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**THE ROLE OF PEER EDUCATORS IN ENHANCING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL
LEARNING : A CASE STUDY OF FOUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN FORT
BEAUFORT DISTRICT**

A Research Study in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree

OF

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by

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DECLARATION

I hereby solemnly declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief that this dissertation entitled: The Role of Peer Education in enhancing social and emotional learning in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort District , is my original work. It has not been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for the award of any other degree or qualification. Where I have used information from the published and unpublished work of other scholars, I have acknowledged such sources both in the text and the list of references.

Signature

Date

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to explore how peer education is enhancing social-emotional learning in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort Education District. An empirical investigation using the qualitative approach examined the situation of the peer education clubs at the four schools. Data was gathered using interviews, focus groups, observations and document analysis. The purpose of the study was to examine the role of peer education programmes in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools. In this research study specifically the qualitative research approach was used. The study also adopted a purposive sampling procedure which is acceptable for special sampling situations where the researcher applied her own experience to select cases which form part of the participants. Four schools were selected, four principals, four teachers who work with peer education clubs, four focus groups, one HIV/AIDS district coordinator, and one peer group trainer.

It emerged from the analysis of the collected data that peer education clubs in Fort Beaufort have a number of challenges facing them, resulting in them making insignificant contributions towards the enhancing of social-emotional learning. The clubs' efforts have resulted in little positive behavioural change among the youth. Among the challenges revealed are: lack of proper structures and support from school administrators, poor selection of peer educators, lack of time and facilities in which to carry out their work, lack of adequate training for both teachers and peer educators. Teacher interference was also cited regularly at all four schools, thereby defeating the whole idea of peer education. The study also revealed that peer educators in Fort Beaufort are not receiving adequate support from other stakeholders like, the police, the justice department and social welfare. Another critical observation made during the study was that peer education clubs are lacking clear standards of practice, rigour and sustainability, all which should be addressed in order to enhance social-emotional learning in schools.

Data was analysed using a thematic content analysis. The analysis was carried out in a manner that related to the research questions and objectives in the study. A transcript was made from the respondents' answers. Reflection and coding was done and data was categorised as an important learning tool in schools, and to recognise its contribution to social emotional learning. The study concluded that peer education clubs in schools, despite their huge potential to improve both behaviour and academic results, are not being given a conducive environment to operate in or the necessary support. This effectively means that learners with some behavioural problems and who have the potential to reform are also being denied the opportunity to lead better lives.

The Department is advised to increase the number of both peer education trainers and trained peer educators. Furthermore the training period of peer educators should be increased from the current five days. There is need for the Department of Education to formalise peer education clubs in schools and craft laws that makes it mandatory for schools to provide the clubs with decent facilities like confidential rooms to conduct their activities. More so the study recommends that there is need to train all teachers in schools in social skills and not only LO teachers to ease supervisory burden on the LO teachers.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my children, Prince, Princess and Pascal and their cousin- brother Lennon, as well as my husband, Kennedy for their support and everlasting love and encouragement during the course of this study.

ACRONYMS

ABC	Abstinence, Be faithful and Condomise
ACHA	American College Health Association
AIDS	Acquired Immune Virus
AIDSCAP	AIDS/HIV Care Access Programme
BEMS	Boys Educational Movements
CPO	Centre for Population Options
CWSA	Child Welfare South Africa
DC	District Coordinator
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
ECDoE	Eastern Cape Department Of Education
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
FG1	Focus Group 1
FG2	Focus Group 2
FG3	Focus Group 3
FG4	Focus Group 3
GEMS	Girls Educational Movements

HEAIDS	Higher Education AI
HED	Higher Education Diploma
HIV	Human Immune Virus
HOD	Head of Department
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross Societies
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
LO	Life Orientation
MSN	Men Who have Sex with Men
NGO(s)	Non-Governmental Organization
PATHS	Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies
PE(s)	Peer Educator
PEM (s)	Peer Education Manual
PEP(s)	Peer Education Programme
PGT	Peer Group Trainer
RCL (s)	Representative Council of Learners
RSA	Republic of South Africa
RSA	Republic of South Africa
S1	School 1
S2	School 2
S3	School 3
S4	School 4

SASA	South African Schools Act
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
SGB	School Governing Board
SMT(s)	Senior Management Team
SOS	Save Our Souls
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
T1	Teachers 1
T2	Teacher 2
T3	Teacher 3
T4	Teacher 4
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIGYPH	United Nations Interagency Group on Young People’s Health
WYR	World Youth Report

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1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Peer education plays a crucial role in enhancing social-emotional learning in schools. This chapter serves as an introduction to the whole study. It contextualises the study by presenting the background, statement of the problem, research questions, and purpose, research objectives, and significance of the study, rationale, delimitation and the chapter outline of this study. Firstly, the background of the study will be discussed.

1.2 Background of the study

Statutory and non-statutory organisations and networks of young people have emerged in different forms in schools (Bhengu, 1998). Statutory bodies are those organisations that have emerged through legislation. Among such organisations are Representative Councils of Learners (RCL) (South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996). The South African Constitution calls for children's participation in issues concerning them (RSA, 1996). The rights of children to participate in decisions that affect their lives is enshrined in Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, which states that the child has a right to be heard and the views of the child should be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.

Consequently, Article 13 spells out the right of the child to freedom of expression which includes freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art or through media of child's choice. In schools the South African Schools Act, 1996 (SASA) provides for the establishment of RCLs at every public school enrolling learners in the eighth grade and higher to represent students' interests at school

level (RSA, 1996:). RCLs are represented on SGBs. The roles of RCLs as outlined in SASA (1996) are the following:

An RCL acts as an important instrument for liaison and communication.

i. An RCL meets at fairly regular intervals, as determined by its constitution, to consider ideas, suggestions, comments and even complaints from its constituencies, in this case learners.

ii. After every meeting an RCL gives feedback to the learners. If an idea is turned down, an RCL must try to explain why approval was not granted. If an idea is approved, it must be conveyed to the professional management and the SGB, where applicable. If they also approve the idea, it becomes part of the school policy, if applicable; if they do not approve the idea, the principal must explain the reasons for this decision to the council, who in turn must inform its constituency.

Some of the roles of RCL as members of the SGBs include deciding on the language of teaching and learning, development of school policies, subject choices, and time tables, recommending the appointment of teachers, and non-teaching staff, control and maintenance of school property and determining school fees (DoE, 1999).

There have been a number of studies on the role of RCLs in SGBs (Phaswana, 2010; Mabovula, 2009; Mncube, 2008; Moses, 2006; Grant-Lewis & Naidoo, 2004; Nongubo, 2004; Carr & Williams, 2009). Most of the findings from the studies revealed that the RCL guides which are distributed in all provinces position learners as potential threats who need to be treated with caution, as well as revealing that RCLS have not been given opportunities to participate in school governance and decision-making processes in most schools which were studied (Nongubo, 2004).

While researchers have examined the role of statutory bodies like RCL in school governance and other teaching and learning issues, there has not been much focus on other learner formations or associations which are non-statutory bodies at school hence the rationale in doing this research. Non-statutory bodies are not stipulated in the Constitution. Non-statutory bodies provide learners with opportunities to organise, plan and carry out actions to meet their needs and concerns, particularly those related to teaching and learning issues (Tear Fund, 2004). Teaching and learning issues in this study include both academic and social issues, for example, pedagogy, issues concerning extra-curricular activities and issues regarding school safety, discipline and good conduct (UNICEF, 2007; Tear Fund, 2004; Hannam, 2001). Some non-statutory bodies mainly deal with effective school safety initiatives and interventions in order to reduce social problems which might hinder learning (Lansdown and Hart ,2002; Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC), 2005).

In schools, a number of mechanisms have been put in place to build a 'safety net' for troubled children and learners are the key components of most of these programmes (Bhengu, 1998). Bhengu adds that the 'safety nets' should include learner leadership development, crime prevention programmes, activities that encourage learners to explore their talents and interests, cultural and social awareness and tolerance, curriculum development academic mechanisms and dealing with learning problems and barriers.

Non-statutory bodies vary from school to school in terms of numbers, how they perform their roles and influence decisions (Carr & Williams, 2009; Hannam, 2001). Among the non-statutory bodies at the school level are girls' education movements (GEMs), boys' education movements (BEMs), peer education groups, arts and culture groups and subject clubs, for example debating clubs, drama clubs, mathematics clubs, and science clubs(UNICEF, 2007; Tear Fund, 2004; Hannam, 2001). GEMs and BEMs are clubs or associations at the school level which enhance participation of learners in decisions related to teaching and learning

(UNICEF, 2007). They are supposed to focus on issues such as equal access by motivating and ensuring that all learners attend school, work with teachers to ensure improved quality teaching, work with school community to ensure gender sensitive environment, safe learning environments, life skills training to empower girls against sexual abuse among other things (UNICEF, 2007). GEMs and BEMs see girls and boys not only as beneficiaries of educational change, but as participants in that change (UNICEF, 2007).

Peer education groups are some of the associations whose norms and values are important constituents of the school environment (Batten & Girling, 1981 in Meier, 2003). Learners in peer education groups are supposed to focus on different kinds of issues ranging from academic to social issues which affect their learning. Peer groups campaign for and educate learners on good practices in HIV and AIDS prevention including empowerment of girls, life skills curriculum, and management of risk behaviour (Miske, 2004). Peer educator groups also promote talking, listening, looking for alternatives and trying to reach an agreement, solving problems together and making meaningful choices, which are key factors in enhancing successful teaching and learning (Williams, undated). They are also supposed to focus on participation in decisions which deal with school safety, good conduct and discipline (Fullarton, 2002).

Arts and culture groups promote participation in that learners decide on activities that learners want to showcase (Miske, 2004). These platforms are supposed to also open avenues for learners to choose the arts that they want. For instance, learners have the opportunity to choose to do music, dance, sculpture or fine arts, etc. It should be noted that not all learners will be academics when they finish school. Some will develop their careers from the experiences they have whilst they are still at school. An opportunity for these groups to meet and make decisions makes them feel respected, builds a sense of belonging and promotes development of social and cognitive skills (Kohn, 1993) cited in Fullarton, 2002. This contributes to higher achievement especially in South Africa where the curriculum demands a

lot of these critical thinking skills for one to succeed in the examinations (Ijaiya, Alabi, Fasasi (2010)

Subject-specific clubs (for example Geography, Mathematics, Science and English clubs) are supposed to perform varied activities that promote better performance in both teaching and learning (Miske, 2004). Subject clubs have the autonomy to come up with good practices on provision of quality education such as progressive use of child centred pedagogical styles. They come up with ideas on how to learn, whether to work alone, in small groups or as a class. The clubs have an increased use of technologies such as internet, research, experiments and field trips. Learners also decide on subject choice, criteria by which their work will be judged and they play a role in weighing their work against those criteria (Miske, 2004). If learners know what, when and why they do certain activities in the school, they become motivated and their engagement is more productive since they will be free to practise discovery learning. This alone promotes teaching and learning, in that learners understand more if they have to think out their own conclusions (Meier, 2003).

1.3 Peer Education Clubs

Teachers also find it motivating to teach a group of learners who take part in the discovery of knowledge (Batten & Girling, 1981) cited in Meier (2003). It also enhances performance of learners Mtengeti and Couzens, (2011) allude to the fact that properly functioning learners' clubs have produced better matriculation results because learners keep on focused on their education and they work together to solve both social and academic problems. According to Miske, (2004) learners in these clubs motivate each other as well as support each other in all their endeavours. Some of the clubs also do fundraising activities for school projects such as renovation of buildings, purchasing of equipment such as computers, books, science equipment or desks and chairs (UNICEF, 2009). Successes in these

clubs have led to them receiving support, guidance and mentorship from higher education institutions as part of their outreach programmes (Mtengeti and Couzens, 2011). This study focuses on the role of peer education groups/clubs as non-statutory associations in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools.

According to the Peer Education Manual (2011), peer education clubs perform a number of social roles in their schools and communities in order to address a number of issues that affect learner performance in schools including substance abuse, learner pregnancy, violence, HIV and AIDS, Sexually transmitted Infections (STIs), study skills and peer pressure. Child Welfare South Africa (CWSA) (2011) avers that nowadays adults are often mistrusted, seen as absent and are even the perpetrators of the difficulties that the children face in schools and communities from which they come. Youth in various social and economic sectors including education in South Africa, are turning more to each other for guidance and support in an effort to cope with their concerns and life challenges.

1.4 Origins of Peer Education

According to Bleeker, (2001) peer education has occurred in a variety of contexts and in a number of different settings and situations. In American high schools in the late 1960s students were trained to discourage their peers from taking up drinking and smoking (Ward et al. 1997) quoted in Bleeker, (2001). He adds that since the advent of HIV/AIDS in the early 1980s, peer education has become an increasingly popular tool to reach 'hidden populations' (such as gay men, sex workers and injecting drug users) with harm reduction information. As governments came to realize the merits of harm reduction methods for HIV prevention and sexual health promotion, peer led initiatives for risk populations such as young people began to expand (Ward et. al. 1997) quoted in Bleeker (2011). In the past ten years, peer education has been revitalized and has expanded to African countries as a method

of drug education and prevention, HIV/AIDS, and youth pregnancy amongst young people (CWSA, 2011).

Historically, peer education has occurred in many different settings and a variety of situations. These include:

- Schools
- Universities and colleges
- Youth centres
- Social settings and
- Outreach settings.

The setting of a peer education intervention is determined by the target group and where they can be reached by the initiative (Bleeker, 2001).

Svenson (1998) avers that peer education has been used in a number of settings and contexts and for various purposes. He goes on to say that peer education in a school setting was first done in Britain in the early 1800s due to the economic benefit of using pupils to teach other pupils during school classes. Peer educators had an advantage in that they were less expensive than professional teachers (Svenson, 1998; Milburn, 1996). Worldwide one of the early Peer education initiatives was the student influenza immunization initiative at the University of Nebraska in 1957 in the USA (Gould and Lomax, 1993). They further stipulated that this intervention was designed to respond to an Asian flu epidemic at the time advocating for immunization against the flu strain. Recently peer education has become popular in health projects targeting youth particularly in the reduction of negative health behaviours such as smoking and substance abuse. (Svenson, 1998; Milburn, 1996; Gould and Lomax, 1993).

1.5 Role of Teachers in Peer Education Clubs

According to Deutch and Swartz, (2002) the training programme and the specific roles peer educators take on must have the support of teachers, administrators, parents and other learners in a school based setting. They go on to say that schools and teachers in peer education support learners in a variety of ways. Schools support peer educators by providing them with social and economic support (Deutch and Swartz, 2002). Peer educators travel a lot doing different activities in their communities, so it is the duty of the school and teachers to see to it that they get full support in terms of organisation of events, money for travelling, security and guidance during preparations (DoE, 2009).

Some peer educators are intrinsically motivated; perform their roles for enjoyment or for the feeling of success that it brings from outside. This therefore means that peer educators are prepared to do voluntary work. Some students, on the other hand, perform only for rewards, or in order to avoid punishment (Svenson, 1998). It is therefore the duty of the teacher to motivate peer educators and see to it that they keep on going by providing them with material and moral support (DoE, 2009).

The DoH, (2001) states that peer educators learn best when they feel intelligent and competent in their clubs. This therefore means that peer educators need to be trained in leadership so that they assist one another on issues arising in their communities. Youth, learn more and learn differently when they are actively engaged. The DoH (2001) further stated that teachers should allow peer educators to be active during their discussions in their clubs. This therefore calls for modern methods of information dispersion, like small group discussions, role plays, debate, internet connections such as face book communication and games (DoH, 2008). Peer educators must also be taught to deal with negative attitudes and symptoms of stress. Furthermore educators are urged to promote a positive working environment by listening to learners' concerns and by referring some of them to experts like social workers.

Deutch and Swartz (2002) state that peer educators must be continuously supervised. They go on to say that, supervisors, in this case, teachers and peer group trainers should maintain a high quality relationship to allow for monitoring, dealing with confidentiality and making referrals for professionals.

1.6 The Role of the Department of Education in Peer Education Clubs

The Peer Education Manual states that through peer education, the department aims at addressing social challenges that affect learners education in the province. Examples of such social challenges are: high rate of learner pregnancy, the increasing number of learners using drugs, the increase of bullying within our schools, lack of effective skills and the general decline of value systems (PEM, 2011). According to (PEM, 2011), the Department of Education recruits peer group trainers who work with the peer educators in schools. The Department of Education is said to be responsible for sourcing funds and assistance from Non Governmental organisations or other interested parties. The Department also provides peer educators with materials such as manuals. Non Governmental organisations such as Child Welfare South Africa on behalf of the Department of Education now train peer educators in schools around Fort Beaufort District as well as provide them with training manuals, t-shirts ,recycle bins and many other resources used for different projects.

According to Zins et al (2003), genuinely effective schools are those that prepare students not only to pass tests at school but also to pass the tests of life. Schools are now seen as “an important if not central arena for health promotion and primary prevention of problem behaviour. Furthermore, according to the National Centre for

Education Statistics (2002) quoted in Zins et al (2003), among the major reasons cited in the US for dropping out of school are social and emotional factors: not getting along with teachers or peers (35.0% and 20.1%, respectively), feeling left out (23.2%), and not feeling safe (12.1%). Thus, it is understandable that direct intervention in the psychological determinants of learning promises the most effective avenues of reform . Clubs like peer education groups provide social and emotional learning in schools (Kelly, 2003). This study therefore sought to find out the role of peer education clubs in addressing social and emotional issues in schools.

1.7 Statement of the Problem

Peer education clubs have been established to solve social and emotional issues that hinder learning in schools. With proper structure and support, peer educators have a unique ability and capacity to reach their peers (Msimang, quoted in Deutch and Swartz, 2002). She goes on to say that peer education, here and internationally, has lacked clear standards of practice, rigour and sustainability. Consequently, adults drive peer education programmes into doing projects / activities that directly benefit them (adults) for instance cleaning of the school grounds (Josie, 2005). Moreover there have been concerns from the media that peer educators are not performing their roles as stipulated in the manual, so it is not clear how the clubs are operating (The Teacher Newsletter, May 2011; SOS children newsletter 2012; City Press 02 September 2010). In spite of peer education's sound theoretical basis, there has been little agreement on what constitutes good practice. The world of peer education means different things to everyone. Without a common language, vision and standards of practice, programmes operate independently and competitively and are difficult to evaluate and improve (Deutch and Swartz, 2002). Informally, there have been complaints from learners who are members of peer education groups that they are not given the opportunities in the clubs to make decisions on activities they would have

planned to do (Chinyama, personal communication, 3 September, 2012). There are other factors leading to increase in behaviour problems such as poor family structures (UNICEF, 2007; Tear Fund, 2004). Department of Education introduced peer education in the 44 schools in Fort Beaufort District, the department had hopes that behaviour problems will decrease, but problems are still increasing. Hence this research sought to find out the role of peer educators in enhancing social and emotional learning in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort District.

1.8 Main Research Questions

What is the role of peer educators in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools?

1.8.1 Sub-questions

What activities are carried out by peer educators?

How do peer educators conduct the activities?

How do the activities promote social and emotional learning in schools?

What support is provided by schools and the Department of Education to enable peer educators to perform their roles?

What are the challenges encountered by peer educators in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools?

1.9 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the role of peer educators in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools.

1.10 Objectives

1.10.1 To establish the role of peer educators in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools.

1.10.2 To determine the activities in peer educators conduct.

1.10.3 To find out how the activities in peer education programmes are linked to social and emotional learning.

1.10.4 To identify what support is provided by schools and the Department of Education to enable peer educators to perform their roles.

1.10.5 To find out the challenges faced by peer educators in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools.

1.11 Assumption

Peer educators in Fort Beaufort are experiencing some challenges.

1.12 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be of value to policy makers and implementers of social emotional learning programmes like peer education. The study might provide learners with information on how peer education can enhance learning at the school level. Learners would be empowered with the knowledge that they have a crucial role to play in their learning through peer education at school level. The Department of Education will find the research useful where issues of the roles of peer education in enhancing learning are encountered. This study will also add to literature on the role of peer education in enhancing learning. The findings of this study can contribute to the enrichment of the curriculum. It could also guide policy makers, teachers as well as other implementers of the programme such as social workers and curriculum developers to create policies that are acceptable to learners. Lastly, it could guide the educators on how to implement peer education in schools. By clarifying the role of peer educators, it may open channels of

communication between the learners and their seniors. The study may also lead to disclosure of abuse and encourage the learners to seek assistance and guidance from relevant sources which may lead to behaviour change (DoE, 2009). All stakeholders, parents, learners, education officials, teachers, principals and other intervention groups such as Social Welfare would learn more about the role of peer education in schools.

This research unearthed particular practical problems that schools and implementers of programmes have experienced that hindered the success of the implementation of intervention of peer education. These practical problems will be discussed in Chapter 5 which deals with the discussion of findings.

1.13 Delimitation of the Study

This study sought to find out the role of peer education in enhancing social emotional learning in four Secondary Schools in Fort Beaufort District. Participants were teachers working with learners in peer education clubs, one social worker working with the learners in peer education clubs, one district coordinator, one peer group trainer, peer educators (learners) and principals in the four schools. The study also focused on the role of peer education clubs in addressing social and emotional learning from each school in Fort Beaufort District.

1.14 Definition of Terms

Non-statutory Body: That which is not established through legislation but is recognised and performs certain functions which are recognised by schools and the Department of Education (Tear Fund, 2004; UNICEF, 2007).

Peer: According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCS) (2009), a peer is a member of a group of people sharing the same characteristics. For example, people of the same age and background, or who do the same kind of work, have the same lifestyles, experience, or beliefs. The

more a peer has in common with the person they interact with, the more likely that person is to receive the messages and be influenced.

Peer Education: For the purpose of this research, 'peer education' refers to the process of sharing information among members of a specific community to achieve positive health outcomes. As Carnegie (1998) in (Kelly 2003) states, peer education's success lies in the passing on of information among individuals who identify with a particular culture. Peer leaders are targeted, selected and trained to inform and encourage others in their social network. Those that are reached by the intervention can change their behaviour (Svenson, 1998).

Peer Educator: A person who belongs to a group on an equal basis as other group members but who is trained (and supervised) to bring about change in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours at the individual level among his or her group members. Peer educators support others in their peer groups (IFRCS, 2009).

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL): In simple terms, SEL is the capacity to recognise and manage emotions, solve problems effectively, and establish positive relationships with others in order to promote learning (Zins et al, 2003:68).

Statutory Body: that which is enacted, created or regulated through legislation, for example the South African Schools Act provides for establishment of RCLs in schools (Phaswana, 2010; Mncube, 2008; Carr & Williams, (undated).

1.15 Overview of Chapters

The following is an overview of the chapters contained in this research project.

Chapter 1

The chapter provides a general introduction to the entire research study. It provided the background information to the study, statement of the problem, significance of the study, delimitations of the study and definitions of pertinent terms.

