

**THE IMPACT OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENT ENVIRONMENT ON
LEARNING STRATEGIES
FOR GRADE SEVEN LEARNERS
IN SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that:

The impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies is my own research work. I have indicated and acknowledged all sources used and quoted by means of complete references, and I acknowledge that this dissertation was not previously submitted by me for a degree at another university.

NKELE MOLOTSI

Signed... 

DATE : February 2003

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SUMMARY

The interest of this study was to research and investigate how the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies for grade seven learners in South Africa, their application or non-application of the learning strategies when learning affect their school performance in Technology as a learning area.

This research is based on literature study related to previous research about learning strategies and home environment of informal settlements. Children are our most precious assets. They need to be secure and well nourished. Children must have opportunities to learn and develop within a family, school and community. They need self – actualisation to realise their potential, to instil positive self-esteem and to be respected and recognised. Social needs such as, to be loved, accepted, cared for and for belongingness, protection and peace of mind, physical needs like shelter, rest, food, water and oxygen (fresh air) are also a pre-requisite to a healthy mind and body.

Acquisition of all the needs stated above would enable a child to achieve better results at school. The learning strategies used in the study have been given and defined for this study, focus was on elaboration study of complex learning tasks with special reference given on summarising, paraphrasing and self-questioning.

From findings, which were based on observations conducted, it was clear that most learners struggled to apply learning strategies in their learning. Some also had it tough by mere identifying them, some though responded very well after given few examples which indicates that, with proper guidance, children can master using and identifying learning strategies whilst learning. Those who managed to use learning strategies correctly performed well, which indicates that mastering of learning strategies increases the learners schools achievement.

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Education has a pivotal role in people's lives. It is through education that the society shapes its soul (Tirisano Newsletter, Dept of Education, 2001: 8-9). For effective education and learning to take place, it is important to understand the context from which learners come. In this research the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies for grade seven learners in South Africa is the focus.

Whereas the role of the home is providing the conditions conducive to the early development of the child and learning (Kellaghan, Sloan, Alvarez, and Bloom, 1993:17) most researchers state that in some instances, the child's problems are associated with the environment, in this case the informal settlement and the circumstances in which she/he grows up (Kapp, 1991:30).

Costa and Liebman (1977:10) refer to the circumstances or family background which the child grows up as aspects of the home environment. These include: the level of parents' education, parents' occupation, parent involvement in school work and supervision among others. Kellaghan et al (1993:17) report that, parental supervision such as helping with home work is one way of offering support to the school's activities. Also by providing relevant learning resources that would enhance the learner's use and knowledge of learning strategies.

Kellaghan et al (1993:10) contend that resources such as the media, especially the television and the computer, are likely to be enjoyed by children living in conventional homes. Better resources would help to stimulate the psychological aspect of the child. Further more, it would increase their networking interpersonal relationships which would expose them to the world of technology for further acquisition of learning strategies that would enhance their learning.

Children from informal settlement environments would however, not enjoy the above mentioned facilities. This might be due to the fact that their parents would not provide them with such facilities. Their unconventional homes do not have electricity, water, proper sanitation to mention just a few. They are unable to connect with the outside world. Learning and education for them stops at school. There is no continuity for the intensity of what was done at school. These conditions affect their learning and

acquisition of learning strategies. According to Avalos (1992:425) the poor performance of the squatter camp child is not an indication that this child is less capable than the township child. Their poor performance might be due to a poor environment they grow up in. For example, these children sometimes do not know where their next shelter will be. Sometimes their homes are bulldozed or are destroyed by fire while at school. Having their homes destroyed sometimes results in the family having to move to a new place where they have to build a “house”. This leads to an informal settlement child being absent from school for a long period and even repeating grades as their families have to search for new accommodation and new schools for their children (Johnson, 1991:3,87-89). Having provided a brief introduction to the study, the next section looks at the statement of the problem.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Teachers in the Tembisa area have observed that most students from informal settlement environments do not engage the use of learning strategies as well as students from the Tembisa township. Teachers also found that some learners from informal settlements were able to recognize learning strategies when cues were used.

This study was confined to establishing how the informal settlement environment impact on learning strategies of grade seven learners in South Africa. Since the researcher could not cover the whole of South Africa, the study was demarcated to four provinces: Bloemfontein, Cape, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and one school from each province. For ethical implications, real names of participants, and those of their schools are not used.

1.2.1 Formulation of the main research problem

MAIN PROBLEM: What is the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies of grade seven learners?

1.2.1.1 Formulation of sub-problems

Leedy (1993:13-14) contends that making the research problem easily managed, researchers usually divide the problem into sub-problems. Resolving the sub-problem will ultimately resolve the problem. This approach has been adopted with the same view in mind. Thus, the following questions have been formulated or indentified as sub-problems.

SUB PROBLEMS: What is the informal settlement environment?

Why do children who are exposed to informal settlement environment experience difficulties employing learning strategies?

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In view of the above main research problem and sub-problems, the following aims and objectives may be identified:

MAIN AIM : The main aim of this study is to investigate the impact of the informal settlement on learning strategies for grade seven learners in South Africa.

SUB-AIMS: The following objectives can be identified:

To describe the informal settlement environment.

To determine aspects of informal settlement environment that impinges on learning strategies.

1.4 DEFINITION OF BASIC CONCEPTS

The following basic concepts will be used in the study and therefore need to be defined. The terms learners and students, teachers and educators, squatter camp and informal settlement environment respectively will be used interchangeably.

1.4.1 Home environment

The home environment is defined as the environment in which children live that is made up of the built environment (that is a physical environment constructed or modified or human habitation and the natural environment in which all human settlements are located. Thus, it focuses on the conditions within this human environment and their implications for children's health and development and for their parents' capacity to adequately care and provide for them (Satterthweite, Hart, Lev, Mitlin, Ross and Smit, 1996:7).

1.4.2 Learning strategies

Weinstein and Mayer (1986:315-316) define learning strategies as behaviours and thought that a learner engages in during learning and that are intended to influence the learners encoding process. According to Langah (1992:25) learning strategies can be considered to be equivalent to study methods.

Cognitive psychologists have divided learning strategies into two domains, namely, cognitive strategies which relate to how an individual processes information and meta-cognitive strategies which relate to how an individual selects, monitors and uses cognitive strategies that she/he possesses (Lenz, 1992:3).

1.4.3 Informal Settlement environment or squatter camp

An informal settlement environment or squatter camp is an area that is informally formed or developed and usually lacks service infrastructure such as water, sewerage facilities, refuse removal, foods and electricity, squatter camps do not have legal status and their future is uncertain (Bank, Manona and Higginhotton, 1996:20).

1.5 DERMACATION OF THE FIELD OF STUDY AND CONTEXT

This research intends to target grade seven learners from selected informal settlement environments in Bloemfontein, Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga Provinces for a wider comparison and authenticity of the results and findings. One school from each province was selected, with ten learners each.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD OF RESEARCH

In the view of the research problem and research aims and objectives, a qualitative research method was used. Since education is a multi faceted social and human science, the research used a multi faceted qualitative research: exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, phenomenological method and interviews. For purpose of clarity each of these concepts are shortly explained thus:

1.6.1 Research Design

According to (McMillan and Schumacher, 1999:46) the research design describes the procedures for conducting the study, when from whom and under what conditions the data will be obtained. A detailed discussion on these issues was carried in chapter three. Qualitative research method and literature study were used for this study.

1.6.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research collects data in the form of words. It employs an inductive approach to research. Data collection strategies identified during the research process will be employed.

According to Monton and Marais (1996:43) explorative strategies help to lead insight and comprehension of phenomenon. They can include interviews, case studies and literature studies.

A qualitative research design is suitable for this study because qualitative data can provide rich insight into human behaviour (Lyncoln and Guba, 1985:99). It is useful for uncovering the emic (insider) view. Qualitative research addresses the what and why, which are instrumental in understanding and accurately describing situations and behaviours (Boyle, 1994:166).

In addition to a qualitative research and explorative strategies, other research strategies were used. These include the following: descriptive, phenomenological, interviews and phases of the adopted research design.

1.6.3 Descriptive research strategy

Hopkins (1976:1367) stresses that descriptive research strategy deals with questions based in the present state of affairs. Selected phenomena are described as they unfold themselves to the researcher. (Monton and Marais,1996:44). Aspects of informal settlement environment which impact on learning strategies of grade seven learners will be described.

1.6.4 The phenomenological method of research

Since the descriptive method of enquiry enables the researcher to understand what a specific experience is like by describing it as it is, it implies that the phenomenological method will also be employed.

Ultimately the responses of learners from informal settlement environment will be gathered by means of interview guide. Their responses will then be analysed and interpreted.

1.6.5 Interviews:

Interviews are alternative methods of collecting survey data. The purpose of using interviews is to allow the researcher to understand the other person's perspective (Patton, 1990:278).

1.6.6 Phases of the adopted research design.

Table 1: Phases of the research design and methodology

PHASE A	PHASE B
1. Purpose	Purpose
(Kerlinger:1986:481). <ul style="list-style-type: none">Literature control themes and categories identified in analysis are discussed in relation to relevant literature.	The description of a possible prevention strategy and then development of guidelines for the implementation of the strategy.
2. Research plan	Research plan
To obtain the emic view, explorative and descriptive techniques will be used.	Themes and categories identified through data analysis in phase A will be used.
3. Sampling	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample population : grade seven learners from informal settlement environment from four selected provinces and one school from each province • Sample criteria – systematic sampling, was employed. Researcher picks a number and then assign it to a subject. A three percent sample was used where every third subject was selected, e.g. 3, 6, 9 and so on until the required number of ten from each of the relevant schools was reached. • Sampling method from-probability, purposive sampling (Basch 1987:44) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4. Trustworthiness 	Trustworthiness
<p>Based on the method of Lincoln and Guba (Krefting, 1992:217-222) the following strategies will be employed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credibility (truth value) • Applicability (transferability) • Consistency (dependability) • Neutrality (conformability) 	The description of a prevention programme will adhere to the strategies for trustworthiness as discussed in phase A.
5.Data collection	Data collection
<p>In order to obtain a rich data basis, multiple sources of data will be used. The techniques are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group interviews with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> educators parents of learners from informal settlement • individual interviews with: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant literature will be incorporated with themes and categories identified in phase A, to describe the prevention programme • The programme will be discussed

<p>school principals learners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filed notes Observation notes of the researcher made directly after interviews. 	<p>with educational psychologists in order to obtain peer evaluation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observational notes of the researcher compared with those of the researcher's partner to verify their authenticity, reliability and accuracy / non-biasness.
<p>6. Data analysis</p>	<p>Data analysis</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group interviews are tape recorded and transcribed accurately • Transcripts are read and intent of generating a list of key ideas, words, phrases and verbatim quotes that capture sentiments (Basch 1987 : 417). Independent coders will receive a protocol for data analysis. They will help the researcher to analyse data. • The researcher and independent coders discuss their findings in order to determine the degree of consensus. • Follow-up interviews with respondents (members checking) contribute to truth value (Kerlinger, 1986 :481) <p>Literature control themes and categories identified in analysis are discussed in relation to relevant literature.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed programme will be refined • Guidelines for the implementation of the programme will be developed. • Researcher sets a meeting with independent coders to compare their findings and draw conclusions on their findings. • Literature study assist researcher and partners to explore the aim of this study being the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies.

1.7 LITERATURE STUDY

The main purpose of the literature study is to investigate findings about the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies of grade seven learners.

Related literature study enables researchers to place their questions in perspective and find a link between one's study and the accumulated knowledge in one's field of interest (Ary, Jacobs and Raizavich, 1990:68).

Journals, theses, newspaper reports and other primary and secondary sources of information related to the study were consulted. A DIALOG-search of the following key words was performed: informal settlement environment, learning strategies and achievement.

In this study, literature study includes mark schedules, progress reports and personal portfolios of learners.

