relating to HIV/AIDS**

The use of qualitative research methodology in understanding HIV/AIDS infection among young people should be explored further because it allow participants to discuss in depth the issues that affect their everyday lives (cf 3.2.1). This is important as the young people's infection rate is still rising in spite of an increase in their knowledge of HIV/AIDS.

- Due to the lack of research on the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in secondary schools, many aspects still need detailed research. Thus, the following areas are suggested:

- To find ways by which HIV/AIDS awareness programmes can be made more meaningful to learners in secondary schools.
- To train educators to manage HIV/AIDS awareness programmes.
- To develop a strategies in which the community can be fully involved in the schools in dealing with HIV/AIDS.
- Ways of supporting affected and infected learners and educators.

5.6 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this study is to determine how the principals, educators and learners manage HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in secondary schools.

One of the limitations of the study is the number of participants chosen. Although typical of the characteristics of qualitative research, the findings cannot be generalised (McMillan and Schumacher 1993:506). This means that the participants chosen cannot support a general theory on the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in secondary schools. However, the research was designed to be exploratory and descriptive in nature, so no attempt was made to generalise the findings.

The researcher selected three principals and nine educators as well as one grade ten class (cf 3.3.2), who were willing to participate, so the selection was limited. Therefore, the results might have been different if other participants from different schools were included.

Despite these limitations, data collected for this research provided the main areas that contributed to a better understanding of the management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes of secondary school in the North West Province.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in schools is becoming more serious as educators increasingly have to deal with affected and infected learners. According to Van

Dyk (2003:2195) the school has a very important role to play in empowering learners with the necessary knowledge, attitudes, values and life skills to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS infection. The Department of Education have introduced life skills and HIV/AIDS into the curriculum, increasing the need to train educators in this field. Moreover, the involvement of other sectors like churches, community and non-government organisations is vital in helping educators and supporting them in managing the HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in the school. In addition, the obstacles that prevent the successful management of HIV/AIDS awareness programmes must be identified and should be addressed so that the HIV/AIDS awareness programmes can succeed in schools in the North West Province.