Chapter 2

The chapter seeks to review existing literature on the role of peer education in enhancing learning. The views and perspectives of various theories of roles of peer education in enhancing learning are also explored in this chapter.

Chapter 3

The chapter describes the methods and procedures that were used to collecting, analyzing and processing data in this research study. The research design, population and sampling procedures, research instruments used to collect data and ethical considerations are discussed in this chapter. Furthermore, the researcher sought to justify why certain research methods were preferred over others in conducting this research study. Also, advantages of using those methods are highlighted.

Chapter 4

In this chapter, the researcher presents and objectively analyzes the data which was collected through interviews with teachers, principals and focus groups as well as observations and documents analysis.

Chapter 5

This chapter discusses the overall research findings and the implications of these findings for the future of the education system in South Africa.

Chapter 6

This chapter provides a summary, conclusions drawn, recommendations and suggestions for future research.

1.16 Conclusion

This chapter introduced this study by discussing the background of the study. The chapter investigated the role of peer education in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools, purpose of the study, the study's objectives, significance of the study, the delimitation of the study, and definition of terms. Also outlined is an overview of chapters of this study and a conclusion. The next chapter will review existing literature on the role of peer education in enhancing social and emotional learning.

2 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of a literature review is to establish the current state of knowledge in the field (Hart, 1994). He further emphasizes that literature is included in a study as a prelude to the report of the empirical work. The purpose of literature searching is to demonstrate skills in literature searching thereby show command of the subject area and understanding of the problem, to justify the research topic, design and methodology. Hart (1994) further explains that references are important in helping the writer to analyse and to situate researcher's problem in a broader context. This chapter seeks to examine the following important points listed below with reference to the existing literature through firstly, discussing and presenting the theoretical framework that informed this study, and finally, reviewing literature, internationally, and in South Africa on the role of peer educators in enhancing social and emotional learning.

2.2 Peer Education

Peer education (PE) means different things to different people partly because standards of practice for peer education have never been defined (Black, 1998; Campbell and MacPhail, 2002 ;Campbell, 2004). According to Department of Health (DoH, 2001) definitions of peer education vary, reflecting differing practical and theoretical approaches. DoH (2001) goes further to say that generally all the definitions highlight the idea that peer education is an interaction between people who are similar in some way, which can be a positive force for spreading ideas and altering attitudes and behaviour. Deutsch and Swartz (2002) add that peer education typically involves training and supporting members of a given group to effect change among members of the same group. Also according to Reinders and Volgelaar (1991), cited in Deutsch and Swartz, (2002), describe peer educators as

those who are information providers, referral agents and counsellors, and who are effective in promoting skills, creating a positive social norm and providing healthy alternatives. In this context of this study, what this definition means is to emphasise the fact that peer educators create a safe place for candid, and genuine examination of attitudes, choices and situations and it is by virtue of their ability to create such safe learning places that they become educators, models, referral agents and activists against HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, violence and other health threats to young people. Peer education is a popular concept that implies an approach, a communication channel, a methodology, a philosophy, and a strategy. Zielony, Kimzeke, Stakic and Bruyn (2003) define peer education as ‘the process whereby well-trained and motivated young people undertake informal or organized educational activities with their peers (those similar to themselves in age, background or interests) over a period of time, aimed at developing their knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and skills and enabling them to be responsible for and protect their own health.’

The English term ‘peer’ refers to “one that is of equal standing with another; one belonging to the same societal group especially based on age, grade or status” (Zins et al, 2003). The term ‘education’ (educate) refers to the “development”, “training”, or “persuasion” of a given person or thing, or the “knowledge” resulting from the educational process (Webster,1985) cited in Zins et al (2003). In practice, peer education has taken on a range of definitions and interpretations concerning who is a peer and what education is for example advocacy, counselling, facilitating discussions, drama, lecturing, distributing materials, making referrals to services, providing support (Shoemaker et al, 1998). Peer education typically involves the use of members of a given group to effect change among other members of the same group. Peer education therefore seeks to effect change at the individual level by attempting to modify a person’s knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours (Svenson, 1998). He goes on to say that more action is needed at group and societal level to make changes in programmes and policies. For the purpose of this study, ‘peer education’ refers to the process of sharing information among members

of a specific community to achieve positive health and behaviour outcomes (Bleeker, 2001). Peer education's success lies in the passing on of healthy information among individuals who identify with a particular culture.

Literature in this study will be reviewed under the following headings:

1. The theories behind peer education
2. The role of peer education clubs in addressing social issues or enhancing social and emotional learning in schools
3. The role of teachers in peer education clubs
4. Activities carried out by peer education clubs
5. How peer education club activities are conducted
6. How peer education club activities promote social and emotional learning in schools
7. The challenges faced by peer education clubs in enhancing social emotional learning

2.3 Theories Underpinning This Study

The study will be informed by the following theories: Social Learning Theory and the diffusion of innovations theory. However in Chapter 5 the researcher will include other theories and literature which are not listed here but are found from the literature readings.

2.3.1 Social Learning Theory

This theory claims that modelling is an important component of the learning process, whereby peer education need to have credibility with others in order to be influential. In order to act as role models, according to this theory, peers would need to be able to observe peer role models, practicing healthy behaviour (Deutch and Swartz, (2002),. Peers would then need scope to practise it themselves and would need positive reinforcement. The process of successfully applying socially earned behaviour could be considered to be empowering for those involved. According to Zielony et al (2003), this theory is largely based on the work of the psychologist, Bandura (1986), who states that people learn indirectly, by observing and modelling on others with whom the person identifies and through training in skills that lead to confidence in being able to carry out behaviour. This specific condition is called self-efficacy, which includes the ability to overcome any barriers to performing the behaviour.

2.3.2 The Diffusion of Innovation Theory

According to Deutch and Swartz, (2002), the theory argues that social influence plays an important role in behaviour change. The role of opinion leaders in community, acting as agents for behaviour change, is a key element on this theory. Their influence on group norms or customs is predominantly seen as a result of person to person exchanges and discussions.

2.4 Studies conducted on the role of peer education

According to Zins et al (2003) peer education essentially involves social and emotional learning (SEL). Elias (2006) defines “SEL” as the process of acquiring core competencies to recognise and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, appreciate the perspective of others, establish and maintain positive

relationships, make responsible decisions and handle interpersonal situations constructively'. He goes on to say that SEL is sometimes called 'the missing piece' because it represents a part of education that links academic knowledge with a specific set of skills important to success in schools, families, communities, workplaces, and life in general.

According to Payton, (2000) quoted in Elias, (2006), many programmes have been developed to help schools enhance their students' health and reduce the prevalence of problem behaviours such as drug abuse, violence, and high-risk sex behaviour. Social and emotional learning (SEL) programmes provide systematic classroom instruction that enhances children's capacities to recognise and manage their emotions, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish pro-social goals and solve problems, and use a variety of interpersonal skills to effectively and ethically handle developmentally relevant tasks. Elias (2006) says that this describes criteria based on theory, research, and best educational practice that identify key social and emotional learning (SEL) competencies and programme features that educators who adopt these programmes should consider. The SEL competencies include 17 skills and attitudes organised into four groups: awareness of self and others, positive attitudes and values, responsible decision making, and social interaction skills (Elias, 2006).

2.4.1 History of Peer Education

Throughout the ages, peer education has been used in a number of settings and contexts and for various purposes (Carnegie, 1998 quoted in Bleeker 2001). Bleeker (2001) has identified these contexts to include: schools, universities and colleges, youth centres, social settings and outreach settings. The setting of a peer education intervention is determined by the target group and where they can be reached by the initiative (Bleeker, 2001). Systematic use of peer education in a school setting was first used in Britain in the early 1800s with direct reference to the

economic benefit of using pupils to teach other pupils during school classes. Peer educators were less expensive than professional teachers (Svenson, 1998; Millburn, 1996).

Michel (2005) states that peer education programmes have been implemented for many years. They vary in approach and outcomes, and have been used traditionally to deliver general health messages. Peer education programmes have been used in various settings, not only involving youth. Many programmes originated as adult peer education initiatives and some of the participating groups have included truck drivers, sex workers and young women. More recently a focus on school based and youth based peer education programmes has become a trend (Michel, 2005).

Despite the number of programmes that are being implemented, there are few documents to describe the role of peer educators, their efficiency and impact. Some of the approaches and documents (UNAIDS, 1999) describe the critical components of a valuable peer education initiative but do not describe how these components were derived. Nor do many explain the criteria or tools used for selection of peer educators, the training, supervision and managerial infrastructure (Michel, 2005).

Wagner (1998), quoted in Bleeker (2001) in her comprehensive history of peer education, examines the development of peer education, acknowledging the work of the Swiss educationalist Pestalozzi working with orphaned children in Switzerland. Pestalozzi developed a more informal approach to peer education than Bell and Lancaster had, that of 'drilling' one child through an artificial machinery of lifeless tasks and the child so drilled is employed to drill others in the same manner and by the same means.

Peer education programmes vary in approach and outcomes, and have been used traditionally to deliver general health messages.

The first documented use of peer education initiatives with adolescents and substance use was in American high schools in the late 1960s (Ward et al. 1997) quoted in Bleeker (2001). In the structured setting of a school, students were trained to discourage their peers from taking up drinking and smoking. Ward et al (1997) quoted in Bleeker (2001) adds that since the advent of HIV/AIDS in the early 1980s, peer education has become an increasingly popular tool to reach 'hidden populations' (such as gay men, sex workers and injecting drug users) with harm reduction information.

According to Crossier, Goodrich, McVey, Forrest, and Dennison (2010), an early form of peer education was the 'monitor' system developed in Victorian schools where older school pupils taught literacy and numeracy skills to groups of younger pupils. The scheme was a way to enable teachers to cope with teaching large groups of young people and children of varied age and ability. Bleeker (2001) also avers that the similarity between 'monitors' and students might not have been great as monitors acted like teachers in their own right, dispensing punishment and reward for good work. He goes on to say that peer tutoring experienced a renaissance during the 1960s particularly in North America and the former Soviet Union. Older students were involved in providing learning support to younger pupils, but on this occasion such schemes were based on educational psychology theory. This theory suggested that interaction between peers was related to successful learning because children develop their abilities through sharing their thoughts, discussing ideas and learning to compromise with other young people who are similar to themselves (Crossier et al 2010). Peer-to-peer interaction also seemed to lack the intimidating overtones which children felt existed in their interactions with adult teachers. They add that peer counselling approaches were derived from this earlier work. Peer educators focus on helping peers deal with personal problems by putting them in contact with peers who have had the same experiences. Both peer tutoring and peer counselling have continued to develop.

In the past twenty years, peer education has been revitalised as a method of drug education and prevention amongst young people in schools. As governments came to realize the merits of peer education in reducing HIV and AIDS, violence, drug abuse, learner pregnancy and sexual health promotion, peer-led initiatives for risk populations such as young people began to expand in schools worldwide (DoE, 2009).

Gould and Lomax (1993) attribute the evolution and expansion of peer education programmes particularly in the USA, and the more recent proliferation in the use of peer education programmes in addressing health education and risk reduction to a number of factors, namely:

- i. The sponsorship of regular two-day conferences by the American College Health Association (ACHA) Task Force on HIV Disease.
- ii. An increase in the number of reports and presentations of Peer Education as a valuable strategy at ACHA's annual national meetings.
- iii. Increasing numbers of journal articles investigating peer education.
- iv. The inclusion of peer education programmes in some institutional curricula.
- v. The realisation that peer education can have far reaching health promotion benefits with manageable costs in the context of budget cutbacks (Gould and Lomax, 1993).

By giving young people opportunities to create their own programmes of education and information, qualities like commitment, loyalty and idealism can become more useful (Svenson, 1998). Peer education programmes enable young people to deal with problems that affect them. The process can be partly social, establishing forums for young people to explore new frontiers, helping to solve problems and let people in power gain an understanding of the point of view of young people

(Svenson, 1998). Peer group pressure is traditionally portrayed as negative pressure on young people, whereby they learn their bad habits like drug taking and smoking. To use such dynamics in a positive manner is the challenge of peer education (Gould and Lomax, 1993).

A peer who understands a teen's fierce need for independence and maturity, and can temper those needs with responsibility and thoughtfulness, is in a crucial position to correct misinformation and shape group values without losing credibility among youth. Adolescents can be extremely influential in shaping the behaviour and values of their friends, particularly in risk-taking situations (Centre for Population Options (CPO), USA, (1993) quoted in Crossier et al (2010).

It is widely accepted that peer education clubs play an important role in the socialisation of the young, as during adolescence peer groups can play an increasingly influential role in a young person's life (Svenson, 1998). Certainly the average child spends a larger portion of time with peers than with his or her parents particularly during adolescence. Root (2005) quoted in DoE (2009) claimed that because peer groups matter to children they also matter to their education. He argues for the recognition of peer groups as an integral part of learning strategies. It is because of this empathy and similar life experiences that peer educators have a distinct advantage over their professional counterparts in informing and educating.

In South Africa, studies have examined many issues raised within peer education clubs; about control of the young people involved in peer group programmes; their relationships to adults as teachers, trainers or coaches; the partnerships developed between youth and community workers as leaders or coaches, and the rationale behind developing such programmes (PEM, 2011). Some sections of the studies are illustrated by examples of good practice. Practical exercises and games are included which aim to help those wishing to establish programmes and develop existing work with young people (PEM, 2011). Peer education programmes are usually implemented as a component of programmes targeting youth, the content

and the goals of initiatives focusing on HIV/AIDS activities needs to relate to education programmes for reproductive health care and life skills. As mentioned earlier, a number of peer education programmes are currently in place in South African schools and are used as strategic interventions targeting youth and young people working in the HIV/AIDS prevention field (UNAIDS, 2001).

According to Bhengu (1998), schools in South Africa have established intervention programmes which involve the youth at the core of all activities which are found in a school setting. The intention is that learners work with teachers to ensure improved quality learning, work with school community to ensure safe learning environments and life skills training to empower both boys and girls against sexual abuse, violence, teenage pregnancy, child abuse, poverty and indiscipline (UNICEF, 2007).

In the Eastern Cape peer education was established in 2009 on the premise that academic performance is influenced by social issues surrounding the individuals in the schools (DoE, 2009). Hence the major aim of peer education in the Eastern Cape is to enhance learning by addressing the social issues which might act as hindrances on the academic performance of learners such as violence, learner pregnancy, drug and substance abuse, responsibility and study skills. Within the paradigm of adolescent peer education, peer leaders are targeted, selected and trained to inform and encourage others in their social network to adopt healthier lifestyle choices, particularly in relation to drug using behaviours, HIV and AIDS, poverty, teenage pregnancy and violence (Svenson, 1998). Those that are reached by the intervention can be encouraged to adopt safer methods of drug use, sexual relationships, and thereby prevent harmful drug use situations (Michel, 2005).

2.5 Peer Education in the Eastern Cape Province

The Eastern Cape Department of Education introduced Peer Education (PE) which is aimed at strengthening the potential of youth to transform their lives (PEM, 2011). According to (Higher Education HIV/AIDS (HEAIDS) , (2009) peer education aims to enable a young generation of South African leaders to be able to confront social difficulties with knowledge and skills. (CWSA, 2011) states that a Peer Education Programme (PEP) is based on the principle that knowledge is quickly exchanged between two peers and that change is supported through common identity and equality. According to PEM, (2011), peer education is an approach, or intervention strategy whereby youth aim at promoting the well-being of others in the same situation. It is based on the premise that people in similar situations have similar experiences, understand one another and can influence one another. In this study peer education is whereby information is transferred by role modelling of a particular type of behaviour. The peer educators are of the same age as the target group in terms of age sexuality and gender. The role of peer education clubs as outlined in literature as follows:

- (i) To be an educator: Provide basic information and skills to facilitate learning about healthy living to peers in a youth-friendly way, in informal, face-to-face, one-on-one discussion or informal education sessions (Svenson, 1998).
- (ii) To provide role models: peer education clubs provide positive role models for healthy behaviour and reinforce values and attitudes in the form of positive peer pressure. This implies that peer educators must have cognitive maturity needed for them to understand the emotions of their peers (Michel ,2005).
- (iii) To be a supporter: peer educators build trusting relationships with peers listen to their experiences and provide support to build self-esteem and to address their problems (Kirby, Laris, & Rolleri, 2006).

- (iv) To provide referral agents: peer educators identify peers with problems that impact their behaviour and educational performance, support them and, if necessary refer them to appropriate community agencies such as youth-friendly health or social services like social welfare (Kelly, 2003).
- (v) To advocate: peer educators raise awareness of issues like inequalities and social services available; make school management aware of the needs of learners and advocate for resources. They can make learners aware of their rights and create an atmosphere of questioning (Svenson, 1998).

To perform the above-mentioned roles, peer educators follow the activities that are in a manual that is given to them by the Department of Education. The manual has been developed to assist in the implementation of the Peer Education programme in the Eastern Cape schools. It should be used, together with any other relevant material, to orientate learners in the schools about PE. Through this manual the department aims at addressing social challenges that affect schooling within the Province. Examples of such social challenges are: the high rate of learner pregnancy, the increasing number of learners using drugs, the increase of bullying within schools, lack of effective study skills and the general decline of value systems like respect and discipline (CWSA, 2011). Hence, peer education clubs have a mandate to deliver a functional peer education programme in all primary and secondary schools. They are mandated to reduce risky behaviour amongst school-going youth including learner pregnancy, abortion, substance abuse, bullying and suicide. In other words they have to enhance social and emotional learning in schools (CWSA, 2011).

According to the Peer Education Manual (PEM) (2011) the programme is coordinated by a peer education coordinator who is a Department of Education official at the district level. The peer education coordinator recruits peer group

trainers one for each school. The peer group trainers are almost the same age as the learners: the peer educators (PEs). According to the PEM (2011), peer group trainers are out-of-school youth from the communities around the schools who are selected by the Department of Education. They work with peer educator groups in the schools on a yearly basis. They must be between the ages of 18 and 25. They must reside within the area of his /her schools. The candidate must be passionate about youth development. Districts do their own selection of peer group trainers using provincial guidelines. Normally, interview processes must be followed and records kept as evidence that a fair selection was done. Each peer group trainer has four schools in his / her care and they must visit each school at least once a week. They act as facilitators in the clubs. They are supposed to train peer educators, but because they are just out of school youth who do not have the skills to train others the Department of Education invites non-Governmental organisations to assist with the training.

Schools are requested by the Department of Education to provide learners with cognitive maturity in order to understand the emotions of their peers. At least 10 learners per school are selected as PEs and they in turn must cascade the information to at least 50 learners (DoE, 2011). Learners, educators and SMTs should jointly determine the criteria for choosing the learners who will go for training as peer educators. Each school should bear in mind that they should choose people who are always available and are prepared to perform the duties stipulated in the manual. They also look at gender balance, self-motivation, personal traits and potential for leadership. Peer educators should role model good behaviour in schools (DoE, 2011).

Training of Peer Educators in schools is offered for at least three days. The training consists of ten learners per school who are trained as peer leaders with the sole aim of letting them pass the skills to their peers. The skills training is linked to certain themes, for example, gender equality, interdependence, tolerance and

respect. According to the manual, the lessons are interactive and learners get an opportunity within the training sessions to demonstrate their competencies of lesson presentations, problem solving and critical thinking skills. The peer education sessions are informal and are usually done after school when all formal teaching is done with (CWSA, 2011). The main purpose of this approach is to ensure that learners engage in the activities contained in the manual away from the rigid formality of classroom learning. Most of the activities in peer education clubs focus on social and emotional learning (Zins et al, 2003).

2.5.1 Peer Education in the Fort Beaufort District

According to DoE (2011), peer education clubs were established in the Eastern Cape in 2009, and are operating in 44 schools in the Fort Beaufort district. The schools were chosen because of the schools' records of high rates of behaviour problems such as substance abuse, suicide, low academic standards, delinquency, interpersonal violence, and high dropout rate. The list of issues facing today's educators and students is very long. But genuinely effective schools are those that prepare students not only to pass tests at school, but also to pass the tests of life (Zins et al, 2003). It has been found that social emotional competence and academic achievement are interwoven and that integrated, coordinated instruction in both areas maximises students' potential to succeed in school and throughout their lives (Zins et al, 2003).

SMTs and schools in general have provided all their support to ensure that peer education clubs perform their activities (DoE, 2011; HEAIDS, 2009; UNICEF, 2007; Tear Fund, 2004). However, some SMTs have raised concern informally that peer education clubs have most of the time concentrated on instigating learners to

demand for their rights in every issue in schools (Chinyama, personal communication, September 12, 2012).

Concerns have been raised regarding the fact that the clubs do not function as stipulated in the manuals (Sisonke Consortium, 2010). Despite the work that peer education and other groups is performing in schools, there is an increase in problems of social issues which affect learning in schools. The Department of Education's main focus in the above programmes is on knowledge and awareness campaigns but very little change in high risk sexual behaviour seems to have taken place. HEAIDS (2009) agrees that the prevention successes have not been as evident among the population at greatest risk. The high rate of teenage pregnancies in the Province could be evidence of many contributing factors hence this research seeks to find out how peer education is trying to reduce the problems. The teenage pregnancy rate in the Eastern Cape increased from 3 264 in 2005 to 5 015 in 2007 and it is on the increase. A total of 1 131 pregnancies was recorded in the grade ten group in 2010 and more than 411 of these learners in the Eastern Cape were younger than 15 years of age (PEM, 2011).

Goldstein and Kackzmarek, (1992) believe that all behaviour, desirable or undesirable, effective or ineffective, is learnt. They emphasise unlearning the undesirable and learning the desirable for us to have a reduction in social and emotional problems in our societies. Peer education programmes are in place but behaviour is not changing, therefore one need to find out how these programmes are being implemented. Deutch and Swartz (2002) also argue that there is need for minimum standards of peer education so that peer education clubs might move towards the same destination and goals, which are the things we want peer education programmes help our schools accomplish. Deutsch and Swartz (2002) reveal that implementation of peer education also differs from school to school in terms of mode of delivery, activities and time allocation in South African schools. The PEM (2011) outlines different activities and suggested ways on how they are

supposed to be done. The activities are designed to allow programmes the flexibility to ask and answer these questions for them, dependent on available resources (Deutch and Swartz, 2002). Given this scenario, it is not clear how peer education clubs are functioning in Fort Beaufort District – hence the rationale in doing this research.

Informally there have also been complaints from learners who are members of peer education groups that they are not given the opportunities in the clubs to make decisions on activities which they want to perform in schools (Chinyama, Personal communication, 12 September, 2012). It is alleged that adults drive them into doing projects / activities that directly benefit the adults, for instance, cleaning the school grounds. Instead of learners deciding on the days and times they want to meet, teachers suggest the times for them. Learners have leadership capacities and are also able to articulate and take measures in addressing crucial social issues which in turn enhance learning, yet they are not always given the platform to make decisions in those aspects (UNICEF, 2007; Tear Fund, 2004). Hence despite the fact that studies have identified peer education clubs as effective in addressing social issues and in turn enhancing learning in schools, it is not clear how peer educators perform their roles. It is therefore the aim of this research to examine the role of peer education clubs in enhancing social and emotional learning.