1.8 LIMITATIONS

- Limited period of study
- Financial problems
- Difficulties to reach all respondents at scheduled time

1.9 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 1: Introduction and statement of the problem. This chapter comprises an exposition of the problem, aims and objectives, definitions of concepts, research design and method of research.

Chapter 2: A literature study to investigate the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies for grade seven learners in South Africa.

Chapter 3: Research design and method of research. This chapter deals with the exposition with regards to the execution of the empirical investigation. It also deals with the collection of data.

Chapter 4: Deals with the implementation of the research design recordings of collected data and analyzing the recorded data.

Chapter 5: Reviews the whole study. That is, the summary of all the chapters, discussion of findings, recommendations, remarks and conclusions.

1.10 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to introduce the research problem at hand and the methodology of how the research will proceed in order to come to a conclusion. Basic terms were also defined for the sake of clarity. This will be followed up by chapter two, which will clarify and explain the theories which will be used to show the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies of grade seven learners. Aspects that have reference to informal settlement environment will also be broadly discussed in chapter two.

CHAPTER TWO

THE INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENT ENVIRONMENT (ASPECTS) ON LEARNING STRATEGIES BY LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of chapter two is to define informal settlement environment and learning strategies. Also, to determine (aspects) why children growing up in such environments experience difficulties engaging learning strategies while learning. This is done to ultimately investigate the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies for grade seven learners.

Achievement also needs defining as it is used throughout the discussion of this study. The reason being that, learners who engage learning strategies achieve better (Schmeck, 1988:321). This will become evident in subsequent paragraphs. Achievement is defined as the process of achieving something after a lot of effort. At school, it will thus mean the percentage or marks the learner obtained in certain learning areas (Gipps and Murphy, 1994:12).

Achievement is specifically meant to measure degree of learning in a specific learning area. The responsibility to create achievement depends on a particular institution and learners environment. In this study, the informal settlement environment (Gipps and Murphy, 1994:12).

2.2 DEFINITION OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENT ENVIRONMENT

Bank et al (1996:20) define informal settlement environment as an area that is informally formed or developed. It usually lacks service infrastructure such as water, sewerage facilities, refuse removals, foods and electricity. Informal settlements do not have legal status and their future is uncertain. Kapp (1991:122) posits that the child's development, his learning achievement and his understanding of the school's purpose are influenced to a large degree by his environment,

experience and conditions including aspects of the environment. In this case, informal settlement environment. A sound home environment should help the child in all respects for his latent, unique personal potential to be fully developed.

Some aspects of the informal settlement environment such as: the extended family, sibsize, mother's level of education, father's level of education, mother's occupation, father's occupation and parental support among others will be discussed later in subsequent paragraphs (Smith, 1977:218) and (Marjoribanks, 1991:42).

2.3 DEFINITION OF LEARNING STRATEGIES

According to Weisntein and Mayer (1986:315-316) learning strategies are behaviours and thought that a learner engages in during learning and that are intended to influence the learners encoding process. This means that learning strategies encompass behaviour and ideas that will assist a person to learn and process information. Dansereau (1985:273) refer to learning strategies as the mental operations or thinking. That is, steps that are used to encode, analyse and retrieve information learning strategies can thus be considered to be equivalent to study methods (Langah, 1992:25).

Weistein and Mayer (1986:315) infer that learning strategies have learning facilitation as a goal. Learners who engage learning strategies achieve better in academic tasks than those who do not use them (Schmeck, 1988:321). This is indicated in the learner's responses.

It is the educator's duty to provide the knowledge for the learners to plan their studies properly. In the absence of instruction that engage learners as active participants in their own immediate and future learning, learners will not use learning strategies and remain passive learners (Garner, 1990:522).Learners should be taught learning strategies and be made aware that different learning strategies exist. Learners need strategies in order to be able to sharpen their skills of achievement and understanding. Learning strategies can be divided into three main categories.

2.4 CATEGORIES OF LEARNING STRATEGIES

Pintrich (1989, 129-234) distinguishes the following main categories: cognitive, meta-cognitive and resource management strategies. Weinstein and Mayer (1986:316) differentiate between: the rehearsal, elaboration, organizational, comprehension and affective strategies.

The impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies will be the main focus in the discussion of these categories. Achievement will equally feature in the discussion as explained in preceding paragraphs. Emphasis will be on the three strategies used in this study. These are: summarizing, paraphrasing and self-questioning (see appendix three).

2.4.1 Cognitive strategies

According to Pintrich (1989:130) cognitive strategies include: the rehearsal, elaboration and organizational strategies. Cognitive strategies include learning strategies related to learner's learning and encoding of the material, as well as strategies to facilitate retrieval of information.

2.4.1.1 Rehearsal strategies

Rehearsal strategies are aimed at acquisition and selection of information (Gagne, 1977:160). A learner cannot be able to either transfer information from the working memory into the long term memory or vice versa if she/he did not comprehend what was learned.

The manner in which the majority of the learners from informal settlement environments responded to questions in appendix three, showed that they had difficulty engaging learning strategies. Many failed to select the main idea of the text given in appendix three. This was in spite of the fact that key words or main ideas were underline, highlighted and italics used. They could not apply prior knowledge that underlined, highlighted and words in italics represented the main idea of the text. This was taught to them before attempting the questions. They could have used these words to summarize the text.

However, the few that recalled that underlined, highlighted and words in italics were main or key words, did well to summarize the text. They understood that key words guided them to shorten the text without changing its meaning.

According to (Pressley, 1986 in Pintrich 1988:76) learners who are engaged in underlining words and sentences recall substantially more information and achieve better than learners who do not employ such learning strategies. One learner from informal settlement environment blamed lack of resources at home as a contributory factor to her not being able to repeat at home, what she did at school. She explained that another learner from the township attributed her good performance to the fact that, when she reaches home, her parents assist her and give her a chance to study. Rehearsal strategies are supplemented by elaboration strategies. Elaboration strategies assist learners to integrate information.

2.4.1.2 Elaboration strategies

Pintrich (1989:131) posits that with elaboration strategies, learners engage in summarizing, asking questions and paraphrasing. Paraphrasing refers to stating meaning of paragraphs in other words than that in the book. Learners have to state contents of the text in their own words without distorting the meaning of the given text. Success in paraphrasing results in better storage and retrieval of the information and give rise to better achievement at school. (Pintrich, 1989:131).

In the given text in appendix three, most learners from informal settlement environments copied the contents of the text as presented. Some learners chose paragraphs from the text and rewrote them as they were. They thought by rewriting the text, they were paraphrasing. This further indicated the difficulty these learners encountered to engage learning strategies.

Learners who managed to identify main ideas were able to construct questions using underlined words. These learners were able to identify the connection between main ideas and construction of questions by using the underlined words. They were also able to identify important segments of the learning material (Schunk, 1991:158). Most learners in this study struggled to construct

relevant questions. Instead, some referred questions to the researcher. Elaboration strategies are supplemented by organizational strategies.

2.4.1.3 Organizational strategies

According to Weinstein and Mayer (1986:321) organizational strategies help learners to organize items from a list into groups on the basis of shared attributes. Most learners from informal settlement environment despite that main ideas were indicated, they still could not list given items into groups. They failed to notice that all underlined, highlighted and words in italics shared the same attributes. That they were main ideas or key words.

2.5 META-COGNITIVE STRATEGIES

Weinstein (1987:590) defines meta-cognitive strategies as learner's knowledge of cognition. Learners have to become aware of a fact. Had learners recalled that underlined, highlighted and words written in italics were key words, they could have done well to answer the question on the selection of main ideas.

2.5.1 Affective strategies

Affective strategies include methods learners use to help create and maintain climates for learning (Weinstein, 1987:593). Learners are expected to manage their learning environment and studying in a quiet place, free of distractions. Given the conditions learners from informal settlement environments grow up under, and from what the researcher observed when visiting their parents, it would be impossible for these learners to create a sound climate for learning. Learners from informal settlement environment live in overcrowded "homes". There is a lot of movement. Quality studying is not always possible in the presence of distractions. The place should be quiet and free of distractions.

Some of the "houses" visited by the researcher were built from black plastics. The noise made by these plastics was so irritating and disturbing. The researcher could not stand the noise just for

the short duration of the visit. Some do not have windows it was so dark inside and it was during the day when the researcher visited. One imagines how these learners could cope under such conditions.

Pintrich (1989:131) state that the learning environment should be both visual, auditory and quite. It should be organized in such a way as to increase the level of attention, promote performance and prevent thoughts from directing attention away from studying. Affective strategies are supplemented by resource managerial strategies. Attention is now turned to resource management.

2.6 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

According to Pokay and Brumenfeld (1990:42) resource managerial strategies are meant to control resources such as time, effort and support by others. These influence the quality and quantity of their involvement in a learning task. Stenberg (1985) in Pintrich (1989:133) infer that all the above mentioned strategies, aid learners to adapt to the environment as well as changing the environment to fit their needs.

For learners from informal settlement environment, it would really be impossible or very difficult to adapt to the conditions of their specific environment. It would also be impossible to expect these learners to change their environment to fit their needs. Another learner during the interview indicated that he could not finish home work because there was no candle at home. Some stay away from school for weeks or months because there was no transport fare.

Some had to move from one informal settlement to the other because they were forcefully removed by government officials, police or local authorities. Some had their shacks blown away by wind or eroded by torrential rains.

2.6.1 Time management

It is difficult for learners from informal settlement to manage and control their study time. They hardly have a study space at “home”. They always lag behind with their studies. They cannot do or finish home work due to conditions in their environments.

2.6.2 Effort management

Pintrich (1989:135) indicates that effort management is related to the learner's motivational pattern. The informal settlement environment conditions and lack of parental assistance do not motivate learners from such environments. There are no relevant learning resources to supplement learning at school. There is no study space, no food, water, sanitation.

Learners are required to manage their task and know its requirements, know different learning strategies and be able to manage those learning strategies. They even lack self motivation because nothing motivates them in their environments.

2.6.3 Support by others

Support by others refer to human resource for assistance. In this study, support specifically refer to parental support. According to Duncan (1992:5) parent's support in the education context refer to the former's involvement and assistance with, concern for, and interest in their children's education. Parental concern and support is positively related to children's achievement at school (Leung, 1996:5).

Moller (1994:9) contends that parent's support is the backbone of the family which provides practical assistance like collecting books for their children from the library and photocopy for them to enable them to complete assignments at home and to increase the knowledge needed for success with school work. The most significant outcome of a positive parental involvement is a happy child who in turn, is encouraged and helped to learn both at school and at home. It is believed that families of successful children eat dinner together and that parents spend time talking to their children (Drum Magazine, 2002:62). In informal settlement environment, there is hardly space for studying nor a room enough for all family members to come together like a family.

Kapp (1991:125) points out that communication between parents and children can increase the latter's language acquisition which is the contributing factor towards the child's performance at

school. Conversation about everyday events, encouragement for poor school performance and advice how or which learning strategies can be used to improve the child's academic achievement at school, form part of the support parents can offer their children. Sometimes children's poor performance is due to the fact that children cannot correctly direct their learning process towards the learning goal (Weinstein and Mayer, 1986:10). Parents can assist by introducing to children learning strategies which help to adjust and remedy weaknesses and failures discovered during the learning process. For example, selection strategy in order for learners to be able to select important sections of the text especially when summarizing. Parents, together with their children, could re read and review which helps to adjust or modify cognition where necessary in order to improve the child's usage of strategies (Somuncoglu and Yildirim, 1999:35). Children growing in squatter environments do not have privacy of being alone with their parents to discuss matters affecting them at school and personally such that parents of those children seem not to be aware of their children's strengths and weaknesses due to lack of interaction and understanding of what is learned at school.

According to Martin (1993:31) children who lack encouragement from their parents because the latter do not assist with school work, for example, monitoring or checking it, are likely to suffer emotional distress that can negatively affect their achievement. Parents can also show support and boost the child's ego by accompanying the latter to school ceremonies like awards, athletics, sport, other activities and parent evenings among others (Seitz, Rosenbaum and Apfel 1985:388). Parents from informal settlement environment indicated that they did not attend school activities since they did not gain from doing so. They claim that they did not understand most of what is taught at schools. Distance between "home" and school is another contributing factor since they did not afford transport fare to school. Parents must show a genuine interest on what their children are learning not just show interest in a test or examination (Drum Magazine, 2002:62) children whose parents take an interest in their school work become happy, confident, become interested too and gear to earn top grades at school.

As parents from informal settlement environment indicated that they did not understand what is being taught at school and that they cannot read perhaps they could ask the assistance of other people. Give themselves a chance to go to school and have educators to explain to them in their

home language what is being done at school. With time, if they show an interest, they could understand the schools activities. This could be an encouragement to the child.

As indicated in the preceding paragraphs that aspects which has reference to the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies feature in the discussions of this study, the following paragraphs give attention to some of these aspects.

2.6.3.1 The extended family

le Roux (1994: 110) defines an extended family as a form of family structure where three or more generations of blood relations such as uncles, aunts, grandparents and in-laws live in the same house in an extended parent-child relationship. Goets (1993:5) however, states that an extended family extends beyond a household and include significant persons who are not related by blood marriage.

According to Martin (1993:127) extended family members could assist by provide financial aid which is essential for improving academic achievement like paying for excursions. According to Drazen (1992:40) additional adults seem to help children with reading so as to provide cognitive stimulation that is essential for improving school performance. Other members can help with home work, monitoring school progress, giving extra lessons so that the combined levels of intellectual functioning of family members can positively influence the child's intellectual development and achievement (Scott-Jones, 1984:274).

According to (Moller, 1994:7) extended families seem to have an edge over smaller families when allocating educational support roles by drawing on a large pool of human resources to provide educational support of parents, grandparents, siblings and other members in the household. Acquisition of relevant learning resources in the home could assist the learner to expand her/his knowledge of learning strategies. Learning strategies would enhance his learning and achievement.

le Roux (1994:44) argues that extended families in most instances live in overcrowded homes as would be the case with families from squatter camps. Children from overcrowded larger families would not have enough study space, parents would suffer financial pressures that might prevent them funding for their children and providing the necessary learning materials that are indispensable for improving achievement, and acquisition of learning strategies.

The researcher of this study found the opposite of what some researchers contend. Most families could hardly buy candles for their children to study. Most indicated lack of education on their part as a reason for not being able to assist their children with school work. Most parents did not even attend school activities like parents meetings. They did not understand what their children were learning at school.

As some family members could be well educated, they could provide children with modern learning resources like the computer to enrich their children with the technology skills needed to cope with the technically advanced society we live in and to enable them to compete internationally by promoting all aspects of technology, planning, design and manufacturing (Gauteng Department of Education, 1997:14).

Alstone and Mclanahan (1991:319) however argue that some extended family members could be less willing to invest time (of providing supervision), and money in unrelated children. Inadequate after school supervision has been found to be negatively associated with academic achievement. Other factors might be that most parents from extended families may not afford to take their children for entertainment like to the movies or games to expose them to the outside world to gain the experience they might apply in their learning to increase their school performance. This might be due to the fact that parents from informal settlement environment did not have the money. Most were unemployed and depended on piece jobs and social grants from the Government.

2.6.3.2 Sibsize

The number of children in the home may correlate with children's achievement at school (Schaefer, 1991:243). The number of children in the family can either play facilitative or

impending role in the child's progress at school. (le Roux, 1994:86) this means that the number of children in the home can impact negatively or positively on the child's educational attainment and performance because, the larger the number of children in the family, the more difficult may be for parents to provide the relevant learning material that could expand the child's knowledge of learning strategies and enhance her/his learning and achievement (Moller, 1994:2).

Children from larger families who are likely to be from squatter camps, where almost all relatives live together in the same household are likely to attain less schooling on the average than children from smaller families, likely to be from township or elite areas. Parents from large families are likely to spend their resources more thinly than would parents with a fewer number of children. (Alstone and McLanahan, 1991:321). In large families, parents tend not to have the time, energy or ability to interact with each child as an individual such that the latter takes advantage of the situation at home by not doing school work and playing truant (James, 1994:28).

Overcrowding in informal settlement environment also makes it difficult for learners to create a meaningful study environment. Because most of their parents did not receive formal education, parents could not assist with school work or methods of study to enhance their children's learning.

Kapp (1991:30) reports that favourable socio-economic conditions are likely to prevail in smaller families because the fewer the number of children, the larger their share of attention, supervision, and family finances which can provide children with learning resources to improve their achievement and acquisition of learning strategies and nutritious food for better thinking. Favourable socio-economic status conditions could also enable the parents to provide educational experience by enrolling their children in extra-curricular classes. However, parents from informal settlement environments may not afford payment for extra lessons. Since they do not have the money. Extra classes would enhance the learners marks at school. Learners would also be armed with different learning strategies. Undertaking vacations and excursions during school holidays as a form of entertainment, would broaden children's social life and assist them to use the experience on school projects to earn good marks (Scahefer, 1991:244).

Large families suffer pressure such as less investment of money to provide for their children, time, to spend quality time with their children and to assist with school work as they may not be able to allocate sufficient time among all of their children. Emotional and psychic energy in each child (Alstone and McInahan, 1991:32). Scott-Jones (1984:335) infer that with a smaller sibsize, parents could afford needs and enhance their children's cognitive development by providing suitable living home and study space which may mediate the family's influence on cognitive and physical development.

According to Crystal (1990:312) children from smaller families can as a result of their parents capability to provide for their needs, show greater achievement at school and attend college in greater numbers than can their counterparts from large sibsize. The reason might be that the fewer the sibsize, the more years of school they eventually complete as their parents can afford fees and relevant material needs in such institutions (Bianchi, 1990:37).

Continuous and advanced schooling could widen the horizon for children from smaller families so that the children could, after the completion of schooling, earn themselves high profile positions in jobs with higher salaries, greater productivity and better health (Bianchi, 1990:37). According to (Smith, 1977:29) children of families who are always worried that their "property" could be bulldozed at any time, do not normally stay long in school as they do not have a chance to attend school properly. Most squatter camp children live in overcrowded homes and could not spend a long time in school as a result of moving from one place to another and they may not acquire knowledge associated with their interests and hobbies. Squatter camp children may not get a chance for strategy training for lifelong learning (Derry, 1989:10).

2.6.3.3 Mother's level of education

Jubber (1988:29) postulates that the level and amount of formal education a mother has received, measure her cognition enhancing quality. The knowledge and experience the mother possess of formal learning and schooling, would enable her to assist her children in school matters such as the choice of subjects and careers (Jubber, 1988:292). This include the different learning strategies which the learner needs to attain a goal of learning.

Due to the appropriate cognition enhancing attitude approaches, higher volumes of certain content of reading, higher verbal skills, more highly educated mothers are better equipped to assist their children with homework and assignments, and choice of appropriate learning strategies when completing assignments and other learning content (Bianchi, 1990:20).

According to Benjamin (1991:1) highly educated mothers have greater success in providing their children with the cognitive language skills that contribute to early success in school than less educated mothers likely to be from informal settlement environment as many did not receive formal education. Because of their possession of the stock of knowledge, broadly acquired language skills, highly educated mother's likely to be those from affluent areas than from squatter camps, are likely to communicate more with their children, provide stimulating reading material, to teach the latter appropriate learning strategies, how to select and use them to achieve better at school (Jubber, 1988:291).

In Kapp's view (1991:125) when the language of the environment in which children grow up is enriched, children from such homes are enabled to express themselves easily and freely both mutually and in writing of, for example, compositions and reports to earn them good marks at school. Responses of the learners from informal settlement environment in appendix three depicted the poor language usage by these learners. At one stage during the interview, one learner asked if it would be fine if he responded in his mother language. He could not express himself in English.

Highly educated mothers also have a tendency to interact more with their children's teachers so that they know what is going on with their children's learning and be able to follow their progress (Shriver and Kramer, 1993:258). Sorensen (1994:32) postulates that interaction of parents and teachers could help the child to put more weight on his studies since he (child) becomes aware of the interest his parents show on his studies. Parents from informal settlement environment indicated that they very seldom attended school activities including meetings. The reason was lack of transport fare and the fact that they do not understand what their children learn at school. Educators and principals also reported this during interviews with them.

2.6.3.4 Father's level of education

Kapp (1991:125) contends that highly educated father's earnings can enable them to provide their children with the western technological set up such as the internet in order for the latter to communicate with the outside world to broaden their knowledge and expand their network of study friends, for example. Access to the internet could help children to be abreast of the world's happenings and could use information accessed through the internet in their learning to enhance their possession of learning strategies which would influence their achievement (Strand, 1988:33).

Guthrie, Seifers and Kirsch (1988:153) a stimulating environment can provide children with reading practices. Children whose fathers have attained high levels of education are likely to have higher reading achievements as the latter might spend quality time reading to his children to instill in them the love for reading. Reading helps to increase children's vocabulary needed for discussions, communication and success in answering questions at school and to improve their achievement (Powell and Steelman, 1990:4). Through constant and supervised reading, learners can develop skills for note taking, selection of key words, paraphrasing and asking questions to deepen their understanding of the text content.

2.6.3.5 Mother's occupation

According to Jubber (1988:292) a mother's occupation plays an important role in determining the quality and quantity of school relevant information she has attained. Scott-Jones (1984:269) contends that mothers occupying high positions at work are likely to broaden their children's knowledge by providing them with the necessary information leading to improved achievement and acquisition of learning strategies.

Greenberger and O'neil (1992:42) report that mothers who occupy professional, managerial or high profile administrative positions tend to have a vast knowledge about various careers and requirements there of. It is unlikely that mothers from squatter camps could occupy high positions

since most squatter camp residents are migrants from impoverished rural areas who never attended formal school but move into cities in search of employment and wealth (Bourdillon, 1991:1).

Pressley and McCormick (1995:26) postulate that mothers who are highly learned and occupying prestigious positions would reinforce the learning strategies taught at school when assisting their children with assignments at home by showing the latter how to paraphrase, summarize or take notes for example. Unlike their counterparts parents from informal settlement environment who did not even know what their children are learning because they did not understand what is done at school.

According to Derry (1989:5) learning strategies require knowledge of specific learning skills or tactics such as skimming and memorization among others. It is unlikely that reliance on any single learning tactic alone will ensure the creation of a well constructed knowledge but multiple tactics are usually required. For example, if an elaboration technique is applied for the purpose of enhancing individual ideas, another schema-building tactic may be needed to relate ideas together (Weinstein and Meyer, 1986). In this way, learners acquisition of learning strategies would be greatly enhanced (Derry, 1989:8). Since it is important that in the end, a successful learner must be able to master learning independently (Weinstein, 1987:1) stresses the importance to foster learning autonomy through the use of learning strategies. According to Weinstein (1987:1) learners will be helped to develop the competencies and attitudes needed for self directed learning that would probably improve their school performance.

As a result of the hardships such as overcrowding at home, leaking roofs during rainy days, lack of learning resources at home, lack of parental knowledge of learning strategies, children from the squatter camps often falter, may fall hopelessly behind making it increasingly difficult for them to remain motivated and ever achieving poorly at school.

2.6.3.6 Father's occupation

According to Jubber (1994:139) in most families, the father's occupation largely establishes the family's economic status and influence the choice of schools. Children of fathers in high positions

at work are likely to achieve more than children whose fathers occupy lower positions likely to be those from informal settlement environment (Jubber, 1988:289). The reason might be that, occupation of higher posts are usually associated with a higher salary that can enable fathers in top positions to provide their children with stimulating learning resources such as electronic games for better learning. Fathers of learners from informal settlement environment usually survive on piece jobs which does not enable them to provide their children with basic needs, such as food and proper shelter. Since children learn better through play and do not easily forget what they have learned this way, electronic games are likely to improve their achievement at school (Sorensen, 1994:23). Toys such as blocks, paints, tools, crayons, backyard activities and kitchen projects can be used as foods for creative minds (Drum magazine, 2002:62).