2.5.1.1 Objectives of Peer Education

According to the Eastern Cape Department of Education (DoE, 2011) the aims and objectives of peer education in the Eastern Cape include:

- i. To encourage positive life choices. In this case the manual provides learners with activities to make them aware that they have a right to make own choices. This is communicated to them either through drama or case studies. Apart from imparting knowledge, peer education approaches usually focus on raising young people's self-esteem and social competence as well as

developing their skills so that they can make informed choices about their behaviour, and feel able to act on these choices (Crossier et al, 2010).

- ii. To render personal support. Peer educators go into the community to assist the needy with different things depending on the needs of the particular group of people or person. It can be provision of food to orphanages or old people's homes. According to Crossier et al (2010), peer education approaches value the views and experiences of young people, making them the experts and recognising that they can positively influence and support each other. Involvement can enhance peer educators' confidence and their sense of engagement with their school and communities.
- iii. Changing behaviours. Peer educators act as role models and they talk to different people with behaviour problems and they try to assist them. It could be drug abuse, violence or HIV and AIDS.
- iv. Enhancing health seeking behaviour. Most peer education activities are focused on a certain theme, depending on the problem of the target group. If the youth in a particular locality is using unprotected sex, then the peer educators address them on this unhealthy behaviour.
- v. Promoting leadership in schools by building capacity of learners. Peer educators are trained to assist their peers by either counselling them or referring them to other social services such as police or Social Welfare depending on the intensity of the problem.

2.5.2 Role of Peer Educators in Enhancing Social-Emotional Learning

According to PEM (2011), peer education performs a number of social roles in their schools and community in order to address a number of issues that affect learner performance in schools including substance abuse, learner pregnancy, HIV and STIs, study skills and peer pressure. “The key message in all their activities outlined in the document is: abstinence from all high risk behaviour by school going youth in order to improve learning” (DoE, 2009).

As discussed in Chapter 1, some of the roles of PEs are: educator, role model, supporter, advocate and referral agent.

To perform these, PEs follow the activities that are in a manual given to them by the Department of Education.

2.5.3 Recruitment of Peer Educators

The selection of peer educators is documented in the literature as an element that is critical to programme success. The European guidelines for youth AIDS peer education suggest that peer educators must be acceptable to the target group and that their personality must be both conducive to training and suited to the work they will be doing (Flanagan and Mahler 1996). A selection strategy that is becoming more popular in the published literature is the use of social network analysis and nomination techniques to identify and select peer educators. For example, a peer education programme in the USA for injecting drug users selected peer educators on the basis of nominations by peers through a social network interview. Peer educators among the injecting drug users were then trained in needle hygiene and the reduction of sexual risk.

According to DoE (2011), in South Africa peer group trainers are out of school youth who are recruited to implement the programme on a yearly contract. Districts do

their own selection of peer groups using provincial guidelines. Normally, interview processes must be followed and records kept as evidence. Each peer group trainer has four schools in his / her care and they must visit each school at least once a week. They act as facilitators in the clubs. They are supposed to train PEs, but because they are young people who do not have the skills to train others, the Department invites non-governmental organisations to provide different forms of assistance including training (CWSA, 2011).

2.5.4 Training of Peer Facilitators

To ensure that they effectively perform their roles as peer educators, the identified individuals have to prepare themselves well. They have to undergo an intensive training in adolescence education in order to be empowered with the competencies needed for accomplishing responsibilities as Peer Educators (PEM, 2011). The peer educator curriculum is highly participatory, easy to follow and contains step-by-step instructions for facilitators as it includes key information, as well as illustrations to engage participants and improve learning and can therefore be used as reference for the PEs after training (DoE, 2009).

Preparation to be a peer educator includes:

- i. Undergoing intensive training organised for Peer Educators;
- ii. Developing a complete understanding of the national framework of peer education and its adapted version in line with the local socio-cultural setting by acquiring and mastering the materials developed under the Programme;
- iii. Sharpening of individual interpersonal communication skills coupled with life skills enrichment;

- iv. Acquiring comprehensive knowledge of the roles and functions of peer educators.

Research has documented the need for comprehensive training of HIV/AIDS peer educators (UNAIDS, 2004). As noted by Flanagan and Mahler (1996), implementing agencies found that it is cost-effective to implement peer education programmes if the initial training (provided to peer educators) was very thorough. They further suggest that there should be an assessment of the participants' background and experience in peer education before deciding on the content of training. Critical elements of peer educator training will include: clarification of the peer educator's expected role(s); sufficient opportunities to practice presentations on key topics such as STI/HIV/AIDS, gender and sexuality, and care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS; and time to practice skills-building exercises such as correct condom use or needle hygiene (UNAIDS ,2004).

South African schools are required by the Eastern Cape Department of Education to provide learners whom they think may understand the emotions of their peers (DoE, 2011). At least 10 learners per school are selected as PEs and they in turn must cascade the information to at least 50 learners in the school. Learners, educators and SMTs jointly determine the criteria for choosing the learners who will go for training as peer educators. The selected PEs must always be available and prepared to perform the duties stipulated in the manual. They also choose PEs on the basis of gender balance, self-motivation, personal traits and potential for leadership. Peer educators should role model good behaviour in schools (DoE, 2011).

2.4.6 Issues Discussed in Peer Education Clubs

The major aim of peer education in schools is to build a culture of responsibility, humanity and accountability (DoE, 2009). This is partly achieved through the transformation of the Bill of Rights into a bill of responsibility and education aimed at harnessing youths with technical skills and abilities to perform effectively in their daily lives. (Goldstein et al 1992). The DoE's Manifesto on values, education and democracy highlights ten key values that form the basis of our constitution: democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-sexism, ubuntu (human dignity) and an open society, accountability/responsibility, the rule of law, respect and reconciliation (Goldstein et al 1992). Peer education is also based on the same values and principles mentioned above.

The DoE has placed a high priority on the teaching of the constitutional values by infusing them into all aspects of the curriculum, and particularly in Life Orientation learning areas. Peer education is connected to Life orientation hence Life Orientation teachers are in charge of these clubs. It should be noted that subjects like Life Orientation offer social emotional learning to learners hence it is crucial in the education system. Peer education clubs, just like Life Orientation, also offer social and emotional learning to learners, but this time through youth to youth activities. This intervention will assist in equipping learners and educators with skills and values to participate fully in the South African democracy (DoE, 2009).

According to Hindle quoted in DoE (2009) the Department of Basic Education, in partnership with the National Religious Leaders Forum, developed the Bill of Responsibility for learners in March 2006. The initiative arose out of concern amongst all stakeholders in education and the broader society that learners should understand that in a democratic society, all individuals have responsibilities as citizens that are linked to the constitutional rights that every citizen is guaranteed (Herman an Winters, 2011). It is when citizens make responsible choices in terms

of the wellbeing of others and themselves, that a democracy is strengthened. The Department of Education welcomed all intervention strategies aimed at promoting youth involvement in issues affecting them. Peer education in the Eastern Cape Province is one such programme established by the DoE with the intention of engaging the youth on the issue of social values and how these values form the basis for harmony, peace and wellbeing for all (DoE,2009).

2.5.5 How Peer Education Enhances Social and Emotional Learning

Peer education promotes learning through a number of activities which enhance self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self-management and relationship skills (DoE, 2011). Peer education promotes identification and recognition of one's own emotions, strengths in self and others, and self-confidence through different activities done in the club. Operational principles for local schools that are grounded in best practices for academic achievement are espoused by the community and they promise to produce effective systems (DoE, 2011). PE promotes empathy and respect for others (DoE, 2011). Stakeholders in schools should learn from peer education that they should respect each other. This enhances cooperation and eventually team work. Once there is team work then great results are expected (UNAIDS, 2004).

Responsible decision making is also critical for learning. Learners trained to be PEs take the initiative to teach their peers evaluation and reflection, and personal and ethical responsibility. PE should be good evaluators of situations around them so that they make good choices depending on the situation (DoE, 2011). Good evaluation and reflection means that learners can identify their strengths, weaknesses and opportunities. This promotes learning in that they will be in a position to avoid obstacles to their progress in education (DoE, 2011).

Peer education enhances self-management of learners/peers. They do different activities which enhance impulse control, stress management, persistence, goal setting, and motivation (DoE, 2011). Self-management includes many factors. Peers are in a position to deal with different behaviour problems by managing their lives in a positive way. A positive mind is a free mind such that learners' performance is enhanced if they have a free conscience (Huddleston ,2007).

Peer educators also communicate in different ways with their peers about relationship skills and cooperation (DoE, 2011). The PEM further states that co-operation encourages communication between peers. As noted earlier, these competencies are taught most effectively within caring, supportive, and well-managed learning environments. Development of autonomy, self-discipline, and ethics is more likely in environments in which mutual respect, cooperation, caring, and decision making are the norm. According to Zins, Elias, & Greenberg (2003), these contexts encourage students to explore new learning activities and therefore provide them with accessible opportunities to address their personal needs and problems, and support them in establishing positive relationships with peers and adults. The intended result is that students feel safe and secure and are not fearful of making mistakes (DoE, 2011). Ultimately, a reciprocal relationship should exist between learners and school climate.

A positive school environment promotes learning which provides a supportive climate. Because social, emotional, and academic growth are interdependent, the result should be a synergic progress in all of these areas (Jones ,1992). This therefore means that there should be interaction or cooperation of all stakeholders, the parents, teachers and learners and, hopefully, they produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects in school and the community.

As noted by Corbett & Wilson (1995) in Zins et al (2003) peer education as a social and emotional learning programme therefore provides promising ideas in

addressing social issues because social and emotional learning is directly linked to academic performance because if a learner has social problems he/she does not perform well in school/class. If a learner is encouraged or supported by those around him in terms of materials, food, and clothing they become more confident, and this alone improves the performance of learners. This fact is further supported by Zins et al (2003), who argue that students who master course content but fail to develop adequate academic self-confidence, academic goals, institutional commitment, and social support and involvement may be at risk of dropping out from school.

According to peer education manual and other studies over seas the issues discussed in peer education clubs include:

2.5.5.1 Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)

PATHS are a school-programme that emphasises conflict resolution, stopping to think before acting, managing and expressing emotions effectively. It is designed to promote social and emotional competence in students and teachers and to reduce aggression and behavioural problems while enhancing classroom productivity and overall quality of the learning environment . According to Elias (2006), PATHS also enables learners to manage emotions, that is to be able to regulate feelings so that they aid rather than impede the handling of situations; thus learners are educated on the accurate understanding of circumstances they might be in first before taking action. On conflict resolution, learners are taught how to negotiate fairly thereby achieving mutually satisfactory resolutions to conflict by addressing the needs of all concerned.

2.5.5.2 Self-Awareness and Self-esteem

According to DoH (2001) Peer educators help peers to develop a positive self-concept at different levels. The way we see ourselves is called our self-concept. A good self-concept leads to a positive awareness of self. Self-awareness is when you become aware of what you are like by what other people say about you and to you, the way they look at you, things you do well and things you can't do that well. Similarly, self-awareness can be destroyed by other people when they say or do negative things to children. Other people can also improve your self-awareness by doing and saying positive things to you. Self-concept can be developed at more than one level (DoE, 2009).

2.4.6.3 Goal Setting

Goals are set with self-belief in mind. Peer educators explain to their peers the role played by their thoughts in terms of self-belief and inform them about the concept of self-talk (their own thought patterns) and how it affects emotions and behaviour. Peers are told that they should write their dreams down and they should share their goals with someone they know will encourage them. Elias (2006) states that learners should set goals and plans then establish and work toward the achievement of those goals. However peers should also anticipate certain obstacles thereby avoid risky behaviour by making good decisions. Character control is important in overcoming circumstances that cannot be avoided or controlled (DoE, 2009).

2.5.5.5 Making choices

Thinking about the different choices before they are made or said, helps in ensuring that what we do or say leads to the best results (DoE, 2009) Peer education therefore helps learners to have the guts to make choices without fear or prejudice. Choices include choice of subjects, dressing, friends or religion (CWSA, 2011). A

positive mind leads to positive results. Teachers work well with learners who have positive minds.

2.5.5.6 Empathy skills

Empathy can be described as temporarily living in another's life, to try and understand their perspective and condition, without judgment (Deutsch & Swartz, 2002). By trying to understand what your peers are going through from their perspective, you will be better able to support them and will also make your clients feel more comfortable being honest with you (CWSA, 2011). This therefore means that if learners have a shoulder to cry on they are relieved of the pressure and stress which might lead to their failure in life. If they are focused, then they are deemed to succeed in their studies. Learners need to identify and understand the thoughts and feelings of others, respect others by believing that others deserve to be treated with kindness and compassion as part of our shared humanity; appreciate diversity by understanding that individual and group differences complement one another and add strength and adaptability to the world around us (Elias, 2006).

2.5.5.7 Problem solving

Peer educators take their peers through problem solving skills and they explain each skill as they go. This helps in defining the problem, using previous experience, discussing ideas with others, finding the best solution, visualising the outcome, and reflecting on strategies and solutions (CWSA, 2011). In life one needs such skills so that one learns from their previous mistakes as well as making goals in order to

achieve one's dreams. If learners have dreams and targets they are likely to work hard in order to achieve their goals.

2.5.5.8 Assertiveness

Self-assertiveness refers to the ability to show a confident and forceful personality (DoE, 2009). PEs explain to their peers' strategies for assertiveness by elaborating on different ways of saying 'no' to things they do not want. Different scenarios are given and peers suggest ways of resisting to problem behaviour. This kind of personality development gives learners who have freedom of choice and conscience. A child who is assertive can achieve in life because he/she is not driven into problem behaviour by peers thereby focusing on his/her education (Tietz, D., Hatchett, J., Kim, L., Summers, D., Pedraza, J. Castro, D., Brean, W., Woods, R. (1998)

2.5.5.9 Effective Communication

According to Elias (2003), learners also learn about effective communication using both verbal and non-verbal skills to express oneself and promote effective exchanges with others. Effective communication also helps in building, establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding connections with individuals and groups.

2.6 Facilitation Methods Used in Peer Clubs

Activities to increase awareness of self-development, values and behaviour, relationships, sexual health, substance abuse, learner pregnancy, prevention of

HIV/AIDS and TB, advancing human rights, study skills, decision making and problem solving are done using different ways (CWSA, 2011).

2.6.1 Awareness campaigns

Awareness campaigns require a good venue and the materials prepared should suit the target group. The facilitator should have ice breakers and should know his/her content and activities well (CWSA, 2011). Different facilitation methods should be used. Materials and resources should be readily available. Evaluation forms must be made available for learners to evaluate the sessions. This will help the facilitators to see areas of improvement. Attendance registers should be filled by learners and facilitators who include social workers per group trainers and teachers should have follow-up sessions. Peer facilitators should lead the discussions and give clear guidelines on how to do tasks. Peer facilitators should also give clear guidelines on how to do tasks (CWSA, 2011). They should allow everyone to participate actively. Peer facilitators should listen to all participants and encourage explanation of unclear statements. Facilitators keep a record of points shared by participants. Rules must be clear to maintain order within a group (CWSA, 2011).

2.6.2 Small group discussions

This allows participants to carry out easier discussions and increase the chances of sharing their views. Group discussions have more chance to share their views, listen to others, debate ideas, form new opinions, test ideas and become aware of their role within a group. The groups should be well organised with four or five people and a time limit is given per discussion session. Ground rules should be set and role should be allocated to each group member (DoE, 2009).

2.6.3 Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a spontaneous group discussion to produce ideas and ways of solving problems. It is also a method that encourages independent thought. It is useful for generation of different ideas as it allows the free flow of ideas on a given topic. Brainstorming is effective for exploratory study of sensitive issue such as HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS 2001). Maximum involvement of all participants (even shy /timid people) is enhanced by brain storming. It enables quick collection of ideas. However the purpose of brainstorming should be explained clearly to participants. Criticism of anyone's suggestions must be discouraged. The facilitator should encourage all ideas, even unusual ones that may seem not workable; they may lead to practical suggestions and debate (DoE, 2009).

2.6.4 Role play

According to PEM (2011) role plays and other theatre techniques provide an attractive way to deliver information through humour and true-to-life drama. It permits peer educators to dramatize the myths that people spread and show how to break them down. In a role play, people can explore problems that they might feel uncomfortable about discussing in real Role play allows one to practice communication skills, think about personal experiences, practice how to respond to feelings, learn from experience and think of different ways the situation acted out could have been dealt with (UNAIDS,2001). Role play explores the real disadvantages of actions without actually suffering. Learners use their minds, imagination and emotions. Through role play learners develop a skill of thinking into the future.

2.6.5 Case study

A case study gives a factual description of an event, character, situation and problem given to learners, which needs to be followed with a discussion. The learner can offer a range of possible views and ideas as well as solutions. This allows for problem solving and critical thinking. The learners become the resource in the process where they share and listen to the ideas of others (CWSA, 2011).

2.6.6 Gallery walk

Participants are supposed to display their posters at the end of an activity through engagement in a Gallery Walk activity to gather and share information from the other groups' posters. This inter-group activity will allow participants to discuss and exchange information (DoE, 2009). All members of a group converge at the group's poster and nominate one member of each group to remain on the poster as their representative. The manual states that group members move to another group's poster in a clockwise direction on a rotation basis with the group representative remaining behind to give a representation on the particular poster. The groups rotate to different posters every 3 minutes until they have viewed all the posters. Thereafter the groups return to their tables and the participants share their observations/information gathered during the walk (CWSA, 2011).

2.6.7 Debates

Different points of view can be articulated in a structured way, while learners respect one another. Debates allow free expression of views on various topics. This allows an in-depth research based analysis of the subject. This promotes communication, confidence and critical thinking. Two groups for debate are formed,

the proposition team and the opposition team (PEM, 2009). Each group may have three representatives. The first speaker defines the topic and introduces three topics for or opposing motion. Second speaker develops the argument put forward by first speaker and add one or two more points. The third speaker sums up the argument. This person can also put forward counter arguments to those presented by the other team. The chairperson of the debate should be elected at the beginning of the process. The chairperson controls the debate; all points/arguments must be made through the chairperson (PEM, 2009).

2.6.8 Question and Answers

This is the most common tool in peer education. Questions are used to link prior learning to new experiences, focus attention of participants to specific topics of presentation, to arouse an interest and hence stimulate curiosity, check understanding, and evaluate progress and emphasise on the main issues (CWSA, 2011).

Activities in peer education programmes vary widely in the type and frequency of activities, the number and intensity of contacts, and the frequency of follow-up. Settings include schools and community halls, those working in peer-led programmes are described using various terms that include peer educator, peer leader, peer supporter, and youth peer educator (DoE, 2009). While peers are meant to be homogeneous to target audience, some programmes find it more advantageous to use “peers” who are slightly older, or otherwise different, from their audience. Peer education is regarded as an easy, cost effective and convenient way to reach a large number of people with information using volunteer staff. It however requires intensive planning, coordination, supervision, and resources. The program costs are inherent in each element, including training, support, supervision,

supplies, allowances – all of which require realistic budgeting and careful monitoring (DoE, 2009).

PEPs do not take place in a vacuum; rather they are shaped by, and respond to, prevailing social norms and community contexts. To be most effective, they must consciously define the context in which they function, and determine whether restrictive expectations exist that must be challenged, or whether supportive networks and institutions are present that can be strengthened and enhanced. This requires mobilization of key stakeholders – parents, teachers, health workers, and religious leaders (DoE, 2009). PEPs also have a growing role in advocacy, promoting support for the rights of young people by providing them with accurate information about human rights and HIV/AIDS, and where needed, access to youth-friendly services (Steve, 2002).

2.7 Challenges

The challenges described below refer to all sorts of peer education programmes not necessarily peer education. Firstly, PE sits uncomfortably at the intersection of cultural domains, between the professional cultures of health and education and the peer cultures of young people who are the intended recipients (Frankenham, 1998). Therefore both groups are faced with the challenge to inhabit both worlds (educators and their own peers) and must therefore establish a stance for themselves between the two. Secondly, PEs often find themselves in difficult positions for example, when they spend time with friends who are not practising safe sex. Furthermore, (Frankenham, 1998) states that many PE initiatives can be construed as confusing when the message is to submit to peer influence in what the PEs have to say, and resist peer influence in other areas of life. This may emanate from an underlying position where adults decide what is good for young people and what is not (Frankenham, 1998).

Walker and Avis (1999) also state that although there is increasing evidence that peer educators can be effective health promoters, only a few programmes have undergone empirical evaluation to show influence of attitudes on behaviours. Most of the PEPs are constrained by lack of sufficient time to promote long lasting behavioural changes and full implementation of the projects due to the current donor imposed time limits that suppress implementation (IPPF, 2004) quoted in UNICEF, (2009). There is also a lack of sufficient time for material development to ensure the PEs go into the field with sufficient material.

Another key challenge is training of both PEs and supervisory staff due to inadequate funds to provide continuing education (refresher training) and updated information for PEs as well as well as training sessions for new peer educators as old educators graduate or move away from the programme area. The low educational levels of PEs warrants additional training that is often not carried out (IPPF, 2004) quoted in UNICEF (2009). This in turn requires that PE training needs to be more practical and participatory in nature, with a structured curricula and support materials. The nature of training that is given to these peer educators is abstract. They are trained in classrooms but when they go to the community they find a totally different scenario. They are therefore unable to fully put into practice what they have been taught for they don't have the teaching aids for demonstration and materials to distribute. The training methods are not participatory and communication skills-building to sustain the motivation of peer educators, as well as in topics such as care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS, and training of trainers for technical / supervisory staff are insufficient (Walker and Avis ,1999).

Peer education implies a philosophical vision in terms of respect for the population and trying to see things from their cultural perspective, in our case from the lens of the poor and marginalized individual who lives in a society laden with issues of violence and dependence. This process often raises issues of race, gender, and class (UNAIDS ,2009). The report goes on to say that PE is a high maintenance

intervention strategy requiring high-quality coordination, leadership, and supervision to facilitate follow-up and supervision. This relies heavily on part-time PEs and coordinators to train the technical / supervisory staff. Kirby, Laris, and Rolleri, (2006) say that this further poses challenges of mapping techniques to further understand the location and mobility of the target populations. They go on to say that working horizontally with the target population, local clubs, and organizations from the beginning of the project in areas such as programme planning, materials development and evaluation also poses a major challenge. This is due to asymmetrical participation and independent decision making perceptions of the society due to gender, age religion and culture. These require trusting more in the people and their experiences and try to strengthen a more horizontal process for programmatic input and decision-making.