Sorensen (1994:23) points out that better financial conditions in the home can enable fathers in high positions to hire private tutors for their children in order to help the latter to further achieve better academically. Private tutors are likely to be knowledgeable in the application of different strategies which they can teach these children to broaden the knowledge acquired at school. These include the following: summarizing, paraphrasing and self-questioning, monitoring and selecting for example (Somuncough and Yildirim, 1999).

According to McCracken, Barlinas and Wims (1991:52) children whose parents hold high occupational status tend to become progressively more like their parents because they tend to develop educational and occupational plan that build upon their background and experience unlike their counterparts from squatter camps who grow up in poor environments and whose parents either occupy lower positions or do not work at all.

Fathers who hold scientific and technological careers are likely to propel their children towards fully fledged science career jobs (Nevitte, Gibbins and Cudding, 1988:4). It should however be remembered that it is not automatic that children of successful parents become successful as well but that, they have to learn. If parents instill a love for learning early on, their children are more likely to go on to become achievers in high school (Drum magazine, 1992:62). Learning is a form of problem solving that involves analyzing a learning task and devising a strategy appropriate for that particular situation (Moller, 1994:2). These children must also know that part of being a good

student is learning to be aware of one's own mind and the degree of one's own understanding (Nisbet and Schucksmith, 1986:3). Children must be taught to view learning as a privilege not a problem (Drum magazine, 2002:62).

Because of the assistance they receive from home, children of fathers in high positions tend to be motivated and have a positive self-esteem. They tend to use effective strategies and exhibit adaptive behaviours in the face of difficulties and changes and are able to set themselves learning goals that involve challenge and acquire effort in attempts to improve their learning when faced with failure. They would try new learning strategies to overcome their difficulties. Learners with high self-efficacy have been shown to actively participate in learning activities, show great effort and persistence, and achieve higher level of academic performance (Qian and Alvermann, 2000:183). The success and motivation of these children might be motivational by conditions in their environment, the support of parents, accessibility to relevant learning strategies.

In contrast, learners from informal settlement environment that cannot provide them with learning materials that is not supportive and, where parents did not receive formal education develop low self-esteem, low self efficacy, do not persist, apply ineffective learning strategies, do not exert effort, easily give up and tend to achieve poorly at school (Pintrich, 1995:45).

2.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter two focused on the investigation of the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies for grade seven learners.

Some aspects which have reference to the informal settlement environment have been included in the discussion. These includes: The extended family, sibsize, mothers level of education, fathers level of education, mothers occupation, fathers occupation, and parental support. Learning strategies too, were defined and discussed.

Literature claims that the impact of informal settlement environment including aspects mentioned above, have a negative impact on learning strategies. It is postulated that children grown up in squatter camps do not learn as much as their counterparts from the township. This is due to

various factors discussed in chapter two. These include: lack of relevant learning resources, lack of study space, lack of electricity, lack of family support, inability to use learning strategies well.

It became evident that given equal opportunities, children from informal settlement environment can perform as well as children from the township. Children cannot be expected to learn well and achieve well when they are always not at school. The uncertainty of where their next shelter will be or where their next meal will come from, disturb children from informal settlement environment greatly. Their cognition is also affected.

The discussion of chapter two indicates that there is a relationship between the environment in which children grow up and learning strategies. Responses by learners from informal settlement environment on learning strategies showed that these children had a problem understanding and using strategies. This indicated the extend to which learning strategies can influence achievement. In the next chapter the research design methodology and collection of data are discussed.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two discussed how living in the informal settlement environment impact on learning strategies of grade seven learners from such environments.

According to literature, some aspects of the informal settlement environment impact negatively on the effective use of, and ability to appropriately apply learning strategies when learning, which in turn affect their performance at school. It is important that educators possess a vast knowledge of the different learning strategies. Possession of learning strategies by educators would benefit every learner as the former pass the knowledge to the latter. Learners who possess a variety of learning strategies would be able to accomplish a learning goal.

It is also important to indicate that parents too, need to have knowledge about learning strategies. The importance of this is that the learners acquisition, application and knowledge of different learning strategies would be further broadened. Parents would also buy their children relevant learning resources on learning strategies. They would also assist with home work.

Chapter three discusses the research design and the methodology processes and procedures employed to collect data from participants or subjects.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 Research design

According to Wellman and Kruger (1999:46) a research design is a plan according to which we obtain research participants or subjects of analysis. Data is also collected from participants. The research design describes what we are going to do with the participants with a view to reaching conclusions about the research problem. The above will be discussed in the following paragraphs. These include, the research method used in this study, which is the qualitative research method, population and sample, interviews with participants and data collection respectively.

McMillan and Schumacher (1993:1) state that a research design help researchers to obtain evidence to provide the most valid answers to research questions. Sometimes though, participants would not be willing to disclose the truth about some issues directly affecting them. The design describes the procedure for conducting the study. It indicates when, from whom and under what conditions will the data be obtained (McMillan and Schumacher,1999:46). According to Babbie (1990:83) a research design is about what you are going to observe and analyze. Why you want to observe it and how you are going to do such observations. A research design is therefore, a strategy for finding out something.

McMillan and Schumacher (1999:46) classify designs into two major approaches. These are, the qualitative and quantitative approaches or methodologies respectively. Mention need to be made though that there are a variety of research methods available to researchers. Certain concepts are more appropriately studied by some methods than by others (Bless and Higson-Smith, 2000:36).

The researcher chooses the method relevant to her/his particular problem or topic of investigation. In other words, the research problem or area of study determines the type of a research method to investigate it (Bless and Higson-Smith, 2000:36). The qualitative

approach or method was found to be the most appropriate for this study. This shall be evident in the paragraphs to follow.

3.2.2 Qualitative research method

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (200:36) qualitative research refer to the meaning, concepts, characteristics and definition of things. Quality refers to the what, how, when and where of a thing.

According to Denzil and Lincoln (1994:2) a qualitative research tends to be field-focused. Subjects are observed in action in their natural environment. In this study, subjects or participants were observed in their respective classroom set-ups. It tends to be easy to carry one's observation in the subjects natural environment because they are familiar to it.

With the qualitative research, the researcher gets first hand information from participants. This enabled the researcher to give a detailed account of how grade seven learners from informal settlement environments employ learning strategies when learning. Learning strategies observed in the study were self-questioning, summarizing and paraphrasing respectively. Researchers of this approach believe that human actions are strongly influenced by the environments in which people find themselves.

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:36) infer that a qualitative research uses qualifying words or sentences to describe or record aspects of the world. Language becomes the tool by which social reality is recorded. The researcher of this study communicated with participants through language. Personal interviews for example, involve the use of a language. Interviews can be in writing or verbal. In both ways, language is engaged.

The learners under investigation were, for example, expected to answer questions in appendix three. The researcher used the interview guide to gather information from participants. This section was about their human experiences. They were expected to

describe how the informal settlement environment impact or affect their use of learning strategies while learning. The researcher was able to record their individual human experiences from the information gathered from their responses.

According to Wellman and Kruger (1999:186) qualitative field studies can be used successfully in the description of small groups, communities or organizations. That is why this study confined itself to grade seven learners from informal settlement environments sampled from selected schools in selected Provinces (Bloemfontein, Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga). Confinement to small groups enabled researchers of this study to reach out to all participants. Researchers were able to interact with all participants. Introverts were also detected during observation processes. Working with small groups also assisted the researcher to control the situation and participants. One girl was so quite that the researcher noticed her as the group was small and manageable for the researcher to notice each participant.

McMillan and Schumacher (1993:15) contend that the approach was found to be more concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from the participants perspective. This is enabled by personal interaction between researchers and participants. This was found to be true by the researcher of this study and partners. They gained a better understanding of the social phenomena of these learners from the learners perspective. This was due to the responses by the learners. These learners cited poverty as the reason for stealing from other children at school. They also indicated that at times, they were forced to scavenge from rubbish bins or knock from house to house asking for food. Some said at times they joined street kids to beg for food or money from passersby. They said that living in informal settlement environments contributed to the bad things they did. In the same breath, they indicated that they did not condone their actions. Only if their living conditions could be improved, their actions could also improve.

Wellman and Kruger (1999:186) concur with the above statement by stating that human actions are strongly influenced by the environments in which individuals find themselves.

3.2.3 Characteristics of qualitative research

- Presentation of facts in a narration with words for example, when the researcher is interacting with respondents, they will be engaged in talking, asking questions and getting the answers.
- Researchers make decisions about the data collection strategies during the study.
- Data is collected in the natural setting of respondents.
- Researcher investigates small, distinct groups such as all the learners in a selected classroom as shall be the case with this research.
- Because of its flexibility in the use of methods, participants are opportuned to freely express their feelings and impressions (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993:374).

3.2.4 Advantages of qualitative research

Ary et al (1990:447; 450) refer to the following aspects as advantages of the qualitative research approach.

- Context : The human experience cannot be divorced from social,historical, Political and cultural influences.
- The setting : Research takes place in a classroom or in the field where participants are found, talks to respondents, observe their activities and relies on interviews.

- Researcher deals with data in the form of words not the numbers and statistics.
- Researcher records accounts of the participant's ideas and feelings on the spot.
- Exploration : Participants viewpoints are explored to determine the impact of informal settlement on academic outcomes and possible preventive strategies.
- Exploration helps to develop methods to be employed in a more careful study.
- Descriptive : The researcher observes. The advantage here is first hand information from participants during intervention process. This implies that the phenomenological method will also be employed.
- Explanatory : Researchers explain and report about what was observed. Researchers were in a position to explain how the informal settlement environment impacts on learning strategies.
- Trustworthiness : The establishment of trustworthiness as based on the model of Lincoln and Guba (Kreft : 1992:217-222) the following strategies were employed.
- Credibility (truth value)
- Applicability (transferability)
- Consistency (dependability)
- Neutrality (confirmability)

3.2.5 Population and sample

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:84) population is the entire set of objects or subjects. Population is the focus of the research about which the researcher wants to determine some characteristics. Subjects for study refer to who or what we will be studying in order to collect data. Researchers have to identify their subjects, find out who is available and how they will select them (Babbie, 1990:102). The selection of who to participate in a study is important since it is almost not possible to study all the members of the population that interest us.

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:84) refer to a selection of a number of subjects from the population and studying this subset of subjects of the population as a sample. The process by which the sample is drawn from the population is known as sampling. For the purpose of sampling, a systematic sampling was employed. This is where a researcher randomly picked a number and assigned it to a subject. A three percent sample was used. This is where every third subject was selected. That is 3,6,9...and so on until the required number of ten from each of the four chosen schools was picked (McMillan and Schumacher,1993:162). The procedure for the selection of subjects for this study is described and discussed below.

Subjects for this study comprise of grade seven learners (boys and girls) from informal settlement environments. Subjects or participants were selected from the following Provinces, Bloemfontein Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga respectively. One primary school from each Province was chosen. The ages of subjects range between thirteen and sixteen. The total population from which samples were selected from the four schools combined was two hundred and seventy (270). Sample number for Bloemfontein was sixty (60) learners. Twenty five (25) boys and thirty five (35) girls. Cape had one hundred and twenty with eighty (80) boys and forty (40) girls. Gauteng's sample was forty (40) with twenty two (22) boys and eighteen (18) girls. Lastly, Mpumalanga with a total sample of fifty (50) learners, thirty (20) boys and twenty (20) girls. The total number of boys from the entire population of the four schools combined was one hundred and fifty seven (157). The entire population of the girls was one hundred and thirteen (113).

Non-probability sampling was employed. This is where the researcher uses what ever subjects or who ever is available at the time of the research.

3.2.6 Role of interview guide

According to Patton (1990:278) the purpose of interviewing participants is to allow the researcher to understand the other person's perspective. Interviews are alternative methods of collecting survey data. There are different ways of conducting interviews. Researchers have to decide on how they will conduct their particular interviews, by choosing the method or methods that best suit their specific study. Methods of study include the following: personal interviews, mail, telephone, focus or group interviews (Wortman, Loftus and Marshall, 1992: 38).

For the purpose of this study, interviews with principals, parents, educators and learners was done. An ethnographic interview was used. This kind of an interview is characterized as an unstructured or in-depth interview. This interview uses a general interview guide but not a set of specific questions worded precisely the same for every interviewee. There maybe a few general questions. The interviewee can shape the content of the interview by focusing on topics of importance or interest (McMillan and Schumacher). The interview guide in appendix three was not necessarily followed as structured. It was just a guide for researchers who were at liberty to change the wording to suit every learner as needed. This enabled interviewees feel free and give as much information as possible. During the process, researchers continuously interacted with subjects. Subjects asked where they did not understand. The content and some terms were also explained to participants. This was done in order to eliminate misconceptions and for as many questions to be attempted as possible. Provision of answers helped researchers to understand their participants perspectives better.

The researcher and partners interacted with the subjects through out the process in a bid to control both the content and the process of the interview for effective interviewing.(Rubin and Babbie,993:120).

The purpose of interviewing is to allow the researcher to understand the other person's perspective (Patton,1999:278).As a result, participants were assured of anonymity, privacy and confidentiality (Ary et al,1990:118).Voluntary participation is also of importance (Babbie,1995:440). These ethical considerations which are related to data collection are discussed below.

3.3 ETHICAL CONSIDARATIONS RELATED TO DATA COLLECTION

3.3.1 Voluntary participation

According to Babbie (1995: 440) respondents must not be forced to take part in a research process. They are also not supposed to be forced to respond to questions that they do not feel comfortable with. Participation should be voluntary Bless and Higson Smith (2000:100) support the above statement. They contend that right of participants to refuse to participate must be respected by researchers.

As the aim of the interview is to gain information about the other person's perspective (Patton, 1990:278) co-operation of respondents is key to getting as much information as possible and must be encouraged by researchers patience lack of co-operation by respondents can be disastrous in a research project. Lack of co-operation leads to non responses (Babbie,1995:442). Researchers undertake interviews to get responses. If researchers do not get the answers, the aim of interviewing will not be achieved.

3.3.2 Right to privacy

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:100) information that is private in nature becomes harmful and uncomfortable to participants. People should not be subjected to research of such a nature unless they agree to it. The right to privacy demands that direct consent must be informed (Bless and Higson- Smith, 2000:100).

Official permission was obtained from the four schools used. All relevant principals were approached in order for the researcher to present the topic under study. This enabled both the principals and their respective management members including school governing bodies to understand the researchers aim of the study.

After consultation with all stakeholders stated above, including the grade seven educators, the necessary arrangements were made to meet and select the learners who took part in the process. Participants were ensured of privacy of their identities. The reason being the nature of the topic under investigation.

Every participant was further requested to sign a consent letter to indicate that she or he agreed to take part in the interview. In Mpumalanga and Bloemfontein, the researcher's partners visited the schools involved.

Herbst (1989:179) indicates that researchers do not necessarily have to collect data on their own. Other researchers can be asked to do this. Hence the researcher was helped by other researchers in other Provinces. This helps in terms of saving time and money for the researcher.

According to Bless And Higson-Smith (2000:109) the employment of many interviewers in data collection enables researchers to deal with large samples more quickly than if only one interviewer collects all the data.

The researcher prepared all the necessary documentation and gave it to each researcher. This took place in a meeting held by the three researchers prior to the interview process. The three researchers discussed the contents and agreed that no fixed format was to be adhered to. Telephonic communication took place throughout the process until the three met again for the presentation of results, reports and drawing of conclusions.

3.3.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:100) state that most people agree to divulge information of a private nature on condition that their identities or names would not be mentioned. In the study under investigation, participant's identities and those of their respective schools were not revealed. The names used are not respondents real names. Their schools were only identified as the G- school referring to Gauteng school, B-school for Bloemfontein, M-school for Mpumalanga, lastly C-school for Cape school.

In the research, anonymity was not maintained since the researchers personally interacted with respondents. But, confidentiality was however maintained throughout the process. Data collected from participants was used for the purpose of investigating the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:104) data collection refers to ways of gathering information from participants. Different methods for different topics under study are used. A non-scheduled interview was used, Interviewees were free to expand on the topic as they saw fit. Most focused on particular aspects of their home environment, in this case, the informal settlement environment. They related their own experiences from such environments (Bless and Higson-Smith 2000:105). This was indicated in the following paragraphs. The non-scheduled interview was found to be useful in exploratory research where the research questions cannot be narrowly defined. This gives respondents a chance to freely expand when giving information on the topic (Bless and Higson-Smith, 2000:105).

The interviewers interacted with the interviewees throughout. They intervened where necessary. The interviewers recorded the information gathered on the spot. The learners, parents, educators and principals were interviewed. Interviewing is a selected means for data collection. Information gathered through interviews with different interviewees was discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.4.1 Individual interviews with respondents/learners

Researchers conducted individual interviews with selected learners from the four schools chosen. The researcher and the participants through school management agreed on the times, dates, and venues for the interview. In a Gauteng school interviews were conducted in Sesotho, Isizulu, Isixhosa and English. The reason for this was that respondents spoke different languages.

The researcher's partner in Gauteng is very fluent in both Isizulu and Isixhosa whilst the researcher is fluent in Sesotho and can communicate in both Isizulu and Isixhosa to a limit. The process ran well with few disruptions explained in chapter four when discussing encountered problems.

Most learners felt free to respond in their mother tongue. They were able to respond appropriately. Few responses were given when they were asked questions in English. Most learners from informal settlement environments experienced problems communicating in English.

3.4.2 Individual interviews with principals

As most of the responses and the experiences of both the principals, parent, and educators were similar, they will not be discussed separately.

All principals indicated lack of employment by parents from informal settlement environments as the reason for the failure on the part of parents to provide their children with the relevant learning resources to enhance their children's acquisition of the learning strategies. Principals also indicated the following aspects as impediments for parents to assist their children. Lack of proper education and proper housing, due to overcrowding among others.

Principals also indicated that most parents do not attend parents meetings. They did not have money for transport to schools. Most families from informal settlement environments live very far from schools.

Most parents could not afford to buy their children uniform nor to provide them with a lunch box. They could also not help their children with home work as they did not understand what is done at school.

Principals indicated that some learners loose school books issued to them. The books got lost when families were forcibly removed by the government authorities or local municipalities for illegal squatting. Some “homes” were burnt in the process in this way, schools loose learning material supplied by the education department, which could not be replaced. This cause shortages of resources for the school.

3.4.3 Focus or group interviews with parents

Some parents were not very keen to be interviewed. When they listened to others freely discussing their problems they joined in. Like their children, one had to use different languages. Most stated lack of unemployment, lack of skills, lack of education, overcrowding as some of the reasons for not been able to assist their children with school work.

Most blamed the government for not speeding the process of providing housing. They how ever, appreciated the government’s efforts by providing the RDP houses for the poor. They also blamed the government for not providing them with skills in order for them to be able to maintain their children. Majority also blamed the government for not building schools nearer their squatters. These are some of the aspects parents indicated, not all parents were interviewed. It was very strenuous to get all of them.

3.4.4 Focus or group interview with educators

The interview took place in the educators respective staffrooms. They indicated their frustrations when interacting with learners from informal settlement environments. They cited lack of proper meals as one of the reasons why these children did not do well at school. Parents lack of formal education as the reason for not being able to assist with home work. Also to provide learning resources to use at home so as to expand their children knowledge of learning strategies.

Most educators indicated that most parents do not come to school when called to discuss their children's learning problems. Parents cited lack of transport money and the fact that they did not understand what their children were learning. Most educators indicated that most learners did not stay with their biological parents. Most stayed with grand parents who depended on social grants from the government to feed the whole family.

Most learners according to educators, do not do or complete home work. It is either that they did not understand, no one could assist, there were no relevant resources at home. Children also cited fights, noise or that there were no lights here referring to candles. Educators indicated that some learners come to school unwashed because no one went to fetch water kilometers away from home. Some learners cited non-availability of soap or Vaseline as the reason for not being tidy. All the above and other factors not stated here impacted negatively on learners from informal settlement environments learning and general performance.

In all meetings researchers held with participants, an agreement was reached on the times, dates, and venues that the interviews took place. Interviews went smoothly. Different languages were used in order to accommodate every participant for maximum participation. Maxim participation enabled researchers to gather as much information as possible.

The above discussed interviews were personal interviews because researchers directly interacted with respondents. Subsequent paragraphs discuss advantages and disadvantages of personal interviews.

3.5 INTERVIEW AS A SURVEY METHOD

According to Patton (1990:278) the purpose of interviewing participants is to allow the researcher to understand the other person's perspective. Interviews are alternative methods of collecting survey data. There are different ways of conducting interviews from which researchers have to decide on how they will conduct their particular interviews so that they are able to choose the method that best suit their specific study. These are; personal interviews, mail, telephone, focused or group interviews (Wortman et al, 1992:38).

For the purpose of this study, personal interviews were conducted where the researcher provided respondents with a passage to complete (Babbie,1990:264). Rubin and Babbie (1993:120) state that it is important for the interviewer to control both the content and the process of the interview for effective interviewing.

The interview of this study was be carried in a standardized way in order to minimize bias and to basically obtain the same information from all participants. As the purpose of interviewing is to allow the researcher to understand the other person's perspective, the latter were assured of privacy and confidentiality (Ary et al, 1990:118). As evident from preceding paragraphs and briefly in subsequent one's, qualitative research which is the method for this study, appear to correlate with interviewing as a selected means for gathering information (Berg, 1995:35)

Leedy (1993:142) reports that the qualitative method is field focused. This method regards the self as an instrument which is engaged in the process of interviewing. It displays the use of expressive language and the presence of voice in the text.

In conclusion, this kind of an encounter whereby the researcher directly interacts with the interviewer is referred to as a structured conversation (Crossley and Vulliamy, 1997:135)

3.5.1 Personal interviews using the interview guide

According to Mcmillan and Schumacher (1993:238) an interview guide is relatively economical, has standardized questions, can ensure privacy. It is the intention of this study to keep respondents identities confidential. Questions are asked for specific reasons. Questions can be written for specific purposes. For example, questions on part B of appendix 3 are specifically written to get data on how life in informal settlements affect learners academic achievement and acquisition of learning strategies.

Closed form items (also called structured or closed-ended) was used to interview respondents. This method was found to be best for obtaining demographic information and data that can be categorized easily (Mcmillan and Schumacher, 1993:243). In this piece of work, the researcher looked into the demographic information of learners from informal settlements and data was categorized according to certain learning strategies, their sub-skills and the impact that the informal settlement environment might have on learning strategies.

Scoring using closed form item was found to be easy with a large number of subjects as it was the case with this research. (Mcmillan and Schumacher, 1993:243) also state that categories created using this method, allowed participants to freely indicate their feelings or beliefs. It was the aim of part B items in appendix 3 to allow respondents to freely and honestly express their feelings about informal settlement environment they grow up in and how it affects them in their learning. Some learners indicated changes they wished for to enhance their situation. Many wished that their parents could get employment and build better houses. Some wished to move to better areas.

3.5.2 Advantages of personal interviews

- Direct interaction between interviewer and interviewee (Wortman et al, 1992:38).

- Presence of interviewer generally decreases the number of “don’t knows” and “no answers”.(Babbie, 1990:265) as clarity is dealt with immediately.
- Respondents usually contacted in their natural environment e.g. classroom.
- It allows greater flexibility in asking questions (Wortman et al, 1992:38) and (Shaughnessy and Zechmeister, 1994:144).
- Respondents afforded opportunity for clarification when they do not quite understand questions.
- Interviewer can probe for answers for example, if you had to choose the answer that most suit you, which do you think would come closest to your feelings?
- If the interviewer maintains neutrality through out the interviewing process and this goal becomes successfully attainable or accomplished, then, different interviewers would obtain exactly the same responses from a given respondent. This shows the element of validity, reliability, trustworthiness, credibility and applicability (Babbie 1990:265) and (Lyncoln and Guba in Kreft model, 1992:217-222).
- The interviewer controls the sequencing of questions and can ensure that all respondents complete the provided sheet in the same order (Shaughnessy and Zechmeister, 1994:144).
- It is accessible, adaptable research tool to get large amounts of data quickly.
- Traditionally, the response rate has been higher comparatively speaking than other methods.
- Interview permits greater depths than other methods. (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993:390).