Expansion or scaling-up of Peer education programmes (PEPs) from the local to the regional or to national level has also been identified as one catastrophe in South Africa. This is due to poor policy implementation, as well as lack of financial and political backing of local government in order to make such a transition more feasible (Kirby et al, 2006). Selection of PEs who are mutually acceptable to programme organizers and community members poses a bigger problem because it's difficult to assess PE skills and talents so that they might better utilize PEs in dealing with the diversity of educational levels and backgrounds within a given population. It is also difficult to find PEs with a minimum education requirement and skills background that are readily available and willing to work as volunteers (Kirby et al, 2006).

Stakeholders or interest groups such as police, organized crime groups, teachers, and/or industry managers create obstacles to programme implementation (Crossier et al, 2010). This is due inability to convince the stakeholders to accept the process and foresee the long run advantages of the PE activities. Therefore stakeholders should be involved in programmes from the onset so that they do not sabotage its

implementation thereby integrate their needs and priorities as well as capitalize on their potential financial, human resource and workspace contributions to the project (DoE,2011). Stakeholders should therefore partner the target population and implementing agency in ownership of the programme through involvement and negotiations with stakeholders (governmental and nongovernmental actors and institutions) in consultation agendas (Kirby, 2006). Kirby concluded that lack of financial resources could also render the PEP initiatives unsustainable.

2.8 Summary

Students today must be prepared not only to succeed at school, but also in life (Steve, 2002). Social-emotional competence and academic achievement are highly related, and effective schools are focusing efforts on integrated, coordinated instruction in both areas to maximise students' potential to succeed in school and throughout their lives (Elias, 2006) He goes on to say that growing body of research demonstrates that evidence-based SEL interventions are associated with academic achievement, health, and citizenship, so a major challenge for schools is how to make SEL a core element of the curriculum and how to implement relevant programming with fidelity and in ways that are sustainable. Tremendous opportunities exist for school psychologists to assist schools in these endeavours, and additional training opportunities must be made available to prepare them for such roles (Zins et al, 2003).

3 CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the methodology is discussed. A methodology in research refers to the strategy or plan of action that links methods to outcomes and governs the choice and use of methods (Cresswell, 2003). Dick & Stepson (1997) quoted in Cresswell, (2003) argues that good research is research which uses a methodology which fits the situation and the goals you are pursuing.

In this section, the researcher discussed the methods and procedures that were used in collecting and analyzing data in this research study. The chapter seeks to justify why the researcher chose to utilize certain research techniques over others and it also explained how these techniques assisted the researcher to delve deeper into the phenomenon of PE. The researcher followed a qualitative approach in an interpretive paradigm, and employed the case study method of data collection, namely interview schedules, observations, and document analysis and focus groups. The following are also discussed: population, sample and sampling techniques, negotiating of entry, ethical considerations, data collection instruments; issues of credibility and trustworthiness, data analysis, and limitations of the study.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Maree (2007) defines a paradigm as a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which give rise to a particular world view, serving as a lens or organizing principle by which reality is interpreted. According to Creswell (1998), philosophers as well as researchers make claims about what is knowledge (ontology), how we know it (epistemology), what values go into it (axiology), how we write about it (rhetoric) and the process for studying it (methodology). There are different paradigms or knowledge claims that have taken root in today's research.

These are positivism; interpretivism (antipositivism); and post positivism amongst others. This research will be guided by the interpretivist paradigm (Khumwong, 2004).

3.2.1 Interpretivist Paradigm

According to O'Brien (2006), interpretivism is the way to gain insights through discovering meanings by improving our comprehension of the whole. The underlying assumption of interpretivism is that the whole needs to be examined in order to understand a phenomenon. It also proposes that there are multiple realities, not single realities of phenomena, and that these realities can differ across time and place. In addition, Dash (2005) avers that interpretivism emphasises that social reality is viewed and interpreted by the individual according to the ideological positions the individual possesses. Therefore, knowledge is personally experienced rather than acquired from or imposed from outside. According to Creswell (2003), an interpretivist or constructivist researcher tends to rely on the participants' views of the situation being studied. The interpretivists believe that reality is multi-layered and complex, hence the researcher sought to hear views about the role of PE in addressing social issues in schools in Fort Beaufort District from a number of respondents. This assisted the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of what is happening in the schools from different viewpoints. This therefore eliminated bias from the research since a single phenomenon had multiple interpretations (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). The constructivist researcher is more likely to rely on qualitative data collection methods and analysis. Quantitative data may be utilised in a way that supports or expands qualitative data and effectively deepens the description. This research therefore collected data using a qualitative approach, but analysed the biographical data using the quantitative approach. This made it easier to interpret and analyse the data using graphs and tables.

Durkheim (1994) in Cohen, et al (2000), affirms that an interpretative paradigm provides relevant information to the researcher in terms of subjective reasons and

meanings that lie behind social activities. With the interpretivist paradigm, efforts are made to 'get inside' the person and understand from within. This is done to retain the integrity of the phenomena being investigated.

Terre-Blanche and Durkheim (1999) describe an interpretive researcher as a person who wants to make sense of feelings, experiences, social situations or phenomena as they occur in the real world and therefore want to study them in their natural setting. The researcher therefore observed the activities of PEs and gave conclusions after interviews and document analysis. This is called triangulation where the researcher sought to get information from more than one angle. To get a more holistic picture of the role of PE clubs in addressing social issues in schools, there was a need for the researcher to incorporate interpretivist concerns around subjectivity and meaning. The researcher focused on how people react, interact, negotiate and give meaning to the role of PE in addressing social issues in schools (Maree, 2007). Furthermore the researcher sought to find out participants' views on the challenges faced by PEs in addressing social issues in schools.

Dash (2005) adds that interpretive researchers often have preferred meaning versus measurement-oriented methods. Such researchers assume that knowledge and meaning are acts of interpretation, hence there is no objective knowledge which is independent of thinking or human reasoning. In this research the researcher drew conclusions on the role of PE in addressing social issues in schools based on observations, interviews, and document analysis. Cresswell (2003) adds that interpretivism asserts that our knowledge is a social product and hence incapable of being understood independent of the social actors (including the researchers) that construct and make sense of the knowledge. This therefore means that the conclusions drawn in this research only apply to the four sampled schools in Fort Beaufort District where this research was conducted. Findings from qualitative research are often not generalisable because of the small numbers and narrow range of participants used in the data collection process (Cresswell, 2003).

Interpretivism has its greatest strength in the richness and depth of explorations and descriptions it yields through the qualitative approach to reach a conclusion (Maree, 2007). However, as has been said before, it is criticized for its subjectivity and the failure of the approach to generalize its findings beyond the situation studied. Despite these weaknesses, this research used interpretivism because it essentially emphasis's understanding and interpretation of the phenomena under study. In addition, the researcher was not looking for absolute truth but rather a detailed explanation of the respondents' understanding of the role of PE in addressing social issues in schools.

3.3 Research Approach

Trochim (2006) defines research approach as the structure of research, that is the 'glue' that holds all of the elements in a research project together. A research approach can be qualitative, quantitative or a mixed method approach depending on answers made by the researcher to the following three questions as suggested by Creswell (2003):

- i. What knowledge claims are being made by the researcher (including theoretical perspective)?
- ii. What strategies of inquiry will inform the procedures?
- iii. What methods of data collection and analysis will be used?

In this research specifically the qualitative research approach was used.

3.3.1 Qualitative Research

The researcher used the qualitative approach as opposed to the quantitative approach. The goal of a qualitative research is to produce intensive, authentic and descriptive accounts of experiences by participants (McLeod, 1993) cited in Holliday (2007). McMillan and Schumacher (1993) described qualitative research as a 'naturalistic enquiry', the use of non-interfering strategies to discover the natural

flow of events and processes and how participants interpret them. Qualitative research is therefore able to produce data on participants' views, feelings and emotions using flexible language (Gibbs, 2002).

In this study, the researcher was able to observe and get participants' views on the role of PE in addressing social issues in schools. In qualitative research, the researcher begins the study by finding out how the respondents see the world and how they define their situation (Neuman, 1997). According to Holliday (2007), qualitative research is a method of inquiry employed in many different academic disciplines, traditionally and in the social sciences. Holliday (2007) further notes that qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994) qualitative research is conducted through an intense or prolonged contact with the 'field' or life situations that reflect the everyday operation of the said individual, group, society or organization. In this study, the researcher used simple observation as one of the data collecting tools, interviews and document analysis to gather an in-depth understanding of the role of PE in addressing social issues.

Barker, Pistrong and Elliot (1995) in Ryan and Patrick (2001) identified some advantages of qualitative research method as follows:

- It enables researchers to carry out in-depth studies and in detail;
- The research can ask questions about all three domains, namely, the affective, cognitive and psychomotor;
- The researcher can probe and dig deep into the mind of the respondent in order to clearly understand a given phenomenon;
- The researcher is able to study the more complex aspects of the participants' experiences on an issue being studied;
- There are fewer restrictions on the data underlying theoretical models;

- Issues which cannot be qualified can still be explored, for example, empathy;
- It is easy to understand because it does not necessarily need statistical analysis.

The above highlighted advantages tempted the researcher to use this approach in this study. From the observations made, the researcher was able to probe and dig deeper into the minds of respondents using the interviews and document analysis as one of her research data collection instruments.

Neuman (2000) states that qualitative research approach involves documenting real events, recording what the people say (with words, gestures and tone), observing specific behaviour, studying written documents or visual images. In this study, the researcher restricted herself to utilizing focus group interviews of learners, and unstructured interviews on teachers and principals to collect data. The researcher also took cognizance of the respondent's gestures and tones to see if these correlated with what they were saying.

According to, De Vos, Strydom, Touché & Delpont, (2002) the qualitative research approach is used by researchers when they aim to understand the day-to-day experiences of people they are studying. In qualitative research, unlike in quantitative research where data is reduced to numbers, data is reduced to themes and categories. Qualitative research focuses on description and not on testing of hypotheses like quantitative researches. Unlike in quantitative research, where hypotheses are provided at the beginning, in qualitative research hypotheses can be formulated during the enquiry. Qualitative research is flexible, as the researcher commences his or her research without a fixed agenda (De Vos et al 2002). In this study, the researcher therefore maintained that it was appropriate to use the qualitative approach because she is interested in the everyday experiences of PEs as they perform their roles in schools and communities in which they live. In support, Ryan et al (2001) gives the following characteristics of qualitative research methodology:

- it seeks to provide an in-depth picture;
- it generally deals with smaller numbers than quantitative research;
- it tries to interpret historically or culturally significant phenomena;
- it can be used to flesh out quantitative data;
- it tries to isolate and define categories during the process of research;
- it is appropriate when the questions posed by the researcher are difficult for a respondent to answer precisely;
- it tries to illuminate aspects of people's everyday lives;
- it values participants' perspectives on their worlds.

Reid and Smith in De Vos, (2002), also articulate the characteristics of a qualitative research as follows:

- the researcher attempts to gain a first-hand holistic undertaking of the phenomena of interest by means of a flexible strategy of problem formulation and data collection;
- the researcher's understanding of the phenomena takes place as the investigation proceeds;
- qualitative methodology rests on the assumption that valid understanding can be gained through accumulated knowledge acquired at first and by a single researcher.

The researcher endeavored to be flexible in the interviews by allowing learners to do most of the talking and made a point of ensuring that they felt at ease. At the start of the interview, the researcher indicated to the interviewees that none of their answers was going to be regarded as wrong, therefore they should to feel free to say all that they thought would be relevant.

In support of the qualitative approach, Neuman (2000) says:

- It captures and discovers meaning whilst the researcher becomes immersed in the data;

- Concepts are in the form of themes, motifs, generalizations and taxonomies;
- Data are in the form of words from documents observations and transcripts;
- Research procedures are particular and replication is rare;
- Analysis starts by extracting themes on generalizations from evidence and organizing data to present a coherent and consistent picture;

From the above assertions by Neuman (2000), Ryan (2001), and Marshall and Rossman (1999), it is clear that in the qualitative research approach the researcher ought not to have pre-conceived ideas about his or her respondents. The researcher enters the research situation with an open mind and allows the respondents to relate their experiences and express their feelings. In this study the researcher allowed the respondents to do most of the talking in order to access their views and how they felt about the role of PE in addressing social issues in schools.

De Vos et al (2002) further point out that the qualitative research approach is grounded in the interpretative paradigm. Its purpose is to construct a detailed description of social reality, it uses inclusive logic and that its design is flexible, unique and evolves throughout the research. The researcher believes that characteristics of the qualitative approach such as flexibility enabled her to access the views and feelings of the respondents on the role of PE in addressing social issues.

Accordingly Marshall and Rossman (1999) advise qualitative researchers to report their studies with the following in mind:

- To make data collection methods explicit;
- To display negative instances of the findings and account for them;
- To make their data collection strategies and analysis public;
- To present and discuss competing hypotheses;
- To preserve their data to and to assess the integrity of participants.

Guided by the above advice by Marshall and Rossman (1999) the researcher endeavored to make her data collection methods more explicit, credible and reliable by first conducting a pilot study whose findings were scrutinized using the above guidelines. The process of data gathering was also thoroughly examined to ensure that respondents easily understood it.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend beginning the study by specifying a research problem, selecting a research site, developing working hypotheses, and using interactive processes to refine the research questions. They further suggest that the researcher plans for the stages of conducting the study. These may include negotiating entry to the site, planning for sampling and for data collection, data analysis, determining how quality were ensured in the study, deciding how the findings of the study will be disseminated, and developing a logistical plan. The researcher found this approach useful, in that it is easy to follow.

3.4 Research Design: A Case study

In this study, the researcher adopted a case study design, which is described by Burton (2000) in Bless, Higson Smith and Kagee (2006) as a building block for data collection which is frequently associated with qualitative research.

Maree (2007) defines a research design as a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done. According to Yin (2009) case study research is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. William (2006) also defines a case study as a unit of human activity embedded in the real world which can only be studied or understood in context. William (2006) adds that classical case studies depend on ethnographic and participant observer methods. Cresswell (2003) notes that case studies are largely descriptive examinations, usually of a small number of sites (small towns,

hospitals, schools) where the principal investigator is immersed in the life of the community or institution.

William (2006) further states that case studies can provide very engaging, rich explorations of a project or application as it develops in a real-world setting. He adds that project evaluators must be aware, however, that doing even relatively modest, illustrative case studies is a complex task that cannot be accomplished through occasional, brief site visits. Demands with regard to design, data collection and reporting can be substantial as well.

According to Merriam (1998), a case study is a method in which the researcher explores one setting, a single subject or one particular event, and collects information by using a variety of data collection techniques during a sustained period. A case study is described as a form of descriptive research that gathers a large amount of information about one or a few participants and thus investigates a few cases in considerable depth (Feagin, and Sjoberg (1991) .Tellis (1997) argues that one of the advantages of a case study is that it gives voice to the usually powerless and voiceless. Case study methods do not only present rich experiences and definitions held by an individual, but their strengths also hinge on the fact that they are characterised by high construct validity, in-depth insights and establishing rapport with research subjects (Mouton, 2003).

In this research a case study was chosen since it allows the researcher to concentrate on a specific situation and attempts to identify the range of interactive processes within a short period of time (Swann & Pratt, 2003 ,Babbie and Mouton, 2004; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). According to Maree (2007), one of the reasons for the adoption of case study as a research design is that researchers were becoming more concerned about the limitations of quantitative methods in providing holistic and in-depth explanations of the social and behavioural problems in question. Through a case study, a researcher is able to go beyond the quantitative statistical results and understand the behavioural conditions through the actor's perspectives. Case studies therefore in their true essence, explore and investigate contemporary

real life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships (Tellis, 1997). In support, Mouton (2003) says, that case studies also strive to portray what it is like to be in a particular situation to catch the close-up reality and thick description of participants' lived experiences of thoughts about, and feelings for, a situation, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles. They are qualitative in nature and allow for a large amount of data.

The researcher adopted a case study research design because it allowed her to gather large amounts of data. A case study also allowed the researcher to go into greater depth and got more insight into the role of PE in addressing social and emotional issues from the dynamics of situations and people's views. In addition, a case study uses a number of instruments of data collection such as observation and interviews which allowed the researcher to study the respondents in their natural settings.

Despite having much strength outlined above, case studies also have limitations. According to Yin (2009), the two disadvantages about a case study design are that many times, the case study researcher has been accused of sloppy behaviour and has allowed equivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and the conclusion. In the light of this warning, I focused on not allowing any bias to affect my research. The researcher guarded against this weakness by adhering to ethical considerations, which are discussed later in the chapter.

3.5 Population Sample and Sampling Techniques

3.5.1 Population

Population is defined as the total quantity of things or cases of the type which is the subject of your study (Williman 2006). Population is a full set of cases from which a sample is taken. Population is also as that larger community from which the

sample could be drawn. The population of this study is 48 secondary schools in the Fort Beaufort District, 48 principals in the district and 300 teachers in the district, 1700 learners from the four schools and 11 peer group trainers in the district, and 1 district coordinator. It is from this population that the researcher chose her sample.

3.5.2 *Sample and Sampling Techniques*

According to Levy and Lemeshow (1991) sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they were selected. The characteristics of representatives selected for this study exemplify the larger group from which they were selected. Sampling has to do with representation of individuals and subsets making up the population (Henry, 1990). Merriam (1998) avers that the number of participants in a sample depend on questions being asked, data being collected, the analysis in progress and the resources available to support the study. McMillan and Schumacher (1993) define a sample as a portion of the population that has been selected and from whom data is collected for different purposes. This study used a purposive sampling technique.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993), with reference to anthropological research methods, the human investigator is the primary research instrument. Due to the fact that the study used a qualitative approach the researcher found the use of focus group discussions, interviews, observations and document analysis as being suitable for this research (Waters –Adams, 2006). Below is a brief description of the research instruments that were used in the study.

3.6.1 Interviews

According to De Vos et al (2002), interviewing is the most commonly used method of data or information collection in a qualitative research. The aim of interviews, according to Marshall and Rossman (1999), is to access the participant's view. During the process of interviewing the respondent, the researcher guarded against influencing the participant's view. Interviews provide very different data from observations: they allow the researcher to capture the perspectives of project participants, staff, and others associated with the project. In this research, interviews with peer education trainers, principals, LO teachers, DCs and PGTs provided information on the role of PE clubs in addressing social issues in schools.

According to Rice, (2003) the use of interviews as a data collection method begins with the assumption that the participants' views are meaningful and their perspectives affect the success of the study. An interview, rather than a paper and pencil survey, was selected since interpersonal contact was important in this research. This method was also important since it gives the opportunity for follow-up of interesting comments (Maree, 2007).

Patton (2006) stated that interviews can be categorised into three types, namely:

- The informal conversational interview
- The general interview guide approach
- The standardized open-ended interview.

During interviewing, the researcher used semi structured interview schedules and this gave the respondents free rein to express their views, opinions, perceptions and also to clarify their feelings. The researcher was able to elicit a lot of data from the interviewees which she could not have obtained had she sent questionnaires. This research instrument gave a lot of advantages to the researcher as it allowed her to regularly check questions for consistency, to probe further or repeat questions in order to get clarity about a question. Moreover, this method helped to

control the interview environment, control the order and direction of the questions and provided an opportunity for spontaneous and informative answers as well as ensuring that all answers had been answered. According to Neuman (2000), face-to-face interviews however have both strengths and limitations.

3.6.1.1 Strengths of Interviews

The strengths of the interview lie in the fact that they are flexible in the sense that the interviewer can probe for specific answers and can repeat a question if the respondent has not understood as has been said above (Baily, 1987). Interviews are suitable because most people are more confident of their speaking ability than their writing ability (Baily, 1987). Lastly, interviews allow the researcher to compare the non-verbal communication by the respondent with what he or she is saying. The researcher can interpret facial expressions and other body languages of respondents. They can also be used as an instrument to elicit information from illiterate respondents.

The researcher was also able to encourage respondents to respond to all the questions, bearing in mind that there was no answer that was considered to be wrong. Focus group interviews assisted the researcher to make an assessment of the reliability of what the learners said. In addition, the researcher could inform learners to raise their hands when they wanted to speak as this would give each one of them the chance to give an account of their personal experiences in the role of PE in addressing social and emotional issues in schools.

3.6.1.2 Limitations of Interviews

According to Neuman (2000), face-to-face interviews have the following limitations:

- High costs might be incurred during the travelling and supervision of interviews;
- Interviewer bias expressed in the appearance, tone of voice and question wording of the interviewer can affect the respondent;
- Interviewers work unsupervised and may make mistakes or forge results/findings.

In this study, the researcher however endeavored to minimize these potential limitations by firstly keeping appointment schedules and this helped greatly in that the researcher did not have to visit the schools more than twice. This resulted in the researcher incurring less travel and other research related costs. The pilot study also gave the researcher an opportunity to outline how the interviews would be conducted on the day. The researcher also had an opportunity to encourage the respondents to be at ease during the interview, by informing them that they were no wrong answers to the questions being asked. This gave the respondents an opportunity and freedom to express their opinions, concerns and feelings. This also allowed other important information to come out from respondents which later on became helpful to the whole research process.

3.6.1.3 In-depth Interviews

Two types of interviews are used in research: structured interviews, in which a carefully worded questionnaire which is administered and in-depth interviews, in which the interviewer does not follow a rigid, form (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the former, the emphasis is on obtaining answers to carefully phrased questions. Interviewers are trained to deviate only minimally from the question wording to ensure uniformity of interview administration. In the latter, however, the interviewers seek to encourage free and open responses, and there may be a trade-off between comprehensive coverage of topics and in-depth exploration of a more limited set of questions. In-depth interviews also encourage capturing of respondents'

perceptions in their own words: a very desirable strategy in qualitative data collection. This allowed the researcher to present the meaning of the experience from the respondent's perspective. In-depth interviews are conducted with individuals or with a small group of individuals (Maree, 2007). In this study- four focus groups were elicited with PEs: One focus group from each school.

An in-depth interview is a dialogue between a skilled interviewer and an interviewee. Its goal is to elicit rich, detailed material that can be used in analysis (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). Such interviews are best conducted face to face, although in some situations telephone interviewing can be successful. In-depth interviews are characterized by extensive probing and open-ended questions. Typically, the researcher prepares an interview guide that includes a list of questions or issues that are to be explored and suggested probes for following up on key topics. The guide helps the interviewer to pace the interview and make interviewing more systematic and comprehensive. The interviewer becomes an attentive listener who shapes the process into a familiar and comfortable form of social engagement. The quality of the information obtained is largely dependent on the interviewer's skills and personality (Patton, 2006).

A semi-structured interview was adopted in the study since it was viewed suitable for extracting the views of 4 principals, 1 district coordinator, 1 peer group trainer and 4 teachers on the role of peer education in addressing social and emotional issues in schools. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher was guided by a list of themes or questions asked to participants (Maree, 2007). The interview is carried out with a focused conventional approach, which allows dialogue between the researcher and the interviewee. It is during the dialogue that the researcher is able to refocus the discussion so that accurate information is gained from participants through rephrasing questions and observing non-verbal clues such as facial expressions and tensing of the body when expressing certain issues.

Consequently, Maree (2007) warned researchers that semi-structured interviews require the researcher to be attentive to the responses from participants in order to record accurate information and to avoid being side tracked by aspects that might not be related to the study. In this study the identification of themes to guide the study also minimized discussions outside the role of PE in addressing social and emotional issues in school. Peer education is one programme under the HIV and AIDS program in a semi-structured interview is being a good listener and questioner. Tempting as it may be, it is not the role of the interviewer to put forth his or her opinions, perceptions, or feeling (Loafland and Lofland, 1995). Interviewers should be trained individuals who are sensitive, empathetic, and able to establish a non-threatening environment in which participants feel comfortable.

3.6.2 Observation

Observation involves the art of looking and listening carefully to participants and their behaviour as they interact in and go through their activities in their respective clubs. Marshall and Rossman (1995:79) define observations as “the systematic description of events, behaviours, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for the study”. Goddard and Melville (2005:40) define observation as that “which involve the systematic recording of observable phenomenon or behaviour in a natural setting”. Observation therefore offers a first-hand account of the situation under study and, when combined with interviewing and documentary analysis, it allows for a holistic interpretation of the phenomenon being investigated and hence allows triangulation of findings (Cohen *et al.*, 2000).

Observational techniques are methods by which an individual or individuals gather first-hand data on programmes, processes, or behaviours being studied. It is a qualitative gathering technique where the observer uses senses to gather bits of data (Maree, 2007). This means that they provide researchers with an opportunity to collect data on a wide range of behaviours, to capture a great variety of

interactions, and to openly explore the topic. Maree (2007) adds that Peer education is one programme under the HIV and AIDS programme.

Observational approaches also allow the researcher to learn about things the participants or staff may be unaware of or that they are unwilling or unable to discuss in an interview or focus groups (Lofland and Lofland, 1995).

3.6.2.1 Types of observations

Babbie and Mouton (2004) identified two categories that are found in qualitative research. The first type includes the simple observation where the researcher remains an outsider. In this case, the researcher would observe participants, that is learners and teachers were observed as they interacted in their PE club activities. The researcher for example, observed how PEs educated their peers. The second type of observation according to is the participant observation where the researcher is part and parcel of the study (Babbie and Mouton 2004). In other words, the researcher would be amongst the participants being observed.

- **Participant Observation**

Flick, Von Kardorff, and Steinke (2004) in Holliday, (2007) regard participant observation method as one of the most accepted means of conducting qualitative research and add that this method has its historical roots in anthropology and ethnology. McMillan and Schumacher (1993) also define participant observation as “an active process which includes muted cues – facial expression, gestures, tone of voice and other universalized social interactions which suggest the meanings of language.”

According to Merriam (2001), the participant observer sees things first-hand and uses own knowledge and expertise in interpreting what is observed. Observation makes it possible to record behaviour as it will be happening. However, in Seltis

(2000) exposes the limitations of participant observation as it takes time and requires commitment while at the same time it comes with various problems of ethics, and the power of interpretation. As a result, a study's main benefit of participant observation is its ability to gain an in-depth observation that contributes to rich insights.

- Simple observation

Simple observations are carried out when the observer or the researcher will be watching rather than being actively involved as in participant observation (Merriam, 2001). One of the advantages of this approach is that participants can be observed in the natural environment where they normally operate from. In this case, learners and teachers were observed when they went through their normal club activities at their respective schools and workshops. Details on how teachers, PGTs, and social workers related to questions from PEs and how they taught PEs leadership skills were also noted. The ability and manner in which teachers guided and controlled learners as they deliberated on various issues in their clubs were also noted. The researcher observed how teachers shared responsibilities, encouraged team work and how they involved learners in decision-making. The general tone of the clubs under study was observed by the researcher in order to establish the interactions of the members in general. The researcher observed one club meeting at each of the four schools under study and two sessions when the four schools were gathered together.

3.6.2.2 When to Use Observations

According to Mertens (2005) observations can be useful during both the formative and summative phases of the research. For example, during the formative phase, observations can be useful in determining whether or not the PEP is being delivered and operated as planned. Observations could be used to describe groups'

development sessions, examining the extent to which participants understand the concepts, ask the right questions, and are engaged in appropriate interactions.

Qualitative observation occurs in naturalistic settings without using predetermined categories of measurement or response (Adler & Adler 1990, quoted in Mertens, 2005). This approach allows the researcher to make observations which reflect people's normal reaction to the area under investigation. In this study, the researcher observed how PEs related with teachers, social workers as well as PGTs. The researcher also observed learners when they deliberated on the various issues within their clubs. The researcher observed the types of issues deliberated in the clubs. As a result observation is therefore an important and useful method of generating primary data (Creswell, 2003). Merriam, (2001) stressed the need for researchers to carry out observations systematically in order to obtain credible data for the study. During these club activities, the researcher also observed what role PEs, teachers, social workers, and PGTs played in the implementation of the PEP.

3.6.3 Document Analysis

In document analysis, as a data gathering instrument, the researcher focused on all types of written communications that shed light on the role of PE (Maree, 2007). This includes published and unpublished documents of PE that is, district reports; memoranda; letters from PEs to teachers; PGT reports from the district; newsletter articles; minutes of meetings and other documents related to PE. However, the researcher has to be cautious of the authenticity and accuracy of the records before using them (Maree, 2007). Documents revealed what PE did in their clubs each time they met. Existing records often provide insights into a setting and/or group of people that cannot be observed or noted in another way. Documents can be divided into two major categories: public records, and personal documents (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

- *Public records*

These are materials created and kept for the purpose of "attesting to an event or providing an accounting" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Public records can be collected from outside (*external*) or within (*internal*) the setting in which the intervention strategies are taking place. Such materials can be helpful in better understanding the project participants and making comparisons between groups or communities.

For the purpose of this research, *internal* records included documents such as minutes of meetings, PE manuals, students PE handbooks and official correspondence. They were particularly useful in identifying PE strengths and weaknesses. They helped the researcher understand the resources, values, processes, priorities, and concerns of PE. Most importantly, the documents gave the researcher an insight of the role of PE in addressing social and emotional issues in schools. Furthermore, they provide a record or history of PE (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Consequently unlike other sources of qualitative data, collecting data from documents is relatively invisible to, and requires minimal cooperation from, persons within the setting being studied (Fetterman, 1997).

According to Goetz and LeCompte (1994) in Dawson (2002) the usefulness of existing sources varies depending on whether they are accessible and accurate. In this research, documents provided the researcher with useful information about the different social issues discussed in PE. Information from PE minutes was also used to generate interview questions and to identify events to be observed. Furthermore, existing records were used to make comparisons of school policies and programme descriptions prior to implementation of PE.

According to Fetterman (1997) advantages of document analysis are listed below.

- Documents can provide insight into what people think and what they do.
- Documentary information is grounded in local settings.
- Information is unobtrusive, making reactive and investigator effects very unlikely.

- Information is obtained in an inexpensive way.

Fetterman (1997) further outlines the disadvantages of document analysis as shown below.

- Information recorded may be incomplete because of selective recording.
- Access to some types of information might possibly be difficult.
- Interpretive validity is possibly low.

Despite the shortcomings of document analysis, this study continued to use it for its advantages mentioned above. The researcher analyzed documents by using an inductive approach. Inductive analysis means that categories and patterns emerge from data rather than being imposed on the data prior to data collection LeCompte, Milroy, Preissle (1992). The researcher focused on all types of written material that could shed light on role of PE in addressing social issues in schools in Fort Beaufort District. Furthermore, the advantages of the analysis of documents are that documents may fill in gaps that may be left open by other data collection strategies (LeCompte et al 1992).

3.6.4 Focus Group Interviews

In this research, FG interviews were used to collect data from PEs. According to Marshall and Rossman (1999), the FG approach assumes that an individual's attitudes and beliefs do not form in a vacuum. People often need to listen to others' opinions and understandings in order to form their own opinions. FG discussions combine elements of both interviewing and participant observation. The FG session is, indeed, an interview (Patton, 2006), not a discussion group, problem-solving session, or decision-making group. At the same time, FGs capitalize on group dynamics.

Focus group is the use of group interaction to gather data and insights that would be unlikely to come out without the interaction found in a group. The method allows observation of group dynamics, discussion, and first-hand insights into the respondents' behaviours, attitudes and language (Patton, 2006). FGs are a gathering of 8 to 12 people who share some characteristics relevant to the research (Selltis, 2000). Originally used as a market research tool to investigate the appeal of various products, the FG technique has been adopted by other fields, such as education, as a tool for data gathering on a given topic.

FGs conducted by experts take place in a FG facility that includes recording apparatus (audio and/or visual) and an attached room with a one-way mirror for observation (Greenbaum ,1993) There is an official recorder who may or may not be in the room and participants are paid for attendance and provided with refreshments (Patton, 2006). If used for evaluation, a team uses a FG room with a one-way mirror; a colleague can take notes and record observations (Wellman & Kruger, 1999). An advantage of this approach is that the extra individual is not in the view of participants and, therefore, not interfering with the group process. Because a one-way mirror was not a possibility, the researcher had a colleague present in the room to take notes and to record observations (Selltis, 2000).

A major advantage of this approach is that the recorder focuses on observing and taking notes, while the researcher concentrated on asking questions, facilitating the group interaction, following up on ideas, and making smooth transitions from issue to issue (Merton ,Fike, Kendal (1990). Furthermore, Fetterman, (1997) states that like observations, FGs can be videotaped. These approaches allow for confirmation of what was seen and heard. Whatever the approach to gathering detailed data, informed consent is necessary and confidentiality should be assured (Selltis, 2000). In this case the researcher wrote a letter to the participants and they signed in consent.

Having highlighted the similarities between interviews and FGs, it is important to also point out one critical difference. The notes, and resultant report, should include comments on group interaction and dynamics as they inform the questions under study (Maree, 2007).

In this study, each FG was made up of 8 -12 PEs. Four focus groups were constituted, one from each school. The researcher managed the FG interview by going around the circle, ensuring that everyone spoke and ending up with the individual responses of all the members of the group (Selltis, 2000). This kind of FG was suitable for this study since it saved time for interviewing each learner (Willis, 2007). One may have a certain opinion about a thing, but once you start discussing with others, new opinions that you will have never thought about may arise (Stewart and Shamdasani (1990). The main advantage of FGs is that there was an opportunity for the researcher to observe a large amount of interaction on a topic in a limited period of time (Welman & Kruger 1999; Morgan, 1993).

3.7 Data Analysis Procedures

The process of data analysis ensues once data collection and member checking have been completed. Qualitative data formed the gist of this research and was subjected through data analysis techniques which found compatibility in each other (Cohen & Morrison, 2006). To be more specific, the data analysis technique that was utilized in this study is thematic content analysis. Analysis was carried out in a manner that related to the research questions and objectives in the chapter (Yates, 2004). A transcript was made from respondents' answers. Reflection and coding was done and data was categorised under different themes.

3.8 Trustworthiness and Credibility of Data

Researchers like Barbie and Mouton (2004) echoed that the principle of good qualitative research is found in the notion of trustworthiness. According to Bassey (1999) in Holliday (2007), trustworthiness entails credibility and transferability, which

is the extent to which the findings can be transferred to other contexts. Winter (2000) in Maree (2007) states that trustworthiness of a study can be enhanced through prolonged engagement with data sources, persistent observation, adequate checking of raw data with their sources and triangulation of data. Creswell (2003) argues that trustworthiness of the study is established when findings reflect as closely as possible the meanings as described by the participants.

In a qualitative study findings are believed if the reader is convinced that the findings are credible. Readers therefore need to be persuaded to believe that the findings are worth to be given attention. There are several strategies of doing that in a qualitative study (Silverman, 2000). Two of the most important strategies in a qualitative research are measures to ensure credibility and trustworthiness. The many different ways of establishing credibility and trustworthiness include interviewer corroboration, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, negative case analysis, auditability, conformability, bracketing, and balance (Guba and Lincoln 1981).

- **Credibility**

According to Selltis (2000) credibility refers to that which can be seen and believed. This is an assessment of the findings in order to establish whether they are credible. In order to make sure that there was credibility in the findings, the researcher used interviews, documentary analysis and observations to extract data from the participants which allowed triangulation of the findings (Holliday, 2007). Analysis of minute books for PEs' club meetings, peer educator manuals for the learners, and annual plans for clubs' activities also helped in triangulation. The researcher also did member checks whereby participants confirmed whether they had meant what the researcher concluded. Credibility of the study was also achieved by way of triangulation, which included face-to-face interviews, focus group interviews and document analysis (Rubin 2005). This reduced bias and distortion of information that may have arisen through the use of only one method. Peer debriefing was also done where the researcher enlisted the help of a

colleague who was not in the population group to review insights and perceptions in the study. The colleague also helped me to minimize bias. Member checks were also done where the researcher went to the sources of information and checked both the data and the interpretation with the sole aim to correct obvious errors and to provide additional volunteer information (Selltis, 2000).

- **Measures to ensure trustworthiness and credibility of data**

The key criterion or principle of good qualitative research is found in the notion of trustworthiness (Babbie and Mouton 2004). In a qualitative research study, findings are believed if the reader is convinced that the findings are credible. Readers therefore need to be persuaded to believe that the findings are worth to be given attention. There are several strategies of doing that in a qualitative research study. Two of the most important strategies in a qualitative research are measures to ensure credibility and trustworthiness (Selltis, 2000).

Marshall and Rossman (1999) recommend that qualitative research can control bias interpretation by:

- Enlisting the assistance of a research partner to critically question the researchers' analyses;
- Checking and rechecking data and purposeful testing of possible rival hypotheses;
- Following the guidance of previous researchers to control for data quality;
- Conducting an audit of the data collection and analytic strategies;

Taking cognizance of the above recommendations made by Marshall and Rossman (1999), the researcher guarded against this bias when analyzing the data gathered. To ensure trustworthiness and validity, the researcher took the data back to the participants after the analysis to ensure that the data was captured the way the respondents gave it to her.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are important since the study involved human subjects. Selltis (2000) wrote that any research which involves other people in some way has ethical implications. Taking this into consideration, it was only proper that this study abided by ethical considerations as contained in the Fort Hare Faculty of Education Handbook of Post- graduate Qualification Policies and procedures so as to ensure that individual rights were not infringed upon and also to promote fairness in the interpretation of data.

Principles such as obtaining informed consent, respecting the right to privacy and participation, anonymity, confidentiality, avoiding harm to participants, and other principles as highlighted by Cohen et al (2000) were adhered to during the collection process, data analysis and interpretation.

3.9.1 *Informed consent*

One of the most important principles in the codes of ethics is informed consent (Sidhu, 2003). Participants to research need to be told what they are letting themselves in for, before they make a decision to co-operate. Thus, ideally, informed consent is part of a contracting process with a written agreement between the researcher and each subject, laying out the terms and conditions of the research. For informed consent, the researcher:

- Explained as fully as possible, and in terms meaningful to participants, what the research was about
- Explained who was undertaking it and financing it
- Explained why she was undertaking it
- Explained how it was to be disseminated not as a once-and for all prior event, but as a process, subject to re-negotiation over time.

3.9.2 *Right to privacy and participation*

According to Leedy & Ormrod (2005), before conducting a study, the researcher must make sure that participants voluntarily agree to take part in research and can withdraw at any time in the research process when necessary. Participants took part because they were willing to do so. This was demonstrated by their signing the consent form. Creswell (2003) concurs that participants have a right to participate voluntarily and the right to withdraw at any time. This research was conducted keeping the essential ethical criteria in mind.

With regards to privacy and participation, the researcher ensured that participants were not forced to participate in the study through;

- Meeting with them in person, briefing them on the purpose of the study, reasons and benefits for their participation and the right to participate or not. Leedy & Ormond (2005) contend that researchers must respect anyone who decides not to participate in the study.
- Giving the participants an opportunity to indicate their willingness to participate in the study by signing a consent form.

3.9.3 *Right to confidentiality and anonymity*

The major safeguard to place against invasion of privacy is the assurance of confidentiality (Davies, and Kirkpatrick 2000). Further, confidentiality means protecting the privacy of respondents by keeping the data sources as confidential as possible while anonymity deals with disguising the identity of the respondents. According to Leedy & Ormrod (2005) in any research, the right to confidentiality and the right to anonymity put the respondent at ease to give information which might otherwise be regarded as sensitive.

Because of the sensitivity of the issues involved in the implementation of peer education in schools, the researcher ensured that the anonymity and confidentiality of all participants was maintained at all times. This was based on the fact that whilst researchers had the right to collect data through, for instance, interviewing people, the researcher realized that this should not be done at the expense of the interviewee's right to confidentiality and anonymity (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1990) in Leedy and Omrod (2005). Even though I wrote down their names, a code was used to identify them. For the schools, I used codes. I gave the respondents assurance that all the information gathered would be kept confidential and treated with respect.

3.9.4 Avoiding harm or damage to participants

Willis (2007) writes that respondents should not be harmed in any way by the research. In any study if the researcher is not careful, it is possible to harm informants not only by exposing information about individuals, but also by talking about them as a group, in a publication in a way which they find harmful or which actually leads to some disadvantage for them (Willis, 2007 ; Dawson, 2002).The researcher, considered the ways the data collection methods and presentation might put the respondents at risk in terms of stress, legal liabilities, ostracism or political repercussion. The researcher also adhered to the issues of confidentiality as discussed above.

3.10 Summary

The chapter tried to identify and describe briefly the method directing the research and the instruments used. This chapter identified and described types of paradigms in research, identified and described the research approaches, design, population and sample, and instruments used to gather data for this study. The emphasis was

placed on describing the advantages and disadvantages of each. Issues of data analysis, negotiating entry, ethical considerations, reliability and validity were also addressed. It is anticipated that, even though the sample size is modest, the findings from this study highlight key areas and issues that might well be applicable to other schools in the district. This chapter also highlighted the population and sample for the study. The following chapter presents data analysis and discusses the findings.

4 CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explained the various research techniques and tools that were used to collect data and also touched on how that data was later analysed. In this chapter, the researcher aims to present the findings of the study in the form of responses that were given by participants on each question asked, which were focused on the role of peer education in addressing social and emotional issues in schools.

The themes that emerged from the data collection were discussed. The themes elicited from the data reflect the views of learners, teachers, peer group trainers, district HIV and AIDS coordinator and principals on the role of peer education in providing social support. The qualitative data was also collected through interviews, observations and document analysis. Qualitative data was solicited from respondents through open-ended questions, and semi-structured interviews. The data was collected in both note form and via tape recorder. The recorded information was then transcribed into a written text. The interviewed respondents were teachers (from the four public schools), 4 principals, one peer group trainer, 4 focus groups and one District Programme Coordinator (DC). The issues arising from the interviews, the observations and the document reviews were then put together as findings of the study. Learners' activities as peer educators were observed and the results were documented and analysed. These also included documents, which comprised minutes of meetings previously held with School Governing Boards (SGBs) and Peer education manuals (PEM), which were also analyzed. It emerged from the study that schools under study have debate clubs, student Christian organisations (SCO), Maths and Science Clubs, peer, education, drama clubs and music. I focused on the role of peer education in providing social support in schools.

This chapter is therefore structured as follows:

- 4.2 The profile of selected schools
- 4.3 Recruitment and training of peer group trainers
- 4.4 Membership of peer educators
- 4.5 The role of teachers and schools in peer education
- 4.6 Objectives of the school-based peer-education programmes.
- 4.7 Issues discussed in clubs
- 4.8 Roles of peer educators
- 4.9 Linkage of issues to teaching and learning.
- 4.10 Challenges
- 4.11 Conclusion (p153)

4.2 The Profile of Selected Schools

The interviewed respondents were identified as follows:

Focus groups (FG1-FG4), teachers who work with the PE clubs (T1-T4) Principals (P1-P4), and the high schools (S1-S4). The coding of the participants is school-matched, namely:

- FG1, PT1 and P1 are all from School 1 (S1);
- FG2, T2 and P2 are also all from School 2 (S2);
- FG3, T3, and P3 are from school 3(S3);
- FG4, T4 and P4 are from school 4(S4);
- DC Is the District Programme Coordinator in the HIV and AIDS section at district level; and lastly
- the peer group trainer (PGT).

The first section presents the location and type of school. This is important as one has to understand the schools' backgrounds. The second section presents the data on teacher capacity which incorporates issues like academic and professional qualifications of teachers as well as their experience in teaching. The third section presents and analyses learners', teachers', principals', district coordinator's and peer group trainer's views on the role of peer education in addressing social issues in schools. The chapter also presents the challenges encountered by peer educators in addressing social issues in schools.

The profile of the school will help to understand the background of the learners attending in the schools. The schools are located in semi-urban areas of Fort Beaufort District. Through observations and information obtained from the respondents it was confirmed that learners in the schools studied are all day-scholars. The schools also draw their pupils from the same area or townships. The learners come from various economic backgrounds and cultures. Peer education in schools is viewed as an extension of Life Orientation (LO) hence LO teachers work with peer education clubs. These teachers also act as a bridge between schools and the district offices as well as social workers. The racial distribution is dominantly black among teachers and principals with a few coloureds among learners in school 2.

School 1(S1)

The school has a female principal who is assisted by two Heads of Departments (HODs), (male and female) and a male deputy principal. The school has three Life Orientation (LO) teachers who share the load from grade 8-12. The enrolment of the school is 500 pupils and the staff establishment is 20. There are about five non-

statutory associations in the school, namely debate, drama, Student Christian Organization (SCO), maths and science and peer education clubs.

School 2

The principal in S2 is male and is assisted by two male HODs and a male deputy principal. The school has four LO teachers who share the load from grade 8-12. The school has an enrolment of 370 learners and a staff establishment of 17. There are six non-statutory associations namely; Music (which is also called 'Edu-Tainment), debate, drama, peer education, Student Christian Organization and the Maths and Science clubs. There are two teachers in this school who are responsible for peer- education and who teach LO, but only one was interviewed on the basis of seniority.

School 3

The principal of this school is male and is assisted by two male HODs. A Senior Management Team (SMT) of four members also assists the principal with the administrative work. The school does not have an appointed deputy principal; nor is there anyone who is performing those duties in an acting capacity. There are three LO teachers who share the load from grade 8 -12. The school has an enrolment of 480 learners and a staff establishment of 19. There are four non-statutory associations in the school, namely: Student Christian Organization, drama debate, and peer education.

School 4

The principal of this school is a male who is assisted by two male HODs and four members of the SMT. The deputy principal is male. There are three LO teachers who share the load from grade 8-12. The school has an enrolment of 350 learners and a staff establishment of 15 teachers. There are four non-statutory associations

in the school, namely; debate, drama, Student Christian Organization and peer education clubs. The schools were chosen on the basis that they all have peer education clubs.

4.2.1 Biographical Data of Respondents

The biographical data assists in providing critical information on the role of peer education in addressing social issues in schools. For example, the examination of academic and professional qualifications of the respondents helps one to understand better and appreciate the calibre of the respondents being dealt with in the research. Views are also influenced by their educational backgrounds.