3.5.3 DISADVANTAGES OF PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

- Growing fear of urban crime for example, in this study having to drive to squatter camps with no standard infrastructure in place and non-visibility of the police force in the streets, have reduced the attractiveness of conducting personal interviews in the home.
- It is costly in terms of money and time the researcher has to spend to drive to the participants natural setting.
- Potential for interviewer bias and subjectivity. The latter occurs when the interviewer tries to modify the wording of a question to fit the respondent or records only selected portions of the respondent's answers (Shaughnessy and Zechmeister, 1994:145).
- The interviewee may be uncomfortable to share all the information the interviewer hopes to explore.
- 3.5.4 General rules for interviewing
- They vary according to survey population and nature of survey content
- Appearance and demeanor : It is important to dress in fashion similar to that of people you will be interviewing. A richly dressed interviewer will probably have difficulty getting good co-operation and responses from poorer respondents and a poorly dressed interviewer will have similar difficulties with richer respondents.
- Be pleasant, because the interviewer will be prying into the respondent's personal life and attitudes.

- Friendly, relaxed atmosphere without being too casual. The interviewee deserves to enjoy the moment and experience to disclose their personal information (Babbie, 1990:265).
- Be brief : questions to be to the point and direct.
- Relevancy : ask what the study aims for only.

○ RECORDINGS

- It is vital that participant's responses be correctly and accurately recorded so as to eliminate extortions. No attempt should be made to summarize, paraphrase or correct bad grammar.
- Nothing from the learners responses was to be changed in any way be it the wrong spelling, incorrect phrasing of sentences etc. The researcher and the observer independently recorded the proceedings during the research process. This assist to compare their findings in order to determine the reliability of such findings. As both the researcher and observer went through the passage to be answered by respondents together, learning strategies and skills to be observed were familiar to both.

3.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter three discussed the research methodology of the study. It is evident that the qualitative research approach supports a study of this nature. Also discussed in the chapter are : the design observation, interviews as data collecting technique, advantages and disadvantages of personal interviews, advantages of qualitative research, characteristics of qualitative research as such as the sample of the study was discussed. Ethical considerations related to data collection, interview as a survey method.

Chapter four focuses on the analyses of data collected by means of a qualitative approach, implementation of research design, recording of raw data.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN, RECORDING OF RAW DATA AND ANALYSIS THEREOF

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the research methodology was discussed. The aim of chapter four is to implement the research design, to record the collected data and analyse the recorded data. The following aspects are discussed in this chapter, namely, the context of the study, strategy levels and sub-skills, findings from this research, problems, limitations, summary and conclusion.

4.2 THE CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The researcher prepared a passage (see Appendix 3) that was read and explained to the learners who, after wards, answered questions provided. Respondents were provided with answer sheets. Both the researcher and the observer completed observation form presented in appendix 2.

The information was organized according to strategy categories and sub-skills as shown in table 4.1 below

TABLE 4.1 STRATEGY CATEGORIES AND SUB-SKILLS

STRATEGY	LEVEL	SUB-SKILLS
Summarizing	1	Identify theme/ Main idea
	2	Group ideas
	3	Do away with unnecessary information.
	4	Summary writing
Paraphrasing	5	Write in own words

Self-questioning	6	Asking yourself questions
	7	Answer questions you asked yourself.

SUMMARIZING ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING FOUR LEVELS.

Level 1: Identify main idea (theme)

Level 2: Group ideas

Level 3: Doing away with unnecessary information.

Level 4: Summary writing

PARAPHRASING- STRATEGY: learners are expected to use own words to explain what the passage is all about.

SELF-QUESTIONING STRATEGY: Learners are to formulate own questions based on presented learning content. After self-questioning, the learners are expected to supply answers to their questions.

4.3 LEARNER RESPONDENTS

Appendix 4 indicates learners who participated in the research project. A sample of forty learners from informal settlements in grade seven were drawn from four primary schools one from the following provinces, Bloemfontein, Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga respectively. However, in ethical terms, real names of selected schools and the learners are not used.

The observer in the observation process is a female primary school educator. At the same school where the researcher is the principal. The former is in possession of a primary school diploma and university degrees. The reason for an observer was to compare findings for reliability, accuracy, and validity purposes. Observation form was designed to record findings (see Appendix 2).

4.4 FINDINGS FROM THIS RESEARCH

The Majority of the learners from informal settlement environments in the four Provinces selected, seemed to experience similar environment problems. These children's problems in turn, together with lack of knowledge and possession of learning strategies, adversely affected their school achievement. It becomes evident that, apart from these children's social problems, educators do not seem to be doing much. They do not seem to work as a team. If this was the case, it could have been easy for learners to master learning strategies. Every educator would easily notice learners who still struggled to identify and use learning strategies. Educators would even come up with solutions as a team to assist learners from informal settlement environment to overcome their problems. Instead of working as a unit, educators complained about workload. They moaned about many workshops and meetings arranged by the Department of Education. Educators were also not happy about the big numbers in the classrooms that enabled them to offer individual assistance to all learners. The other area of concern for educators was lots of paper work which they found strenuous and time consuming.

It seems like educators either ignore to teach learning strategies or that they do not teach them correctly and perfectly, or perhaps still, that most have not acquired such skills themselves Moeketsi (1996 :38). It must be emphasized that learners must be taught that different learning strategies exist and that they influence achievement.

The reason for assumptions made above are evident in the learners responses in appendix 1. Learners results showed that, if cues such as the following were not used, learners could have experienced problems to respond to questions of identifying main ideas. These include the following, big words/letters, darkened words, italics, or underlined words. Since the arrangement of grouping ideas was left at the learners discretion, most did not encounter much difficulty in this sub-skill.

Paraphrasing and summarizing caused problems in most learners. They confused the two strategies. Phrasing of questions was also a problem. Due to lack of language acquisition and learning strategies, some learners struggled to respond to interview questions. This is in spite of the fact that the passage was first read to them and some terms explained by giving more examples.

4.5 SUMMARIZING

Summarizing include: selection of main ideas, grouping of ideas, deletion of unwanted information. All these are incorporated within summarizing.

According to Moeketsi (1996:38) selection of main ideas as a sub-skill of a learning strategy, is a useful strategy that should improve performance.(Weistein and Mayer, 1986: 19) further state that ability to select main ideas help learners to recall better.

Learners who managed to select the main ideas, were those who looked for cues. Some learners picked any words they came across from the passage. It seems like those learners who used cues would find difficulties to select main ideas when cues were not used.

Highlighted, underlined, words in italics were provided as a guide to learners that in their attempt to summarize, they should focus on these cues. They could have left out other words but not highlighted ones. These are words that brings out the meaning of the whole text.

Grouping of ideas points to the ability to select main ideas or key words. It is the identification of important segments of the learning material. Learners must be able to see the connection between different ideas (Schunk, 1991: 158).

If learners master the skill of selecting important sections of the text, they are then able to outline the key words or main ideas. The ability to identify main ideas, would enable

learners to summarize the text. . Learners could only do so if they understood strategies relating to the question at hand. Learners who used prior-knowledge that main ideas were those highlighted, did well over those who could not recall this.

Most learners copied paragraphs from the passage as they were. Note should be taken when giving learners passages to summarize. Sentences should be short and to the point. For a learner to master how to summarize, they must first understand the text (Mokoena, 2000:39). Exercises on summarizing should be given to learners as often as possible.

4.6 Paraphrasing

This area also caused confusion as it was confused with summarizing. Most just copied paragraphs from the text as they were. Those who attempted to use own words distorted the meaning of the text. Paraphrasing refers to stating meaning of paragraphs in other words than that in the book (Pintrich, 1989:131). Learners were required to state contents of the text in their own words but not changing the meaning of the text. Success in paraphrasing results in better storage and retrieval of information. Learners responses showed that they were unable to store information. They did not understand the text hence the poor responses. They also had a language problem. Learners copied some paragraphs and left out others. They thought that by so doing, they had paraphrased the text.

4.7 Self questioning strategy

Some learners copied sentences as they were from the passage. There are however, those who tried to ask relevant questions. The researcher discovered that most copied sentences as they were and used question marks at the end of those sentences.

Learners who could not identify the main idea failed to use this as a basis for questions. They could have simplified things for themselves by using underlined words to construct questions. Questions too, had to relate to the contents of the text since key words carry the main meaning of the text, using them could have enabled learners to master the question on self-questioning. Learners who failed to use highlighted words did not do well in this section but those who did, performed well. Some learners referred questions to the researcher.

According to Mokoena (2000:41) learners who were exposed to learning strategies, have had a better understanding of the text and selection of learning strategies as dealt with in Appendix 3 than those who were not exposed to learning strategies. Learning strategies help learners to achieve better results in school work.

4.8 PROBLEMS

Learners from some schools had difficulties reading the passage on their own. Pronunciation, repeating one word over and over, non usage of commas, full stops and question marks were common problems. Mentioned problems made it difficult for learners to understand the content of the passage.

One boy asked if it would be acceptable if he answered in his mother tongue when asked a question based on the content of the passage.

Hand writing was another area of concern. The researcher struggled when going through responses due to illegible hand writing. In two of the schools, two boys and a girl solely depended on the researcher to explain almost each and every word.

In another school, when the researcher arrived at the time allocated, the learners were still in their original classes. The researcher waited for almost an hour. Once with the

participants, other learners kept knocking at the door. Some came to ask for this and that from their brothers and sisters disturbing the process. When the siren sounded for after school, participants started being jittery losing concentration. Those outside, kept peeping through windows making the situation even worse.

In all schools, it was discovered that some learners could not copy correctly. They still spelt words they saw from the passage wrongly.

4.9 LIMITATIONS

Limitations of this research were pointed out in (1.10). However, these limitations were combated through the research methodology used in chapter three (paragraph : 3.2.2, 3.2.3 and 3.2.4) respectively. This is the qualitative research method.

All researchers stress the powerfulness of the qualitative method. The latter neutralizes the limitations that served as threats to the study.

Since this method is systematic, purposeful, planned, that the research takes place in the respondents natural environment, that narration with words is used which makes it flexible to enable respondents to freely participate and express their feelings and ideas, the qualitative method therefore, serves as strong acceptability, validity, reliability and authenticity of results.

The researcher gets first hand information direct from respondents. Results or responses are recorded on the spot. Indicated threats were nullified by the employment of this method.

4.10 SUMMARY

From the learners responses, it became evident that the teaching of learning strategies need to be stressed to educators. The latter need to know that acquisition and mastery of learning strategies by learners from informal settlement environment would improve the learners academic achievement and enable them to solve learning problems in different learning areas.

It is the educators duty to provide the knowledge for the learner to plan his studies property. In the absence of instruction that engages learners as creative participants in their own immediate and future learning, learners will not use learning strategies and will remain passive learners (Garner, 1990:522). Learners have to be aware of different learning strategies. They have to know how and which ones to use and when learners have a vast understanding of learning strategies, they would be able to use or select them even when cues are not used.

In some schools, one wonders if the new method of teaching that is, outcomes based education is being implemented. Reading skills and hand writing also need attention. Participants responses do not differ much among the selected schools. Because of their big numbers, only ten learners from each school were recorded in the observation form.

Environment conditions play a major role in learners performance at school. Most learners from informal settlement environment indicated that due to their parents not working, they had to walk long distances to school as their parents could afford to pay for transport to and from school. Some go to school in empty stomach. Hunger inhibits thinking and concentration. Some participants indicated lack of space in the home that made it difficult for them to study and finish home work. Many indicated lack of electricity as another inhibiting factor. Non-availability of water is also a problem as these children have to go distances to fetch water from taps erected at some points in the streets.

Children from informal settlement environment do not have relevant learning resources such as computers and educational games since their parents do not afford to provide such. These learners frustrations are indicated in their responses when responding to questions in part B of appendix 3.

4.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter deals with the analysis of data collected in chapter three. Findings from this research were recorded. The strengths and weaknesses of this study will be highlighted. It becomes evident that the ability to identify key words or main ideas in the text enabled learners to respond well to questions.

The concern is not only about learners being able to identify main ideas when highlighted but even when cues are not used. The ability to identify main ideas even when cues are not used indicates that learners have acquired learning strategies. If learners have acquired strategies, they could use the knowledge to solve any learning problem. The next chapter discusses the findings makes recommendations, conclusion and remarks about what was discussed in preceding chapters.

CHAPTER 5

SYNTHESIS, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter five deals with the review of the whole study. Aims of research, findings from literature study, method of research, research design, recordings and analysis of data, recommendations and conclusion.

5.2 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The main aim of this research was to investigate the impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies for grade seven learners in South Africa. To achieve this objective, a literature study was under taken. (see chapter two). The interview guide was used to gather information from the learners. Principal, educators and parents were also interviewed.

5.3 FINDINGS FROM LITERATURE STUDY

In the literature review, informal settlement environment was defined as an area that is informally formed or developed. It usually lacks service infrastructure like water, electricity, sewerage facilities and other human needs. Informal settlement do not have legal status and therefore their future is uncertain.

Learning strategies were defined as behaviours and thought that a learner engages in during learning and that are intended to influence the learners encoding process. They can be considered to be equivalent to study methods. Learning strategies can improve achievement.

Learning strategies are grouped into three broad categories: cognitive, meta-cognitive and resource management strategies. All these learning strategies are related to the learners learning and facilitate retrieval of information. They interact with one another as the result of learning in order to ensure positive influence and improvement of achievement.

In the teaching and learning environment, learners and educators deal with learning strategies to enhance learning.

In this study, when discussing learning strategies, focus was on summarizing, paraphrasing and self-questioning which were used in the text given to learners in appendix three. Aspects which have reference to informal settlement environment discussed in chapter two were determined and discussed. The interrelationship between learning strategies, informal settlement environment and achievement became evident in the discussions undertaken in this topic.

Recordings and data analysis carried out in chapter four indicated that the majority of the learners from informal settlement environment in the four Provinces selected seemed to experience similar environment problems (see chapter 4).

Achievement was defined as the process of achieving something after a lot of effort. At school it will mean the percentage or marks that the learners obtained in certain learning areas. It is meant to measure degree of learning in a specific learning area.

Apart from the learners environmental and social problems that are beyond their control, it seemed like educators do not do enough as it was evident in their responses in appendixes one and three.

5.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH

The research for this study was conducted with two hundred and seventy (270) learners from informal settlement environments. Bloemfontein had sixty (60) learners with twenty five (25) boys and thirty five (35) girls. Cape had one hundred and twenty (120) learners, eighty (80) boys and forty (40) learners, twenty two (22) boys and eighteen (18) girls. Lastly, Mpumalanga had fifty (50) learners, thirty (30) boys and twenty (20) girls. The total population for boys from all four Provinces was one hundred and fifty seven (157) and that for girls was one hundred and thirteen (113).

All learners were made aware of learning strategies used in the text. Cues were used to identify the main ideas that were underlined, highlighted and italics used.

A qualitative research methods was used. Researchers interacted with the learners. Responses were recorded on the spot. Interview guide was used. Learners, principals, educators and parents were interviewed in their natural environments That is learners in their respective classroom, principals in their offices, educators in their staffroom and parents at their “homes”.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

More passages should be given to the learners to engage learning strategies so that learners ultimately realize the importance and benefits of using learning strategies in their learning activities. Learners must be able to master to identify main ideas without cues being used. More reading and spelling have to be done in schools. Learners have to be encouraged to go to public libraries to read and do research.

5.5.1 Re - skilling of educators to empower learners with learning strategies

Educators need to be equipped with the usage of different learning strategies in order for them to impart such skills to the learners.

5.5.2 Computer literacy

Technology is taking a lead in today's lives. Educators must attend workshops and enroll in institutions offering technology skills, usage of computers, internet accessing, timetabling and so on. It is indispensable for all schools to possess technological tools for the upliftment of quality of learning and teaching to improve results and skills. Learners also have to be taught to use computers and access the internet and to use other technological tools so as to make learning easy, challenging, independent and interesting. Also, to network with learners from other countries and schools. In this way, their achievement at school could be improved. Learners can acquire more knowledge on learning strategies through the use of a computer. Learning programmes for different information in all learning can be accessed by the use of a computer.

5.5.3 Strategies for life-long learning/reading

Life-long learning or reading equip both learners and educators with skills they can put into practice later in their lives. It is important that what is learned should be of use and relevant.

Learners must be able to contribute to the needs of their community. For example, if learners from primary phase level possess effective learning strategies, they would be able to apply them in all learning areas in upper phases right up to tertiary level, and beyond.

If parents are equipped with relevant skills like bricklaying, carpentry, tiling and so on, they could be able to make a living out of acquisition of such skills. This would in turn, combat unemployment and poverty in our country (South Africa).

5.5.4 Incorporation of learning strategies when planning lessons in all learning areas

Schools should encourage all educators to include teaching of learning strategies in all learning areas. This is possible and can be achieved since integration in all learning areas should be considered when phase planning is done. For example, when phase educators do their planning, they are supposed to have a similar phase organizer, same programme organizer. Educators can also agree to have a similar passage where learners in each learning area are asked to either paraphrase, summarize or even delete unwanted words to suit their respective learning areas.

5.5.5 Recommendations for educators

Integration becomes easy when done in a team work. When all do the same thing, it would be easy to consult others and get assistance on the spot without making others deviate from what they would be doing.

Uniformity can be achieved in terms of phase organizers and programme organizers. This would also help learners to see the interrelationship between all learning areas. They would realize that learning areas are not taught in isolation but that they form part of a whole. For example, self-questioning could be done in all learning areas at the same pace. More time should be allocated in schools to teaching learning techniques.

If educators work as a team and focus in integration, it would be easy to identify learners who experience problems implementing learning strategies. This can be achieved because if a learner did not master learning strategies this would be evident in all learning areas.

With learners from informal settlement environment, educators could come together and as a team, come up with solutions to assist these learners. But often, educators complain about being overloaded and overworked. Most educators do not make follow ups on what they did with the learners. Most do not even give feedback. Learners as a result, do not become aware whether they understood the learning content or not until given a task to do. Learners would even not become aware of the importance of knowing and implementing learning strategies.

5.5.6 Recommendations for Government structures and parents

The other area of concern was the home environment of learners from informal settlements. They live under inhuman conditions which seriously presents the Government with an assignment of looking for ways and means of combating their frustrations. Most of the people living in informal settlements are unemployed, uneducated, or have received little education, or informal education. They usually live on pittance pays they receive after doing washing for other people, after looking for someone's child or did the garden.

The Government must come up with structures to skill these people so that they are able to create jobs for themselves and be able to fend for their children. To provide they must be able their children with the basics such as shelter and food. Pay their school fees and buy them relevant learning resources which will assist the learners to better achieve at school. They will also be able to provide their children with nutritious foods that would assist their brains to function optimally in class.

There should also be strict measures by the Government to control the illegal influx into the country. These are some of the people who contribute to the uncontrollable growth of unlawful settlements. The Government should also come up with means to fully provide for children from destitute homes not only in terms of feeding schemes in schools. Countries like Botswana educate their children up to Tertiary level freely.

Parents must be encouraged to attend Abet institutions. The latter must not be far from where parents live so that they are able to walk to such institutions since they would be able to pay for transport to and from such schools. Acquisition of skills and formal education would enable parents to assist their children with school work and know the importance of availability of learning resources in the home. Provision of electricity and water as basic needs must also be seriously considered. Even if someone could donate a learner from informal settlement with technological tool/s, the learner would not be able to utilize it due to unavailability of electricity at home.

Some learners from informal settlements are forced to go to school without having washed due to lack of water. Conditions such as these affect learners negatively since they tend to feel inferior to other learners at school and withdraw from the group. A weak child could end up playing truant as a means to solve her/his frustrations. Some end in the streets. The whole community must take it upon itself to come up with practical, feasible, attainable plans to help informal settlement inhibitors. It is said that “It takes a village to raise a child.” If well raised, this child could contribute positively to the society and the country as a whole.

5.5.7 Recommendations for the Department of education

- Education colleges to be temporarily shut down so as to deal with the process of redeployment. There are still educators out there who are still unemployed.
- Classes to be manageable. Some schools are overcrowded. Proper, effective teaching and learning do not take place.
- Changes within teaching and learning must be moderately done. For example, the implementation of OBE was so abruptly introduced and educators were expected to adjust to changes immediately. Too much was introduced too soon.

- Factors such as the following were overlooked. Overcrowding in classes, lack of resources, trainings and workshops which needed to be done timeously and fully before the implementation. Educators had to deal with so many changes including difficult terminology within OBE.
- Educators to get proper empowerment and training before implementation is done.
- Schools to be equally resourced.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Learner's responses indicated the importance of understanding and implementing learning strategies when learning. Learners who were able to identify main ideas showed more understanding of the text than those who did not identify them.

Learning strategies play an important role in education, they improved achievement and enabled learners to identify important facts in the text. Aspects of informal settlement environment showed that, if problems experienced by these parents could be solved, parents could be able to provide their children with basic needs and relevant learning resources that could improve the learners achievement and acquisition of learning strategies.

The environment which the child grows up in, plays a very important role in the child's development. People must live in acceptable conditions. Conditions of the child's environment must be conducive for learning. Every person has a right to accommodation not a shack build of plastics. And every person has a right to privacy not overcrowded tinned house.

The minds of the learners from informal settlement environment need to be boosted with nutritious food and better conditions at home to enable them to complete for success at school.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Observation reports

The researcher indicates reports from the researchers who assisted with the observation.

APPENDIX 2

Observation to be completed by observers.

APPENDIX 3

Contains the prepared passage for the learners to read and answer the questions after it.

APPENDIX 4

Respondents.

APPENDIX 5

Learner consent letter.

APPENDIX 6

Application letters sent to the schools that participated in this research. (Note that real names were not used).

APPENDIX 1

OBSERVATION REPORTS

Strategies	B-Primary	C-Primary	G-Primary	M-Primary
Summary	AZOLA	LESLEY :	MAPULE :	JUDITH :
	Item 5 - Well done	Poorly responded	Did well on short	Items 1 -3
	Item 6 - Good	He took along	questions	Not well answered
	He responds.	time to finish		Items 4 -6
	The advantage of	writing		Well attempted
	watching different			
	channels is to know			
	what is happening			
	to the other			
	channels.			
Paraphrasing	Did well	Re-wrote	Re-wrote	Re-wrote passage
		sentences from	passage	
		text. Language		
		problem		
Self-questioning	Good attempt	Poorly attempted	One word	Questions are of
	e.g. Item 12A-		answers. Item 9-	low order requiring
	How can I get		e.g. What is on	one word answer.
	information when		internet.	Item 9-Why does
	I have no computer		What do we use	Mr Holvemeire
	12B - Also did well		it for	use for storing
			Question marks	information.
			not used	Who does he
			Item 12A - Why	communicate to
			don't we use the	with his computer
			paravein.	Incorrect phrasing
			Response 12B-be	no question marks

				cost paraffin will destroy this thing	used.
Home	Have accepted	Very poorly	Poorly answered	She claims her	
Environment	living in squatter camp. Parents help with school work.	attempted	e.g. Item 1 -	home	
	Does not have learning resources		The is no affection the is nothing wrong at how I do well at school.	environment does not affect her academic achieve- ment. Sisters help. does have a comp- uter at home. Wo- uld like to study overseas because they have more resources and education is adva- nced.	
			Item 2- I don't have a computer but it affect me becouse the is now one who will new everything the ore something my parent do know	Little brother noisy and nagging. Parents help with homework.	
			Language problem Phrasing difficulty Word separation Spelling Lack comprehension	Well attempted Good language Spelling and sentence construc- tion.	