Teaching experience as bio-data assists in determining whether the views of the respondents are congruent with their knowledge of the job at hand. Scholars tend to think that views are also influenced by gender in certain cultures (HEAIDS, 2010) hence the need to profile the respondents with respect to their gender. It is also assumed that a complete understanding of the respondents' attributes will make it easier to understand why certain practices are in place within the schools when it comes to teachers and principals' attitudes towards youth programmes like peer education.

4.2.2 Age range of teachers who work with peer education groups

Of the Four teachers who were interviewed three of the teachers were over 50 years and only one was between 41 and 50 years of age. The data also revealed that 3 out of four selected teachers were females. This however cannot be concluded that more female teachers teach life orientation in South African schools considering the sample size. It might only indicate that there are more female

teachers than male teachers in the schools under study as some respondents revealed.

According to T1, teachers who worked with peer education clubs were people who were considered to have life skills and Life Orientation teachers were found to be the most suitable. Since a purposive sampling technique was used this may not necessarily mean that the schools in question have more female teachers than males teachers. However some teachers revealed that they were chosen on the basis of maturity and experience to deal with children.

4.2.3 Age range of principals in schools with peer education clubs

The findings revealed that the age range of principals fell between 51 to 70 years of age. However it cannot be concluded that principals in South Africa have their age ranges between 51 to 70 years of age. Again this data can not lead to a conclusion that there are more male principals than female principals in South African Schools because of the sample size. It can only be argued that schools under study have more male principals than females.

4.2.4 Teacher qualifications

Two of the teachers under study had a B.Ed qualification. One had B.Ed (Honours), and the last one had Bachelor of Arts. Since a purposive sampling was used, it does not necessarily mean that more teachers in schools have B.Ed qualifications

4.2.5 Professional qualifications of principals

The study established that two principals had a Bachelor of Education Degree (Bed), one principal had a Certificate in education, the other one had a higher education diploma (HED). The findings do not necessarily mean that most teachers in the teaching field have a B.Ed qualification.

The study also sought to ascertain the teaching experiences of the interviewed teachers, although this was not in itself part of the research focus. The results are discussed below.

4.2.6 Teaching Experience

The findings revealed that half of the teachers which is two had over 20 years' experience and two had 11-15 years of teaching experience. Teachers with little experience might be less likely to know how to handle some of the challenges of implementation as they arise, whereas the more experienced teachers might be better equipped to handle such challenges as a result of precedents. Peer education programmes need a lot of coordination and cooperation since the programme is not part of the curriculum but an intervention programme. For instance, T3 complained that learners conducted meetings without notifying them and went further to an extent of even inviting clubs from other schools without the teachers' knowledge and approval. T3 had this to say:

In as much as these learners should be independent, they should not undermine our authority. For instance, last week they held a meeting with peer educators from S4 without our knowledge. They bypass us now and then by holding meetings behind our backs because I had told them that the concert which they wanted to hold on a Saturday will affect our off-days. I had advised them that they better hold that concert during the week after school. Their argument was that they wanted to have more funds from community participation, since over the weekend there would be a lot of people from the community who would be able to join them.

A follow-up interview on the conflict between teachers and learners in school 3 revealed that peer educators accused the school of not allowing them to have meetings at times which they felt their peers would benefit more from the gathering. With specific reference to the incident mentioned above, FG3 had this to say:

We did not do this behind our principal's back but I think there was communication breakdown between us, our teacher, and our peer group trainer. We had agreed with our peer group trainer that we were going to invite our neighbouring school during the last session that we held the previous week. As usual we knew that it is our teacher who notifies the administration that we were going to have a gathering here in the school and from experience the administration does not turn down our requests. So our peer group leader in the club went ahead to send letters to the schools and the schools came as per plan.

One of the learners in the group confirmed:

It must be the teacher who forgot to tell the administration because we were surprised to hear that the administration did not know about the gathering. The fact that we have to go via teachers to the administration is a problem. More so, the peer group trainer comes from outside so it is a problem to integrate peer education programmes and the programmes of the schools that are on the school calendar.

Observation revealed that teachers felt challenged by learners when they learners made their own decisions without first consulting their teachers. This suggests that adults in the school do not believe that youth can influence their social and emotional learning.

Table 4-1: Peer education group composition

School	Peer education Males	Peer education Females	Total
1	4	6	10
2	4	11	15
3	7	11	18
4	5	5	10
TOTAL	20	33	53

Table above shows that in all the four schools girls outnumbered the boys in peer education. School 3 has the highest number of peer educators (18) followed by school 2 with 15 learners, Schools 1 and 4 have 10 Peer educators each.

4.2.7 The Fort Beaufort District Coordinator

The district coordinator is a male, aged between 65 and 70. At the time of data collection he was two months from retirement. He had worked for the DoE in the HIV and AIDS department for the past 10-12 years. Peer education is one programme under the HIV and AIDS programme.

4.2.8 The peer group trainer in the four schools

The peer group trainer was a female aged between 20 and 25. She has matric and trained as a peer group trainer (PGT) in January 2011. She has one and a half years' experience as a peer group trainer.

4.3 Recruitment and training of peer group trainers

The findings revealed that peer group trainers were trained for two weeks. They revealed that they had a lot of problems because their training is too short. Participants highlighted that working with young people takes a lot of experience.

PGT commented:

I finished my matric three years ago and now I am working as a peer group trainer on a part time basis. We are trained as peer group trainers for two weeks. We learn most of the things as we work with peer education clubs. Schools try by all means to select good bright learners to work with us but the problem is how to make them what we teach them. They see us as colleagues and some just do

not take us seriously, because we are also from the same community and almost of the same age group.

She continued

My major problem is lack of expertise on how to manage these clubs. There is a lot more that we need to address in our societies, but we lack the experience. Reading the manuals and following the activities in the manuals is not enough. I feel that I need more knowledge on management of learners, child psychology and teaching strategies because we are more teachers. I feel that we need more time for training and practice.

The district coordinator also echoed that the peer group trainers lacked experience because most of them do not stay for long in the district, they move to other jobs.

He said:

The reason is that peer group training is not a professional course which can give someone a job. It is only training of school leavers so that they help their peers in addressing social and emotional issues in the schools and in the communities in which they live. In as much as peer group trainers are trained for two weeks full time, they still lack the expertise that is needed when training peer educators. As a result we invite social workers from Child Welfare South Africa to train peer educators in this district. MTN South Africa and Child Welfare South Africa work hand-in-hand to train the peer educators.

The coordinator was asked how the peer group trainers were remunerated. The coordinator said that peer group trainers were more like volunteers because they were given very little money, for pocket money. They relied mainly on volunteers on this programme.

The DC had this to say:

Money is not available for peer education groups. We have to rely on sponsors and volunteers. MTN and Child Welfare South Africa are our reliable sponsors who source funds for us.

4.4 Membership of Peer Educators

Most respondents revealed that teachers act as supervisors of peer education groups.

Teachers indicated that they were responsible for promoting responsible community and individual behaviours. It was further revealed that teachers chose learners for clubs for certain reasons. Underlying the selection criteria was the aspect of discipline. Most of the teachers indicated that they chose learners who were disciplined and who wanted to be role models to others. Teachers also revealed that they are tasked by both the schools and government departments, such as the HIV and AIDS Education and Social Welfare to select learners on their behalf who are suitable for training and to work as peer educators at schools and in their respective communities. They want learners who are creative, such as those who can use poems, songs, drama or their imaginations to come up with ways to deal with societal issues affecting them and those around them.

T1 confirmed that he was indeed responsible for the selection and recommending learners for peer education training on behalf of the school. He went on to say that the selected learners are viewed as the school's ambassadors to the outside world, hence the need to carefully select such learners who will portray a good image of the school. The teacher also stated that peer education is a voluntary programme, so learners and teachers should be those who are willingly devoted to utilise their time and energies for the benefit of the larger communities without expecting any rewards in return.

T1: had this to say:

I have to select learners whose characters correspond with the demands of this important community work. I cannot just select learners who are known for mischief in the school and, as they will not add any meaningful value to the

club. Such learners can only be identified by class teachers because they are the ones who teach them in class and they know their potential. Some learners can be very brilliant in class, but not gifted with other talents like public speaking.

T1 concurred with T2, in that there is need to carefully select learners into these clubs, particularly those with the talent and who are willing to use it to benefit the wider community. Also noted as important attributes of such learners is the ability to effectively communicate with other group members and the emotional maturity to deal with a diversity of cultures in the South African schools. The teacher added that South Africa is a 'Rainbow Nation' owing to globalisation and according to him, learners with the ability to reach out to all of these cultures and with the potential to make positive impacts to those reached out, will be the ideal club members.

In concluding the interview, T2 said:

We aim to select learners, who when given the opportunity to exhibit their talents, do it, whole-heartedly and effectively. Also it is important to note that there are many cultural groups within our school, and it will be helpful to have capable learners who can reach out to all culturally diversified learners.

T2 had a philosophy which differed from the first two in that he claimed that he was a strong advocate of democracy, whereby his club was open to all learners. He added that with the experience that he has had with social clubs, he needed not to force certain learners to join the club as he had the potential to identify and nurture learner's talents. He added that the advantage of voluntary club joining is that those who come on their own usually work devotedly towards achieving the club's causes.

T3 conceded that:

My club is open to everyone; I do not rate learners because of their ability to stand in front of people or their oratory abilities. Some learners are not good at public-speaking, but could be role models who communicate silently behind the scenes and can also be very good researchers. Also, I believe that in most cases, learners do not want to work in environments that are riddled with regulations, like in peer-education; rather they favour a more relaxed environment that is sociable, like in sporting activities where you find them in large numbers. I therefore try by all means to create that kind of an environment for them. I always listen to their suggestions when it comes to community services.

The teacher intimated that most of the peer-education learners who are in her club are there simply because of passion and added that if some members were selected, it was through the recommendations of their class teachers who felt that their exceptional potential could be put to good use in the club.

T4 stated that:

I personally value working with learners who freely express their passion in the club's activities, as it makes my supervisory and mentorship role easier. As you know, it is easy to direct the ship when all the crew members are in agreement. I must however add the fact that some of the learners in the club were influenced by their class teachers who felt that their characters and capabilities could suit well to the demands of the club. Indeed, most of these learners have lived up to their expectations.

The researcher's interviews with principals on how peer educators were being recruited into their clubs elicited interesting revelations. While some advocated for the teacher-based selection criteria of these learners, others concurred with their teachers that for peer clubs' activities to have positive impacts, there was a need to promote voluntary club joining in schools. They cited peer-education work as something that required self-drive and motivation and at times selflessness on the part of Peer Educators, and argued that forcing learners to undertake those duties would produce futile results.

Principal 1 also noted that:

If learners are persuaded to join the club, they have the potential to easily give up on their work when faced with challenges. Forced learners are not assertive and optimistic in their work as they do not see opportunities in difficulties as others do. I advocated for the free and voluntary joining of clubs by the learners.

The following were the arguments raised by the four principals:

P1 revealed that:

Peer-Education Programmes, just like the LO subject, deals with facts of life and gives life-long learning experiences to learners. Selection of learners into peer education clubs had to be taken seriously. As a mentor, I am particular about the good image of the school and that it is through several activities done in the different social associations, like peer education, dramas and awareness campaigns that enhances the good name and image of the school. It is for that reason that we carefully select learners into these clubs.

He emphasised

Our policy as a school is that we should select learners who will represent the school's ideals well to the outside world. We also consider the learners who understand the importance of their role and the club's objectives in the school and more importantly the learner's decision-making capabilities when faced with challenges. P2 confirmed what T1 said that the school carefully select learners who positively impact on their peers and who among other qualities should be able to rise above cultural differences to reach out to all those in circumstances of need. He particularly emphasised the need to select learners who are mature and who can handle confidential information about other peers' problems.

P2 argued:

Our school is one of those who, due to their rural location, has become home to a variety of cultures, both South African and foreign, and as a school we reckon that it is part of our responsibility to select learners who can reach out to all these cultures.

P3 emphasised the importance of upholding democratic principles in schools, which included giving learners opportunities to voluntarily choose to join the clubs or not. As such, the clubs are open to all learners in the school.

P3 stated that:

It is our belief that if we force-march learners into joining clubs where their hearts do not lie, we will be planning in vain, so we open the doors for those who feel they can fulfill the aims and objectives of peer education programmes to come in and perform the roles freely without coercion. We understand the importance of allowing learners to freedom of choice that is within the Education Department's statutes.

In support of what T4 and P3 stated, the P4 expressed the fact that their school did not find it beneficial to move around selecting learners for peer-education programmes, but rather it also recommended that those with passion for the work should volunteer.

P4 argued that:

The reason why our Peer-Education programmes have been so effective, by the Education Department's rating standards, over the past years is because we got it right where it matters most, that is to allow only learners with the passion to take part.

From the above findings it is clear that membership in peer education clubs has no definite criteria. There are no set standards for membership into peer education clubs. Each school teacher has his/ her own way of choosing learners. Learners volunteer to join peer education in some schools, but in others it is the teachers who choose them. Participants who allowed their learners to volunteer to join the clubs were Principal 3, Principal 4, Teacher 4 and Teacher 3. Non-democratic participants were Principal 2, Principal 1, Teacher 1 and Teacher 2.

The analysis of peer education manuals revealed that it is difficult to ask for exemplary behavioural standards from teachers. The manual reveals that teachers are role models to the peer educators they manage. As supervisors teachers should strive towards being a good example of healthy behaviour and should be discreet if their behaviour is not worth emulating.

P2 had this to say:

A teacher should be exemplary, so, for example a teacher caught for drunk driving should not be eligible for selection as a supervisor, especially when the offence is repeated or is public knowledge.

P3 was uncomfortable when I asked about the duty of the teacher in peer education clubs. He explained that he did not really have the knowledge about what transpires in peer education clubs. He knows that there are youth clubs, but he is not sure what the youth clubs do:

My major concern is that teachers are supposed to be role models, but the behaviour of some of them does not warrant them to be leaders of this young generation. They smoke in front of the children, they come to school drunk and they use bad language in front of the children. This alone makes them unfit to be part of peer education.

P4 was fully aware of what the teachers were doing in the peer education clubs, saying:

I understand that teachers are the ones who assist learners when they come seeking for assistance from the school. Teachers bring learners' requests forward such that as a school we try by all means to give them whatever they ask for. They usually ask for money to sponsor their projects. We help them to boost their self-esteem by taking or listening to their opinions.

The District Coordinator revealed that the role of teachers is not all that easy since they do not have enough time to attend learners' sessions during the week. Peer Group Trainers were said to be the ones responsible for attending these weekly sessions. They go on and give feedback in form of reports to the district coordinator, who said:

Teachers choose learners for peer education clubs. They also ask for financial assistance on behalf of the learners. Monitoring of projects and supervision is one of the duties that teachers do in order to make sure that the programme is well implemented.

4.5 The Role of Teachers and Schools in Peer Education

Teachers in peer education clubs all said that their role was more of facilitators than anything else. The teachers were the ones responsible for the selection of peer educators. The DC stated that teachers especially LO teachers in schools are responsible for choosing peer educators.

The DC had this to say:

All communication from the district goes through the teachers. It is the teachers who provide us with 10 learners whom we need to train as peer educators per school. The teachers are always available when the peer educators meet weekly in their schools. Even if we call all schools in the cluster, the teachers will be there to help training facilitators with discipline and order in the classrooms.

Observations made during a meeting of the four schools revealed that teachers were in charge of the clubs. Teacher 1 in School 1 was busy moving around the groups and assisting learners on the topics under discussion. The teachers sat in front and left the Child Welfare trainer to talk to the learners. When the learners were given tasks the teachers stood up and moved around. The teachers also

chipped in when the facilitator asked teachers to give some energizer in form of songs or games. The minutes showed that teachers were consulted by peer educators before any activity was done.

T1 revealed that:

As a teacher my major role is to see to it that learners do what they are supposed to be doing. Mind you, some of the issues that our learners deal with are too complicated for them as learners. So my major job is to assist my learners to find alternative solutions to problems. If ever the problem is beyond our capacity then we have to either refer them to the police or to Social Welfare. So you can see that our learners at times do not manage to solve the problems on their own and we as teachers, we also have our role.

T2, T3, T4 agreed that they had a great role to play in peer education. They agreed that as teachers their duties were varied. Besides helping peer educators they were also acted as mediators between the school administration and peer education clubs. The teachers had this to say:

T2 added that:

Peer educators are very mobile so we at times need transport to take us to the community and do a variety of activities. They sometimes perform concerts and awareness campaigns in the community hall. So I help them arrange the transport. The principal needs to be pressurised so it is my duty to see that they get the transport. T3 echoed:

As a teacher I sometimes educate peer educators on some social issues which they must be careful with. For instance, I always warned my students against lack of discipline because their peers will not listen to them once they find out that they are not disciplined.

T4 had this to say:

My role as a teacher is that of mentorships. Learners always consult me first in all that they want to do. I am more of an advisor. I do not suggest things for them, but I always show them the positive and negative effects of this.

Focus groups were interviewed in order to confirm the role of teachers in peer education. Some learners in the focus groups gave the following comments

A learner in FG1 stated:

Our teachers are always there for us. They help us whenever we need them. They help us with letter writing when we ask for assistance from sponsors, the school administration and even the community at large. Our teachers are our advisors who are always keeping an eye on us. When they see that we are going astray they call us and advise us. We always move on because our teachers are always there for us.

A learner in FG2 commented:

We get advice from our teachers and we always consult them on things which we do not understand. There is a lot of violence in the school, so at times we really do not know on how we can intervene as peer educators. The teacher assists us by telling us what we can do to actually try and save the situation.

Another learner in FG3 in emphasised that FG3:

Our teacher's very busy and we always assist her in identifying learners with problems in the school. She will then ask us to write a report of what the child will be doing which makes us think that the learner has problems.

A learner in FG4 revealed:

The teacher was responsible for provision of materials and tasks from the department. The teachers are the ones whom we trust for anything that we need to do. We give the teachers our moneys for fundraising so that they keep that money for us.

The Social worker stated :

We have been called in by the Department of Education to assist our children with social issues in schools. The department asked schools to provide them with learners who work as peer educators in peer education clubs. The teachers then choose the peer educators for us and we train the peer educators.

Teachers also assist us by maintaining order when we have the training sessions.

He continued:

The teachers are always there in the training sessions and they see to it that they help us with energizers so that the learners can stretch themselves during sessions. Teachers also participate during discussions. We always encourage teachers to be where the peer educators are so that they may understand what we will be discussing. When they go back to school they make sure that what we discuss here is put into practice.

The Peer group trainer also stated:

I work with the 4 teachers in the schools which I work with. The teachers assist me to organize the peer educators. At times we do not have time to meet with the peer an educator, so what I do is that I send my messages through the teachers to the learners. The learners also talk to their teachers. If ever they want something from me the teacher can send a word to me. I am always in touch with the teacher because I work from outside school; hence I need to know what the school would be planning to do during the week so that if possible I find space to fit in our group meetings. It is very helpful that I have at least teachers in the school that I work with because it was going to be more difficult for me to work directly with the learners. So teachers in the schools are more [like] coordinators in the peer education programmes.

4.6 Objectives of the School-Based Peer-Education Programmes

The research question sought to find out the objectives of PE in schools from the PEs, PGTs teachers, principals, and trainers from Child Welfare South Africa (CWSA). The researcher, however, observed that the objectives of promoting leadership in schools by building on the capacity of peer education was being neglected or misconstrued, particularly by club masters and principals. Allowing learners to participate in decision-making in social issues through peer education was seen as a threat to teachers' authority in some schools.

All the teachers concurred that the major goals of peer education programmes is to train peer educators in leadership and life-skills. Those who will have undergone

training will in turn come back and teach others in the school on a number of social issues. This will enable learners to become their own problem solvers. Other teachers claimed that these programmes are aimed at alerting learners on the dangers of a host of social issues that distract the youths from their learning processes such as, drug abuse, unprotected sex resulting in sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancies and suicide tendencies when they fail to find someone to share with their social problems.

T1 this to say:

The major goals are to promote leadership in schools by training students so that they actually teach their peers to be their own problem solvers. The thrust is therefore to catch them young and walk them along an acceptable societal and cultural path. What we simply do is to guide them here and there where necessary, but it is the club's policy to minimize such interferences.

T2 added:

Learners need to be alerted to the dangers of abortion, drug abuse, STIs, teen pregnancies, suicide, and bullying. In fact, Ma'm, on everything that hinders a learner from focusing on his / her studies. Actually, the school's aim is to eliminate or reduce risky behaviours and facilitate positive behavioural changes amongst our youths.

The teachers also stated that these programmes enhance teaching effect in schools as they inculcated in learners certain attributes like communication skills, foster co-operation between learners and teachers and between learners themselves. The teachers also concurred that these programmes have a teaching effect which comes through the numerous social messages conveyed through drama, poetry and through debates.

This was confirmed by T4 who said that:

Clubs have a teaching effect, for example, peer education groups usually perform dramas, poetry and use music whose messages do help in teaching learners on certain social issues which ordinarily would not be mentioned in their everyday lives.

Principals echoed most of the issues that the teachers had mentioned such as; imparting life skills to learners, teach them to be their own decision-makers in their lives, and also teach them against drug abuse, alcohol abuse, unsafe sexual practices and other general social problems associated with youths.

P1 also said:

We want learners to be aware of reality and to be decision-makers and problem-solvers in their own lives. So iclubs zonke (all clubs) in general actually work towards the enhancement of this empowering and capacitating of skills in our learners through the activities that they do. The school actually gives them the leeway to organize their social functions, like; concerts and self- regulate the various activities from the start to the end. During paid functions, such as concerts, we make sure that teachers are present to ensure that learners honestly collect the money and give it to them for safe keeping. That way we also teach them the importance of honesty in life.

The principal from S2 further qualifies these points:

In peer-education, learners are trained to stand on their own feet and we allow them to make mistakes, from which they get the opportunity to learn afterwards. For instance, last year our learners held a concert and they made a loan with the school to hire a Disco from a local DJ with the hope of paying back soon after the concert. Unfortunately, they had over-estimated the returns of the activities as the turn-out did not measure up to their expectations. Resultantly, the club ran into a loss and ended up failing to pay back the school money in time as was expected. So this way, the learners learnt a valuable lesson.

One principal, however, bemoaned the misinterpretation now being given to these school-based peer-education programmes by some misguided learners. He claimed that these programmes were now being regarded as “teacher-watchdog” tools by

some learners and added that they were now regarding themselves as an autonomous body which teachers had little control over. This principal however pointed out that the problem was on PGTs at the District Offices who emphasize learners' rights a great deal, but at the expense of their learning.

Principal 3 also revealed:

The peer-educators are influencing some of our learners to rise against teachers. Just last week, one of our teachers was reported by learners to have ill-treated their colleague only to find out that they had discussed the matter with the peer educator trainers first. It is this PE trainer who had interpreted the teacher's conduct as ill-treatment. What is now happening is that learners are now consulting PE trainers on every decision made on them in the school. While we recognise the societal role for these PE trainers to deal with pastoral issues, it will be equally very misleading to think that they can give advice on everything in the school.