Summary	ONELA	LETTIE	MODISE	SIMPHIWE
	Did well	Did not do well	Very poorly attempted e.g. 2A-He write about faster	Very poorly responded.
			challenging channels is remote control.	
			He write about E-mail and faxes that you can talk to people in order place with a letter	
			2B-Grouping ideas e.g. You can read and understand.	
			You can imported ideas together	
			However, he beautifully responded to item 6-	
			Difficulty with phrasing, language muddled sentences make no sense.	
Paraphrasing	Not good	Not good	Poorly responded to.	Copy text as it is.

Self-Questioning	Did well	Could not ask questions. Copied sentences from text	Poorly performed	Well tried Item 9b Why we have Technological tools No question marks Rest poorly attempted.
PART B				
Home-Environment	Facts good, sentences and language muddled	Did well e.g. She stated that she lives in a shack without electricity and this affects her studies.	Difficulty e.g. Item 5-When I go to school I go and play soccer and when I am back they ask me How was at school wat I len about muddled sentence no meaning.	Difficulty
Summary	TSHILIDZI Poorly performed	PAUL Poorly performed skip words	VUTIUS Reproduced text	XOLI Poorly performed language problem hand writing
Paraphrasing	Not attempted	Difficulty	Did not attempt it	Not well attempted
Self-questioning	Not attempted	Not attempted	12A-Tried e.g.	Better e.g. Item 9b

			What can I do when I need to fax my letter no question mark		What is Technol- ogy No question marks
PART B					
Home- Environment	Did badly	Poorly attempted	Home environ- ment really affects him.e.g. Item 3- Noise fighting with each other I can't study if the nois and it affect my performance because when I have to study I just think of what happened yester- day when my parents were fighting. Item 5- They don't really help me because they don't know englis perfect they just help me at african langua- ge. Item 6 - I wish my parents could stop fight-	Poorly attempted e.g. Item 1 - Your life how you live in your house how do they crete you.	

					ing while I'm around and help me with my school work
Summary	ASANDA	JULIA	RUDZANI	ZANELE	Not well answered Items 2A and 2B Able to identify main ideas but failed to group them.
	Struggling. Item 5- Three uses of a computer. She responds Computer has recieved. a computer has letters. a computer has follows.	Reproduced sentences and paragraphs from the passage	Had serious difficulty Item 3- I thing the imported inform- ati must use to sova aprobe Inpote informati must be use. Incomplete words sentences mudd- led do not make sense. language problem, spelling big problem e.g. Beose they can breke it.		
Paraphrasing	Had difficulties	Not well responded	Re-wrote text	Muddled sentence No sense	
Self-questioning	Had difficulties Item 12-gow to use Breare a gow to use kars a gow to use janar- eta. Difficult even	Well tried Item9: How does a rem- ote change channels How does a computer respond	Had difficulties	Had difficulties phrasing problem Item 9: Who wood a copmputer have a TV.	

	to figure out what she wants to say	to his voice		What can be mended be computer Who can a computer be a microwave
PART B				
Home - Environment	Had difficulty	Tried	Had difficulties	Phrasing, language inhibits expressing himself well.
		Item 1 : She states that lack of electricity affects her studies. Since she stays with her granny, mommy can't help with school work	Item 2: I wish at home it was a computer	Item 4: No money me mother work in piece job and I have a semp
			Did not complete the questionnaire	father he all ways make noise at home and gumente with my mother.
				Item 6-My father I wish he will die and life my mother and two sisters and my one brother I will be okey and good in my school work bat I allwas good I me school work
Summary	ZEZETHU	NTAOLENG	JACOB	JUDITH
	Difficulties	Did very well	Difficulties	Item 1-3 Not well answered items 4-6
	answers not related			

	to questions		good
Paraphrasing	Had problems	She did well	Re-wrote paragraphs from passage
Self-questioning	Struggling		
PART B			
Home - Environment	Did not attempt this section	Did well, have lot of confidence Item2-me I can work on my own even if we don't have computer at home my mins are as fast as it is	
PART B			
Home - Environment	No attempt	She would choose a school nearer home so that her parents do not have to pay for transport	Well tried She says she is not affected by her home condition. Her sisters help her with school work. There is a computer at home. She would like to study overseas
		She indicated that despite her home	

		condition. She		because they have
		still performs		more resources
		high at school		and education is
				advanced.

APPENDIX 2

OBSERVATION FORM

NAME: _____

TIME: _____

PLACE: _____

DATE: _____

STRATEGY	MEANING	STRATEGY USE	PROBLEMS
>Summary skills	>Selection of main idea	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
	>Grouping ideas	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
	>Deletion of unnecessary information	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
	>Summary writing	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
>Paraphrasing	>Put information in own words	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
>Self questioning	>Asking questions	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____
	Providing answer To questions	_____	_____
		_____	_____
		_____	_____

General remarks (if any) _____

OBSERVER: _____

APPENDIX 3

ASSESSMENT TOOL

PHASE ORGANISER: THE LEARNER AS A COMMUNICATOR

PROGRAMME ORGANISER: USING TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS TO
MAKE LIFE EASIER

PART A

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow

TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS

TECHNOLOGY is a **HUMAN ACTIVITY** that develops **SOLUTIONS** to peoples **NEEDS**. All learners should opportunities and access to learning in technology. Technology benefits Society and the Environments (Department of Education Technology, 2001: 14 & 15).

A computer is a tool that can be used to create useful information that can be printed, communicated to others and stored for future use. **Mr. Hovelmeier** has a computer, receives and sends letters and follows **Television** programmers. He uses a **remote control** to change channels on his television. Mr. Hovelmeier also uses a **microwave** to cook and warm his food. His computer enables him to send and receive **E-MAIL** and **FAXES**. This means that computers are fast. His computer also responds to his voice. It can be set to help him check for wrong spelling after typing. This shows that computers are accurate and reliable. Mr. Hovelmeier is able to communicate with his friends, relatives and people he do not know from other places and countries through his computer. He uses his computer to also search for more information by using the **INTERNET**. He stores information in his computer and uses it later when eve he wants to. He also stores the information in a **STIFFY/ DISK** in case he looses information stored in the computer or the computer gets lost or stolen. The stifty-disk is a tool used to store information. A computer is a tool that can be used to create useful information that can be printed, communicated to others, and stored for future use (Meyer & Baberk 1997: 14)

Sources Ken and Fiona Krige

Technology New Nation Technology Grade 7 (2002: 24) and

Technology, 2001: 14 and 15

Meyer and Baberk 1997: 16

QUESTIONS

SUMMARISING

1. How would you choose the main idea?
- 2A. What would you consider as main ideas from the passage? Mention **five**.
- 2B. Group the given answers in 2A. in order of importance according to your own understanding.
3. What do you think should be done with unimportant information?
4. Briefly summarise the passage.
5. How do people create useful information using the computer?
6. Mr. Hovelmeier uses a remote control to change channels in his TV. How does changing channels help Mr. Hovelmeier with information?

PARAPHRASING

7. Write the information you have read using your own words.
8. Give your own understanding of the word technological tools.

SELF QUESTIONING

9. Construct **three** questions on what you have read.
10. Write a paragraph which is, not more than **five** lines explaining what the author means when he says “Mr. Hovelmeier’s computer also listens to him”.
11. Write **five** lines in which you explain why it is considered as a disadvantage to allow kids to have access to an internet unsupervised?
12. “Imagine that you are a business person who has to use a computer, fax and e-mail for your business to be productive and make profit”. What would happen to your business if you can have an electricity power cut for two days?

From the above information construct **three** questions that would address your problem.

ANSWER SHEET

SUMMARY

1. Think to yourself- What was the main idea?
Write it down.

- 2A. Think to your-self “What important things did the writer say about the main idea?

- a.
- b.
- c.

- d.
- e.

2B. Think to yourself- How should I group my ideas. Put 1 to the idea you want to be first, put 2 to the next idea you want to be second and so on....

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

3. After selecting your main ideas what do you think should be done with Unimportant information?

.....
.....

4. In short say what the passage was all about?

.....
.....
.....
.....

5. Think to your-self .What **three** things do people use the computer for?

.....
.....
.....

6. Think to yourself what is the advantage of watching different channels on a TV.

.....
.....
.....

PARAPHRASING

7. Write the information you have read using your own words.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

8. What are technological tools in your own understanding?

.....

.....

SELF QUESTIONING

9. Construct three questions on what you have read

- a.
- b.
- c.

10. Think to yourself- What does the author mean when he says
 “Mr. Hovelmeiers computer also listens to him.”

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

11. What are the disadvantages of allowing kids to browse through or open the internet without an adult around.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

12. Ask yourself **three** questions which would help you solve the problem of not having electricity for your computer, fax and e-mail while your business has to make profit. Write these **three** questions down.

- a.
- b.
- c.

TABLE 4.1: STRATEGY CATEGORIES AND SUB-SKILLS

STRATEGY	LEVEL	SUB-SKILL
Summarising	1	Identify Theme/ Main Idea
	2	Group ideas
	3	Do away with unnecessary question.
	4	Summary writing.
Paraphrasing	5	Write in own words

Self-Questioning	6	Asking yourself questions
	7	Answer questions you asked yourself.

SUMMARISING

Level 1: Identify main idea (theme)

Level 2: Group ideas

Level 3: Doing away with unnecessary information.

Level 4: Summary writing

PARAPHRASING- learners are expected to use own words to explain what the passage is all about.

SELF-QUESTIONING Learners are to formulate own questions based on presented learning content. After self-questioning, the learners are expected to supply answers to their questions they have asked.

APPENDIX 4

RESPONDENTS

B Primary School (BLOEMFONTEIN)

Learner	Gender	Age	Grade
Tshilidzi	Female	15	7A
Zezethu	Female	13	7B
Asanda	Female	13	7B
Nolufefe	Female	15	7B
Azola	Male	13	7B
Anela	Female	13	7B
Siyabulela	Male	15	7B
Nkosibonile	Male	15	7B
Nhameko	Male	14	7A

C Primary School (CAPE TOWN)

Learner	Gender	Age	Grade
Paul	Male	14	7A
Lesley	Male	12	7A
James	Male	13	7A
Mduduzi	Male	13	7B
Xolani	Male	14	7B
Annah	Female	13	7A
Julia	Female	14	7A
Lettie	Female	14	7A
Sylvia	Female	13	7A
Ntaoleng	Female	15	7B

G Primary School (GAUTENG)

Learner	Gender	Age	Grade
Mapule	Female	14	7A
Noxolo	Female	14	7B
Paul	Male	16	7B
Pule	Male	14	7A
Dutivi	Female	14	7A
Darlington	Male	15	7B
Modise	Male	15	7B
Rudzani	Male	14	7B
Jacob	Male	15	7B
Zozo	Female	14	7A

M Primary School (MPUMALANGA)

Learner	Gender	Age	Grade
Girley	Female	15	7A
Baby girl	Female	14	7A
Judith	Female	13	7A
Zanele	Female	14	7B
Pat	Female	15	7A
Judith	Female	14	7B
Sipho	Male	16	7B
Xoli	Male	15	7A
Modise	Male	16	7B
Simphiwe	Male	15	7A

APPENDIX 5

LEARNER CONSENT LETTER

I _____ in Grade seven (7) at

_____ Primary School hereby confirm that the purpose of research

has been clarified to me. I therefore agree to participate in the research as a sample member.

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX 6

APPLICATION LETTER

29 Eugene Street
Helderkruijn
ROODEPROORT
1724

The Management
School B
BLOEMFONTEIN

Re: request to undertake educational research with your Grade Seven learners.

I request to involve your grade seven learners on my MED research project in a Technology lesson. The researcher will be assisted by one observer. The title of my topic is "The impact of informal settlement environment on learning strategies for grade seven learners in South Africa.

Your positive response will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully
Ms N. J. Molotsi

Vista University - Soweto