The other principal mentioned that these programmes are carried out at schools because schools are recognised as institutions with a conducive environment and a platform through which youths' issues can be addressed. He also added that it is the schools' responsibility to produce future responsible citizens.

P4 also highlighted the following:

The aims of peer-education are that they want to equip and empower boys and girls with the knowledge and confidence they need to make their way through the daily problems of growing up such as pregnancy, dropouts and alcohol abuse among others. Also as an institution, the school has a moral responsibility to produce and nurture future responsible citizens of the country.

The district coordinator (DC) commented that:

Peer education clubs have been established in schools as a cheap and effective way to disseminate information. Teachers and peer group trainers however have a direct interaction with the learners in PE clubs. The objectives of the clubs depend on the implementation of the programmes in the schools.

For me, the objectives of Peer education are to educate others on the dangers of problem behaviour. We are mainly concerned about molding learners who are well behaved, who know their rights and responsibilities.

He further stated that:

We need to make all our youths in schools and the community at large realize that they do not need to be free riders in their schools and communities. Instead, they need to put input on the development of their communities and schools. Our objective is to have all the schools around here increase in enrolment, because now there is a problem that some schools are closing down because learners are becoming fewer and fewer.

The DC gave the researcher Peer education learners' manual and showed her a statement in which read "Peer education is aimed at connecting responsibilities and rights. The bill of responsibilities is a reminder for the youth of South Africa that even though we all have and should enjoy rights like equality, respect, dignity and life, this cannot happen unless we also take responsibility to act in ways that protect, ensure and uphold these rights (Peer Education Manual 2011)."

The DC further echoed that:

We are trying to shift youth from the belief that freedom means doing what they like. PE takes us to the idea that we need to take responsibility for the way we live together. It affirms that we should give back to our communities and our country so that human rights become real for everyone. We also base our objectives on the constitution. The SA constitution is one of the most inclusive in the world. But I do not deny the fact that our learners abuse all these privileges that they get from the constitution. As the Education Department we introduced peer education as a strategy which promotes human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice across the whole curriculum. The DC further mentioned that their goal is to let peer educators help other youths who do not afford to go to school like orphans.

The DC continued:

We want our learners to be aware of the fact that they also have a role to play in motivating others so that they achieve in school. Our major concern is enrolment, retention, and achievement. We also want to decrease learner drop out which is caused by learner pregnancy, drug abuse or violence. In Fort

Beaufort, that is our major problem. Learners are dropping out of school like you have never heard. So we want to restore that and avoid redeployment of teachers. Teachers in schools with few learners are redeployed and it is not a good experience for most people who have been in the school for many years. Schools with less enrolment will also be closed. Peer education is our only hope in reversing the situation in schools. This is the only way to reverse the situation.

The researcher also sought the views, assessments, opinions, feelings and experiences of learners on how they felt and perceived as the objectives of PE in their respective schools. These views and assessments were also of the conditions in which the peer educators operated. An overwhelming majority of learners perceived the objectives of peer education clubs as that of helping those in vulnerable circumstances both at schools and the communities in which they come from. They felt that all unfavourable conditions in the lives of the youths should be removed, such as drug addiction, sexual abuse or exploitation, alcohol abuse and prostitution.

At first the learners were apprehensive but became increasingly relaxed after the researcher explained to them that the interviews were just like a normal discussion and that there were no wrong answers.

The aim of the question was to find out if learners were aware of the objectives of the school-based peer-education programmes. Most of the learners showed an understanding of the objectives of these school-based peer-education programmes. All the four focus groups concurred that the main objective was to address the social challenges that the youths of today are battling with which include among others; HIV and AIDS, Drug Abuse, teenage pregnancy and to promote life-skills. One learner claimed that the other objective is tackle issues related to poverty, whereby learners or even some identified children from less privileged families are assisted with school fees and some material assistance.

One learner from FG1 stated:

Our major objective in this rural community is to assist children from disadvantaged backgrounds by giving them moral support. Poverty, long walks to school, lack of material all need to be attended to. We raise funds through concerts and we sell sweets in the school. At one time last year, we donated some money to a local orphanage after having been informed about the financial challenges the institution was facing. Although it was a small donation but we sincerely hope it made a difference in the lives of the beneficiaries. It is also our hope that we shall continue helping this institution and many others in similar circumstances.

All the focus groups indicated that they also offer peer-counselling to fellow learners whose behaviour in the school will have been found to be wayward, such as being involved in drugs. One learner from Focus Group 4 indicated that the other critical objective of these school-based peer-education programmes was to help in the creation of conducive teaching and learning conditions in the schools and increase access to education to the disadvantaged learners. She went further to say that they fundraise for fees and other educational materials for orphans in the school and those who will have been identified from the surrounding communities.

She further stated:

Peer education aims to increase access, retention, completion and learning achievement for the most vulnerable children by promoting life skills, community participation, health and safety.

The focus groups also concurred that their main target group is the youths and that there is need to direct them socially.

One learner from FG3 echoed

The focus of the programmes is youth development and empowerment, especially of young people in historically neglected rural communities and informal settlements in Fort Beaufort. These groups are vulnerable to substance abuse, HIV/AIDS and violence including sexual abuse. So, our major aim is to help them quit /recover from such activities and focus their minds on school work. If someone is faced with one of the above problems, he/she will not perform well in their academic work, and it is our aim to give counseling and moral support to such people'.

As the researcher was discussing with the learners they always made reference to the District Programme Director and the Child Welfare Social Worker and decided to visit these two offices so that so that she could get an appreciation of the mandate of their roles. I was provided with the Education Department's PEM for learners in public schools and the Child Welfare South Africa's National Programme document on Child Protection: Peer-education 2012. The aims and objectives of peer-education programmes are well spelt out in both documents. An in-depth analysis of both documents revealed that most of the roles that the learners were describing to the researcher were actually contained in both documents and that they were just rephrasing them.

The researcher also found out that the manual was developed by the two respective departments of Education and Child Welfare to assist in the implementation of the peer education programmes in schools. The activities in the Child Welfare manual address a number of issues that affect learner performance in schools, common amongst them being: substance abuse, learner pregnancies, HIV/AIDS and STIS, study skills and decision making. Included in the manual is the school's HIV/AIDS calendar showing the months, events, and the activities to be undertaken by peer groups. The availability of these stipulated objectives is a clear indication that the learners are just there to merely implement what is already set for them by manipulating the objectives so that they suit their own situations. A concern was raised in an interview held with teachers that despite the fact that the objectives of the peer group association are clearly spelt out in the manuals, it has been

observed that learners see this association as a platform on which to demonstrate their democratic rights.

An in-depth analysis of the Peer-Education Manual revealed that the objectives were in line with those outlined by almost all the respondents. The major objective outlined in the manual is to reduce substance use in the Greater Fort Beaufort area by 40% by the year 2020 amongst youths aged between 12 and 30 years and develop a large base of self-help skills among youths aged between 18 and 30 by 2020. These skills will help in the future development of the area. The project targets both learners in rural schools around Fort Beaufort District and the youths in the surrounding communities who dropped out of school. The objectives outlined focused on identifying risk factors in Fort Beaufort area, including poverty, lack of employment opportunities for young people, peer pressure, boredom and lack of recreational facilities as well as lack of parental care.

4.7 Issues Discussed in Clubs

The research revealed that both clubs – the subject clubs and the peer-education groups – discuss issues that are linked to real life experiences. Observations and interviews revealed that peer-education programmes are aimed at building a culture of responsibility and humanity and accountability in our schools. The findings revealed that this programme is meant to make children take responsibility for themselves and their own behaviours. This understanding should cut across every aspect of their day-to-day lives. In the sessions that the researcher observed, teachers helped learners to understand how their actions can affect others. Teachers also chose to work with the learners in ways that match their levels of development, age and life experiences. In the end, the researcher noted that most of the issues that were discussed during the sessions focused on teenagers' problems and their possible solutions. PEMs reveal that these teenage problems

include among others: drug abuse, rape, HIV/AIDS, study skills and Environmental Conservation.

P1 responded as follows:

I am not sure of the major issues which they discuss, but I think peer educators' focus is mainly on problem solving. I have not attended any one of their sessions but they often come to my office asking for assistance. They often report that they want to raise funds to take to an orphanage which is just close to our school.

P2 also added:

What I have observed is that peer educators are trained on child and learners' rights. We should know that when rights are limited then children's vulnerability increases. But what our learners do not understand is that rights and responsibility go together.

P3 highlighted that:

The rights are over-emphasized in this association such that when peer educators come to us for support they want us to agree to everything they say. I had a problem last week with one group which needed to go to a meeting with other peers in another school. These learners wanted to go to that particular school in the morning around 9:00am. I told them that they were supposed to go in the afternoon after having attended their normal morning class lessons. They were not happy about it and sent an RCL member to say I had refused to comply with their request. Hey! We had a big fight trying to convince these learners to go at.

P4 also echoed:

Our communities are full of family problems and some learners are heads of families, such that when they come to school they still want to maintain that overall control on all of us. They take the issue of their rights too far. Ideally, the workshops which they regularly attend should help us remind our learners that rights do not replace rules in the schools. Laws already in place should be respected. We therefore insist that such social issues be discussed

comprehensively to smooth relationships within the school, and in the end learning processes will be enhanced.

T1 also stated:

We first teach learners to understand their personal beliefs and values and make them to understand that people have differing beliefs and values and that these beliefs and values can be changed through gaining knowledge. It therefore follows that; all the activities that we do are aimed at changing learners' attitudes for the better.

T2 mentioned:

Peer educators focus on self-development, values, behaviour, relationships, sexual health, substance abuse, learner pregnancy, and prevention of HIV and TB.

T3 added :

Peer educators are taught many things such as study skills. They teachings also focus on planning, motivation, time and stress management among other things.

Peer educators are taught about the types of relationships, and challenges found within these relationships.

The learners also concurred that it is mainly negative social issues that they discuss comprehensively, and proactive approaches to prevention and social integration. Their mentors and teachers also discuss with them in detail the social and economic strategies that involve every social area: family, school and the community. The main purpose is to positively promote the general welfare and well-being of learners. Such issues include among others, drug abuse, violence and HIV/AIDS.

One learner in FG1 stipulated:

We discuss about sexuality, developmental stages and healthy lifestyles. On healthy life styles they discuss virginity testing and circumcision. In groups we discuss safe ways of circumcision and whether virginity testing is good or bad. We also discuss substance abuse and addiction so that we have a clear understanding of what substance abuse and addiction are. We discuss many issues including pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, and myths about HIV/AIDS.

One learner in FG2 revealed:

The issues that we discuss here are varied. We deal with all life issues, anything that one can think of. We are also empowered so that we can stand on our own. We learn to grow vegetables, our rights and study skills’.

One learner in FG3 stated:

Issues which are discussed in our association include ways to deal with anger, both positive and negative ways. For example, we are taught that positive ways include being aware of our own anger, expressing our anger and to think about our anger. The negative ways include bottling up anger and acting out our anger. We also discuss about conflict management, the various forms that conflict can take, such as: verbal, physical, and explicit (obvious) and implicit (not so obvious), for example where people do not talk to each other for whatever reason.

One learner in FG4:

We discuss peer pressure and friendship. We have been taught that it’s good to have mutual caring and support for one another as well as valuing each other. We are also constantly reminded that mutual trust and respect are very critical in all relationships.

Analysis of peer educators' manuals indicated that they also deal with decision-making and problem solving skills. Learners are taught to make informed decisions in solving problems that may come up in their own personal lives. Observations also revealed that learners are given case studies with real life problems and in groups they come up with possible solutions. The mentors give suggested solutions to all the problems after each discussion session. These include peer group trainers, teachers and Child Welfare officials.

4.8 Roles of Peer Educators

Teachers in both associations agreed that learners have the role of implementing the programmes. Peer educators are the ones who work on the ground. They are the ones who educate their peers on different life skills. They take the positions of teachers. Youths feel free to share their problems with their peers. Some of them do not trust their adults, simply because some of the perpetrators are adults. The majority of learners perceived their major roles in these associations as that of educating their peers at times by use of practical examples they meet daily. One learner in FG1 had this to say:

Our major role is that of implementing peer-education and imparting life-skills to learners in our schools.

P1 mentioned:

Our learners in peer education groups have different objectives that are guided by our curriculum and the South African Schools Act. Objectives differ from grade to grade / phase to phase. Here at secondary school peers are becoming more important. They are trained in various spheres of life. The main objective being that of trying to bring up an all-round human being who fits well in the society.

P2 supported:

Lessons discussed are mainly social, but they are all meant to promote academic achievements of learners. When learners do not have a good mind set they will not succeed in everything that they do in school.

P3 also added:

Orphans and vulnerable children are deprived of their first line of protection – their parents. Parents affect the lives of children in a unique way, and as such their role in children's rights has to be distinguished in a particular way. So some lessons that the learners get from peer education are that learners should accept that they are orphans and that living a good and successful life involves hard work, and that everything worthwhile only comes with effort. So the major objectives of peer education are that whatever problem the child might have they must be informed, make choices and take action about the problems. Most of the activities in peer education aim to help learners face problems like HIV/AIDS, crime and unemployment, xenophobia and relationships.

P4 emphasised:

The major objectives of the peer education groups are to promote whole school development. These include promotion of responsibility and discipline. Everything else falls in place once our learners are disciplined. Mostly peer educators instil discipline in accordance to the code of conduct of peer educators found in their peer education manual. They are encouraged to reflect, analyse and have critical thinking skills.

The social worker who leads most of these social discussions argued as follows:

The associations in our schools are all aimed at ensuring that they assist in building a culture of responsibility and accountability in our schools. Our learners are very much aware of their rights but they forget that they also need to be responsible.

The researcher also talked to teachers who all explained that peer education groups are trying to make their peers understand that their rights go with responsibilities. They all agreed that the national curriculum statement require human rights and responsibilities to be integrated and infused into teaching and learning across all learning areas (integration) and into all learning areas (infusion). Different teachers had different stories to tell.

T2 explained:

Our learners require a lot of lectures on responsibilities now, more than they do on human rights, because human rights have been preached more than enough. So it is the responsibility of schools through the curriculum to emphasise rights and responsibilities. These associations like the peer education groups are the rightful platforms to expose our learners with activities that instil responsibility.

T3 supported:

The main objectives of the peer education groups so far, are to transform the attitudes of our youth in a various ways. The main objectives are to make schools and communities that are safe for all. So these associations are there to help build skills of participation, freedom of expression and to empower young people to be part of a democratic South Africa.

T4 also added:

The objectives of all extracurricular activities are the same. An understanding of one's self and body is one objective of peer education. From the sessions which I have attended I came to understand that our learners are taught that they have the right to say what they feel to enable them to take their place in society and to stand up for themselves. But this is one major part of democracy that our learners do not like. They forget that rights come with responsibility. So schools together with non-governmental organisations like Social Welfare, we aim to achieve the growth of responsible, committed and caring citizens with adequate problem solving skills and values. Peer education enhances self-esteem of learners.

The researcher went on to ask the learners what they meant by 'implementing'. One learner in FG 1 had this to say:

We actually have problems in our communities, like I said before, which include among others, poverty, lack of employment opportunities for young people, peer pressure, drug, substance and alcohol abuses, boredom and lack of recreational facilities as well as lack of parental care. We then take the role of teachers to educate our peers on what they can do when faced with any one of these different challenges mentioned above.

Another learner in FG1 also agreed:

Teachers serve in the role of guides, monitors, coaches, tutors and facilitators where our knowledge and experience fall short. We are also there to refer our peers to other organizations like child welfare, police, and to the hospital if their

problems are beyond our capacity as peers. We also assist our teachers to identify the problems in the school and have them addressed. We sometimes bring to the attention of our teachers the names of learners who abuse drugs, who have fallen pregnant and those who are violent to others.

A learner in FG2 added that:

We are there to train our peers so that they can also manage their lives as well as capacitate them to be able to assist fellow members of their communities to also manage their own lives. We are actually aimed at instilling cultural values in our colleagues. Cultures have values that are largely shared by their members. For instance, in our school we try and lead by example. As peer educators we are supposed to teach others that we are supposed to respect each other. Our group encourages compassion, respect and compassion. Schools cannot function if there is not mutual respect between educators, learners and parents.

A learner in FG3:

We are just like teachers. We educate our peers on the risks of pregnancy, drug abuse, plus we see to it that we address all issues that disturb our learning processes in the school. So we steer the activities in the club. We assist our teachers to spread the words for instance on the dangers of drug abuse, alcohol, teenage pregnancy and even violence because most of the people in our communities are known to be generally violent in nature.

A learner in FG4:

Our job is to guide our peers in dealing with issues arising in our school and we teach them how to deal with sensitive issues like rape in the community or school. We provide updated information to peers for instance who have been raped. We tell them to go to hospital if they think that they have been raped and get tested for rape. Our education and training as peers has limits so that is why we have to refer our peers to experts like social workers for counselling and police so that the perpetrators can be prosecuted. Learners open up to us because we are peers and some perpetrators are old people whom learners no longer trust.

4.9 Linkage of Issues to Teaching and Learning

During interviews the respondents gave various responses on how high risk behaviours are linked to teaching and learning. They all agreed that despite the fact that the education system of South Africa is open to everyone, there are high failure rates, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse and high dropout rates, hence the reason for bringing in intervention strategies (DoE, 2011). The analysis of PEMs revealed that the peer-education program is “a dynamic process, an intervention strategy, a communication channel, a system and a tool whereby selected and well-trained people in a specific situation contribute to the well-being of others in the same situation”. It is built on the premise that people in similar situations have similar experiences, understand one another and can influence one another. Learners share freely even on issues of sexuality within their own age group.

The key message in the activities outlined in the manuals is abstinence from all high risk behaviours by school going youths. The activities are learner-centered and comply with the curriculum in terms of content dealt with. The manuals reveal that the main purpose of engaging learners is to encourage discussions, debates and open communication. It is therefore clear that the Department of Education aims at addressing social challenges that affect schooling within the province in order to improve enrolment and retention rates which are the major problems in South African schools. In the dropout and repetition rates Study (2009/10) published by the Department of Education, the impact of poverty, illness, quality of family support, pregnancy, family commitments, and quality of schooling are all factors that contribute to high failure rates.

Respondents in this research agreed that the factors mentioned above have a great bearing on teaching and learning in that an infected or affected child cannot perform well in school thus the need to address the problems. Observations and analysis of minutes books and peer-educators' manuals revealed that peer educators are there to assist in awareness campaigns e.g. of HIV and AIDS, communication skills,

teamwork, co-operative skills, problem solving, conflict resolution, mediation skills, fund raising, teaching, learning and leadership styles, facilitating meetings, organizing activities, events, and entrepreneurial skills.

4.9.1 Teenage Pregnancy

All the respondents in the four schools indicated that there are high rates of teenage pregnancy in schools in Fort Beaufort District. If learners become pregnant, there is a high risk of failing since they will miss out a lot on school work while on maternity leave. Due to the challenges of motherhood, girls eventually drop out. So awareness campaigns about risks of teenage pregnancy could raise the retention rate of learners in schools. However peer educators felt that the policy on teenage pregnancy is too lenient and this is why some learners have second pregnancies while in school. They felt that peer educators should not only be involved in the solving of the problem but should be involved in policy formulation. They also felt that they are wasting their time addressing people who are not geared to solve the problem. All the four teachers concurred that teenage pregnancy need a different approach for it to be addressed. They feel that the solution should come from the teens themselves. It is of no help to suggest ways of solving the problem without involving the youths.

The learners, however, feel that they have provided possible solutions on teenage pregnancy on several platforms in their clubs, but it seems they are not being taken seriously, by their teachers and the Department of Education. They strongly believe that if these are taken on board, teenage pregnancy cases will be reduced significantly in schools.

The respondents had this to say:

P1 had this to say:

It is true that cases of teenage pregnancy still continue unabated in the District and some new strategies have to be found to deal with this problem.

P2 also reiterated:

Teenage pregnancy is a real problem at my school and there is need to seriously engage the youths about it. The peer education club provides that platform to tackle the problem.

P3 added that:

I think the government should stop giving support-grants to teenage mothers. The country is losing human resources with a lot of potential through drop-outs.

P4 echoed:

Teenage pregnancy is one problem that most schools are battling with, ours included. Many of these teenagers who fall pregnant usually drop out of school and as you can see it is the girl whose education is disturbed. The responsible boy is not affected and usually he immediately forgets about the pregnant girl and look for other girls. It is therefore important that this issue be discussed at peer level.

The teachers in all the four schools confirmed the problem of teenage pregnancy in their respective schools. They responded as follows:

T1 further explained:

Our school has a problem of drug abuse and teenage pregnancy. We are tired of preaching the same gospel each and every day. It's high time that the youths themselves are given a chance to come up with the solutions. They know their problems better so they must be given opportunities to air their views on why they are failing to reduce teenage pregnancy.

T2 emphasised that:

Teenage pregnancy is a serious problem at this school and as the LO teacher and the Club Master for the peer education club, it is one topic which we regularly discuss with learners with a particular focus on girls, so that they can take seriously their education and aim to be better persons in their lives.

T3 added:

The general consensus in our school is that teenage pregnancy is being encouraged by the government's continued support of all those who will have given birth. Many in our school believe that if there were no grants, teenagers would have been more responsible.

A learner in FG1 revealed that:

A number of learners are pregnant right now as we speak. To tell the truth, teachers in this school have a lot to deal with. It is not easy to tell the teacher that so-and-so is pregnant. How is this going to help? The teachers have no power to chase the learners away. They have a right to learn. We feel that the old government was fair by not allowing pregnant learners into the school. This is because some pregnant students get ill during the course of their pregnancy. We have aired our views in debates but it seems as if we just debate for the sake of debating. Our concerns are not considered. If only we could be recognised as a functional organ then some of the solutions could come from us.

A learner in FG2 also pointed out that:

Our opinions on teenage pregnancy are not taken seriously. We have written articles on solutions to teenage pregnancy but all this is just thrown into the dustbin. Teenage pregnancy disturbs the whole idea of learning, in that learners lose focus and concentrate on the developments which will be taking place in their bodies.

A learner in FG3:

As Peer Educators, we feel very challenged when cases of teenage pregnancy keep on increasing. During our club discussions we debate on ways we can reach out to all teenage girls.

A learner in FG4 supported T3:

We wish if the government can stop handing out support grants to young mother. As a school, we cannot solve this rampant problem of teenage pregnancy on our own. Relevant government departments and the community at large needs to join hands and save the many lives that are being wasted when these learners drop out of school.

According to the responses that were given by all respondents, teenage pregnancy cases are increasing in schools, which is a clear indication of lack of moral values

on the part of some girl learners. All participants agreed that the main call is for the government to consider selectively giving support grants to teenage mothers.

4.9.2 Drug Abuse

The key message in all activities outlined in the documents which were analysed is abstinence from high risk behaviour by school-going youths. Drug abuse affects learners' education in that if a learner is drunk it is not possible for him/her to grasp what is being taught. Concentration span is reduced. Most learners in the catchment area of these two schools are said to be abusing drugs and bunking lessons. They are always in the school backyards. Learners in these schools are said to be losing three to four days per week. This alone leads to low achievement rates. Thus there is a need to address these problems in a more effective way, involving the learners so that they may influence the behaviours of their peers. The respondents had this to say:

P1 explained:

Drug abuse is very common in the school, particularly with boys. This has resulted in them performing so poorly in class because their learning is affected. Peer Educators are being trained to reach out to those affected so that they can abstain.

P2 also added:

Most of these learners who are into drugs have shown that they do not care about their education or their lives. Their performances in class are very poor and as a school, we task the teachers to debate these issues in their clubs and highlight the negative end results of drug abuse.

P3 agreed with P1:

Drug abuse is a serious problem in the school mostly with upper grades, and these are now even teaching the young ones to join them. As a school we are trying by all means to address this problem, by bringing in resource persons from outside to come and address learners on this problem. Some of these resource persons are former drug abusers themselves from the learners' communities are now waging a war against drug abuse.

P4 suggested:

I think the fight against drug abuse should not be left to schools alone, but the communities should also play a role because these learners do come from homes. In our school we encourage peer advices and peer counselling on the negative effects of drugs to the learners' schooling career.

The teachers also emphasised what the principals had said: that there is a need for a multi-sectoral approach to this problem of drug abuse among learners. The Departments of Education, Health and Child Welfare need to join forces and fight this problem. This is what they had to say:

T1 explained:

The topic of drug abuse in schools is one that we always discuss because it is also rampant in our school. In our club discussions, we try to devise various strategies on how best the problem can be tackled. Many teachers in the school have complained about the lack of discipline in class among boy learners and their failure to concentrate on their school work.

T2 also added:

This problem really needs to be addressed in our school because it is affecting the learners' learning process. Sometimes, these learners do behave in a way which disrupts others and it becomes difficult to teach in such an environment.

T3 stated: ‘

Our learners need to be seriously work-shopped on the negative effects of drug abuse and how in the end it will make their lives miserable.

T4 added:

What I have realised is that some of these learners are getting fooled by the myths that drugs do enhance their thinking capacity. We, however, try to dispel these myths during peer-education discussions.

The peer educators acknowledged the rampant incidents of drug abuse in their schools and attributed this to a number of factors. Some bemoaned the current

systems in schools whereby peer educators' activities are not on official time-tables. They claimed that this situation has made it difficult for them.

A learner in FG1 supported what had been said by the teachers and principals:

We have a lot of problems with some of our peers who do not want to abstain from drug abuse and unsafe sex. We have witnessed a lot of conflicts between teachers and learners where learners do not respect the teachers. We try our best to talk to the learners during our own spare time. The problem is that we are very few and we are not on the time table, so at times we fail to address some of the problems in time. For instance, a case where some senior boys organised to beat up the history teacher because he scolds them daily was not addressed because of time. We at times fail to deal with some of the issues and refer them to our LO teacher, who in turn refers the cases to social welfare or police. Learners with social problems do not do well in class. They need a lot of moral support.

A learner in FG2 revealed:

We discuss social issues with the learners in order to let them aware of the dangers of drug abuse or teenage pregnancy. Some do not even want to listen to us but some have changed, behaviour-wise. The good part about some learners is that they are still young and if we talk to them they listen to some of our advice. It is the older boys who give us problems, in that they bring dagga to school and they are the ones who teach the young boys to drink and smoke. In the morning they are sober, but later in the day they are so violent.

A learner in FG3 added:

Our teachers need to be respected by learners but in vain. We do not have room to disturb the plans made by the social welfare staff. We follow the manuals because we cannot do otherwise. If the choice was ours we could be asking the learners to be tested for drugs so that they can be asked to stop and be rehabilitated. It is not the boys alone who give us problems, but the girls also use drugs and alcohol. Some are as young as 14 years.

A learner in FG4 suggested:

A number of learners have children and they are not even careful since they do not use condoms. They are at risk of having HIV/AIDS. So at times the teachers quarrel with the learners not knowing that the learners are drunk. It is very difficult for us to work after school. We are not there on the time table so we do not have access to some of

the peers. If ever we were given room to suggest meeting times we could have suggested that we get time to meet with our peers officially.

Learners in their focus groups also concurred with their teachers and principals on what needs to be done about drug abuse and the magnitude of disruption to their learning processes.

The DC had this to say:

Learners in Fort Beaufort District have been rated to be the worst in drug abuse compared to other districts in the area. Our aim is to reduce drug abuse by educating our youths about the dangers of drug abuse. Peer educators are also educated about how learners can be rehabilitated. The major facts here are that the role of peer education is to make referrals on issues beyond their capacity.

The PGT also agreed with all the respondents and had this to say:

When I was at school I used to talk a lot to some big boys who always bunked lessons because they were smoking in the toilets. You know what they told me? (She said gazing in the air). I couldn't believe my ears. They told me that they smoked because it showed that they were now men. They also mentioned that smoking relieves them from stress and it is fashionable nowadays. The learners also told me that their parents have no say because it is their right. I tried to talk to them but they never took the debate serious. And you know what? They all failed dismally.

4.9.3 Poverty

Peer education is an intervention strategy that involves training and support of a given group to effect change among members of the same group. Teachers revealed that a number of the children around town are orphans or they do not have one of the parents for one reason or another. The social worker revealed that variations in social conditions under which learners grow up have a direct impact on learners' performance. This includes disruption in family structure, inequitable access to education and health services. All this has a direct impact on learners' performance and retention. All respondents echoed that a hungry child cannot do well in school. It is for this reason that the Department of Education is calling to

everyone, including the NGOs, to intervene in trying to reduce all barriers to education.

All principals agreed that peer-education is a programme are linked to teaching and learning in that background of a child has a lot of bearing on his/her education. P1 and P2 agreed that the issues discussed in peer-education programmes have a direct bearing on teaching and learning issues. Learners with high levels of motivation and morality are also high achievers. They also said that their schools are made up of learners from broken families where most learners leave with grandparents or single mothers. They pointed out that in some families it is hard to afford two meals per day hence teachers find it hard to teach learners on an empty stomach. Learners sleep in class. The nutrition programmes in the schools are mainly found in primary schools.

The principals had this to say:

P1 stated:

Learners who are motivated because of sound social backgrounds do perform well in their school work as opposed to their opposites. They cannot perform Miss whilst they are hungry. Peer educators also look at such problems and they assist them.

P2 added:

Our experience has been that learners who come from poor backgrounds tend to suffer from an inferiority complex and in the end their performance in class suffers. But through peer programmes we strive to bring them to the same level with those from affluent backgrounds.

P3 also highlighted:

Our school's peer-education programmes are also aimed at addressing the plight of the underprivileged in the communities to enable them to enjoy their learning like all other learners. These clubs do identify the learners who are so affected and offer them both moral and material support to raise their self-esteem. This approach is showing some positive changes in the previously affected learners' school work.

P4 supported:

There are quite a number of learners in our school who have a lot of potential in class, but who come from poor backgrounds. We encourage class teachers and peer educators to identify them and then work on uplifting the spirits so that they can see themselves being equal to all other learners. That way, it gives them the feeling that they can compete equally with peer learners or even surpass them academically.

The majority of teachers highlighted the need for schools to continue peer-education programmes that catered for the down-trodden in the communities, as it is in there that lie huge potential of future skills for the country.

They had this to say:

T1 said:

Our school is located in a rural setting and it is in there that many community members live in abject poverty. Naturally, their children do come to school showing these signs and when these children compare themselves with those from rich families, they are usually affected by these differences. They end up lacking confidence in class and are always withdrawn.

T2 agreed with P2:

Poverty is a determinant factor in learners' performances in schools. Learners from poor backgrounds do lack confidence in class and their performance is ultimately affected. What we usually do is to enlist the assistance of local Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) to give their families social support. We also help others with funds that we get through club functions, like concerts.

T3 explained:

As class teachers we normally come face-to-face with learners who have so much academic potential but they will be lacking in self-esteem. It is therefore our role to identify these and highlight their plight to those who can assist.

T4 added:

Peer educators also deal with issues pertaining to the social conditions of learners with a view to bringing them at par with everyone else. Once that is achieved, teaching will be easy for us and also the learners will enjoy learning.

All the focus groups raised concern about the need to address poverty in the communities they come from. In general, the learners felt that poverty alleviation programmes must be enhanced in the rural areas and that in particular something must be done for secondary school learners to address their problems so that their learning is not affected by social needs.

Learners in FG1:

It is true; some of our fellow learners do come from very poor homes. This is evident through their dressings and their general appearances. Most of them will be looking so resigned that concentration in class is low and resultantly they do not score high marks. Their learning is affected by their social conditions, and it is important that peer-education activities be also tailor-made towards addressing such things like poverty.

Learners in FG2:

Many of learners come to school whilst poorly resourced, in terms of uniforms and even food. They usually tend to isolate themselves and in class they lack confidence thereby preventing themselves from full participation in school work.

Learners in FG3:

Poverty, if not addressed adequately can be a huge barrier to learning. Due to poverty, some learners with a lot of potential do fail to continue with their studies as their parents will be failing to pay for their school fees. It is therefore our role as peer educators to identify such vulnerable learners and seek assistance from NGOs and the Child Welfare Department.

Learners in FG4:

Through a number of peer-education initiatives like dramas, we highlight the negative effects of poverty on learners. We also highlight the need for the government and NGOs to initiate sustainable developmental projects in the communities from which these learners come.

The above responses are a clear indication that learners' social backgrounds have a bearing on their learning processes. All respondents noted that learners from poor families play second fiddle in class to those from better family backgrounds. The respondents also recognised the importance of the need for the government to

seriously address this problem in order to make sure that learners from poor family backgrounds are afforded equal learning opportunities.

4.9.4 Orphans

Most respondents seemed to view the issue of orphans as a serious problem in schools, as some of these orphans do lack discipline to an extent of nearly making teaching impossible at times. Others are lobbying for more intensified education on safer sex and rigorous HIV/AIDS interventions in rural communities. This is what they said:

P1:

Most of the learners that you see here have one parent or they leave with their grandparents. Some do not even know their parents because they have been neglected or the parents are in a second marriage. Such children are a problem because they seek attention from teachers who also have their own problems.

P2:

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has had a negative effect on some of the learners in our school. Many of our learners do come from single parent families or child-headed families and as a result their discipline is mostly found wanting, to an extent of making it impossible for learning processes to occur in classes.

P3:

Our Peer educators do include the plight of orphans in their activities, whereby they at times offer to them peer-counselling in the school and they also give material support to a nearby orphanage. If they are given adequate peer-counselling they will concentrate much in their learning to improve their situations.

P4:

Learners who come from broken homes usually pose some discipline challenges to their class teachers and even relations with other learners

are usually poor. Such situations make it difficult for teachers to teach or for other learners to concentrate.

The teachers also raised concern that about the lack of discipline by most of these orphans due to lack of proper parental guidance, which results in nearly disruptive situations of learning processes. Most of the teachers felt that there is need to educate communities on safe sexual activities and to rehabilitate those already affected.

Teachers responded as follows:

T1:

There are a lot of disruptive behaviours in our classrooms being caused by some of these orphans, owing to lack of rehabilitation programmes. At times as teachers, we clearly identify their acts as some form of compensatory behaviour.

T2:

In our school, all identified orphans are given peer-education on morals and the fact that there much that they can do with their lives despite their present circumstances. This has helped a lot to make them work hard on their schooling.

T3:

Most orphans in our school lack material and financial resources and this affects their learning because this results in low self-esteem.

T4:

A lot of orphans in our school are mostly those who come from very poor backgrounds as they have no-one to fend for them. Their learning capacities are most of the times difficult as they have many social issues to deal with. They are always burdened with family responsibilities and it is the duty of peer educators to identify these learners and give them peer counselling or refer them to the Child Welfare department so that they can be assisted by the government.

Peer educators are mostly in agreement with their principals and teachers that most of these orphans come to school exhibiting clear signs of lack of parental guidance and lack of care. This has led to some of them misbehaving and even not taking seriously their learning seriously after giving up any hope of changing their present circumstances. Social problems are the underlying cause of this misbehaviour.

The Focus Groups (FG) argued as follows:

FG1:

Most orphans in our school need a lot of help – that is, spiritually and materially. As peer educators we try to give them some counselling and try to make them accept the fact that they can change the circumstances they are in if they take their learning seriously.

FG2:

In our Peer-Education club, we try to look into the problems of those learners who are economically challenged and seek bursaries for those with a lot of potential in school. We recognise the need for them to have equal opportunities to better education and in most cases this has changed their previously negative behaviour for the good.

FG3:

We give counselling to those orphans who will have been identified as causing problems for other learners in class and then try to understand their backgrounds so that we can come up with best ways to rehabilitate them.

FG4:

Our school encourages us as peer educators to tackle the underlying social problems of the identified orphans in the school. We then discuss with them these social problems and refer major ones to the Child Welfare Department. We realise that meaningful learning can only take place when these social problems are addressed.

4.9.5 Human Rights

The majority of principals pointed out that the issue of human rights was being taken too far by learners and even their parents to some extent, which, if not addressed would leave teachers powerless in schools. Also the principals cited the importance of human rights in schools particularly in a multiracial South Africa, which calls for the need to protect the rights of all to access education, irrespective of where they come from.

This is how the principals responded:

P1 explained:

It is pathetic to note that today's generation is so much affected by the social structures of the independent South Africa. Things have changed so much in schools because our learners have been accorded human rights by the government. We have learners who govern themselves. Just imagine a child protesting because he/she has been beaten by a teacher with a newspaper on her head. Just yesterday we had a case of a learner who phoned her parents that a teacher had beaten her with a newspaper on her head. The grandmother came here fuming.

He added that:

We had to apologise. The problem that we have here is that the intervention programmes that we have in schools support these human rights issues. I have been thinking about this for quite some time now. All stakeholders should address such issues and emphasise the fact that learners should learn to be responsible citizens and that teachers also have rights so learners should not provoke teachers and expect them to leave it at that. Teachers are also human beings, so they should treat them with respect. How then can one expect to pass when he/she undermines the teachers?

P2 added:

Social issues need to be addressed so that there is a conducive environment in the school for learning. I am sure peer educators also address such issues because peers may influence each other. The Social Welfare guys who work with the learners do not ask us as the administrators about the issues that need to be addressed in the schools. They simply bring manuals and I have seen one with a lot of social issues which they cover but I do not know whether they ask learners to select issues to be discussed.

P3 explained:

What we need in our schools is for learners to realize that teachers do not aim to violate their rights when they make them do certain things in the school. But I think the whole problem starts with the education they get from these manuals which they are given by their mentors at the District Offices. Some of these teachings they receive do not allow for learning to take place, the teachers' space is restricted, and that needs to be addressed.

Principal 4 concurred with the other three principals, but added that there were too few peer educators to address the problems in the schools. Only 10 peer-leaders, to him, are too few for a total of 400 learners in a school where there is violence, drug abuse, high teenage pregnancy and high dropout rates.

P4 emphasised:

Human rights are important in our schools because if they are not upheld, in a multi-racial society like ours there is bound to be chaos in schools as some learners will be denied access to education on the basis that they are not South African nationals. My only worry is that the number of peer educators in schools is very low when one compares with the host of challenging social problems that peer educators for a school with an enrolment of over 400 learners is hardly enough: the number needs to be increased.

In support of the observations made by the principals, the teachers argued that:

T1 added:

The issue of human rights in our schools has caused many of our learners to lose direction. As teachers we are now afraid to discipline learners because, any move that you take is equated to human rights violations of learners.

T2 also revealed:

At times during the course of our work, we discipline learners when they behave badly, not necessarily to punish them, but to put them in the right direction. It is this disciplining process that is misinterpreted as a violation of human rights for learners by some of them. At times I do not blame them because I realise that they lack knowledge, as they are not properly educated by their mentors at the Cape College.

T3 suggested:

Both the schools and Departments of Education and Child Welfare need to raise more awareness on the issue of human rights, particularly how they apply in learning processes. Failure to do so will result in us teachers losing control of learners who appear to compare any teacher action with their rights.

T4 agreed:

Human rights in schools have allowed all children to access education without looking at where they are coming from. What still lacks though is the learners' understanding of the term, because what we are now witnessing is that some misguided learners are now attempting to strip teachers of their powers. I wish if more education can be given to learners in schools so that they concentrate more on their learning than on what the teachers do to them.

DC echoed:

There are complaints that learners are being overprotected and they do not have a chance to work out solutions of problems on their own. I do not think that peer education is being over protective; instead, peer education is there to open the eyes of the learners such that they understand that academic learning alone without social and emotional learning will not take them anywhere.

4.10 Challenges

4.10.1 Disciplinary issues

Findings revealed that in order for any school to run smoothly, discipline must be instilled and accepted as one of the pillars of efficiency, both on the side of the learners and also teachers. All respondents agreed that disciplinary measures are used to help correct unacceptable behaviours of any individuals and bring them within the acceptable standards expected by any school.

P1 had this to say:

It is expected that learners must accept the responsibilities of their actions when they have broken the rules, but before resorting to any form of punishment, reasonable efforts should be made to discipline the learner. Various disciplinary policies must be put in place and adhered to by any school. Learners need to be

taught about our values and the importance of discipline in their everyday life. It is not easy for peer educators to involve themselves in disciplinary matters except when they were invited by their teachers to do so.

P2 supported:

The use of corporal punishment is unacceptable and must not be used under any circumstances. The disciplinary committees are put in place so that they maintain order in schools. Because of this, pupils no longer respect teachers, and teachers are working under unpleasant working conditions caused by poor discipline in schools.

P3 added:

Peer educators are involved in disciplinary issues, for example, when counselling their peers who are shocked by violent incidents, or those who are involved in drug abuse, [or] learner pregnancy. They are not even instructed by teachers or us as school principals to go out and do the counselling. The peer educators work with the peer group trainers and they focus on problems in their schools. Peer educators do not even wait to be called by their peers if there are problems of discipline in the school. Peer educators go to their peers with behaviour problems and counsel them without being invited. As schools we do not involve them but I think they should for part of the school disciplinary committee.

P4 explained:

Peer educators deal with disciplinary issues. They approach learners with behaviour problems and they try to find out why they behave the way they do. Peer educators help their peers to solve the problems if they can and they refer them to other social services if they cannot help them. As a school we take responsibility if the child is abused by colleagues and we make sure they are treated fairly.

He added:

When it comes to discipline we help our teachers not to be looked down upon by learners by punishing the perpetrators. Peer educators, I understand, are trying by all means to make our learners aware of the dangers of bad behaviour. They act, they sing, they do poems. Their messages in all this focus on the consequences of bad behaviour.

Observations were that teachers do not look very happy in their jobs. Respondents were asked to elaborate on their level of involvement in this area.

On the same issue, T1 stated:

Peer educators are not involved in disciplinary hearings. However, when there is a major offence done by a learner, for instance, when a learner has stabbed another learner or has not come to school for a very long time sometimes the learner has been found with dagga at school, it is only the SMT and the senior teachers who deal with this. Peer educators deal with minor cases like advising their peers on the effects of late-coming or absenteeism. Peer educators do not discipline their peers, but they offer advice and alert their teachers of what is happening in the school. The school will then act accordingly.

Teacher 2 responded as follows:

In my school all teachers are responsible for maintaining order and instilling discipline to learners. But in the case where learners have committed serious offences, we involve parents. It becomes the responsibility of the SMT to deal with the case. Peer educators provide some counselling to their peers with minor disciplinary problems. Most of the cases are referred to other social services.

T3 and T4 said almost the same thing and T4 summarised it all:

Peer educators should be involved in the disciplinary committees in the schools, but they are not. For instance, some learners have problem-solving skills, and have an art of showing or guiding how learners should behave in the school premises. They can deal with late-comers. Some learners are also respectable persons in the communities in which they live and are known to many of the learners, so they may not behave badly in their presence.

The social worker had this to say:

We don't really force schools to include peer education clubs into the daily running of the school, but we feel that they can make a major difference to social problems if they are involved in disciplinary committees. Peer educators know the problems of their peers better than their teachers. They can advise the disciplinary committees better than other sources of advice, because they know what is on the ground. We really encourage our peer educators not to expose themselves to violent situations. Instead, they should alert their teachers or peer group trainers of any serious problems in their schools and community at large.

Peer group trainer said:

We have a lot of problems as peer education clubs, in that our clubs are run from outside of the schools. So as peer group trainers we rely more on peer educators and the teachers in the school. Peer educators are not included in the disciplinary committees of schools because they are regarded as an independent association. I still feel that intervention programmes like peer education should be taken more seriously by administrations in the schools, because they have a lot

of information pertaining to their peers. Giving them a say in disciplinary committees would offer very good advice to the administrators in the schools. Some learners have more serious problems than what the teachers can see.

Learners emphasised that they are not part of the school disciplinary committee and they are not consulted in any of the disciplinary problems in the school. They revealed that teachers allow them to talk to their peers and offer advice to the peers. When it comes to the disciplinary committees they do not ask or consult with the peer educators on what they would have found out. They argued that they felt they could make a difference in the disciplinary committees because some of the decisions that disciplinary committees in schools take are not fair to some of their peers.

A learner in FG1 had this to say:

We are not happy about some of the decisions that the disciplinary committee in the school take. They have suspended one learner accusing her of stealing another child's phone. We have discovered that this young boy had been sent by a grade 12 learner who is bullying him. We later on advised our teacher who later on advised the disciplinary committee, but it was too late. The grade 12 learner refused saying that he had not sent the young boy to steal a cell phone.

One learner also added:

Later on, the same boy did the same thing of sending another boy to steal another learner's cell phone. The young boy was seen by a peer educator who asked him why he was not happy. The young boy was clever and reported to the peer educator. The peer educator reported the matter to the administration and the grade 12 learner was suspended. There are many issues which happen in the eyes of peer educators, but the disciplinary committees do not utilise the peer education clubs.

FG2 and FG3 said virtually the same thing.

A learner in FG3 summarised everything:

We are not happy about the way we are treated in schools. We are not recognised as part of the school. We force ourselves into issues discussed in schools. We are not given any chance to air our views in terms of discipline in the school. We know that our peers are undisciplined and some of the problems come from their backgrounds.

Teachers do not have some of the information that we have, because we live in the same community with our peers.

The DC also added:

Peer educators are not there in schools for window dressing. I am surprised by some schools which when we send our peer group trainers they do not want them in the school. They see peer education clubs as useless and a waste of time for tuition. They forget that learners do not do well in class when they have problems at home.

4.10.2 Time

Time tables create a sense of order to each and every school, since everyone knows the programme of the day and follows it strictly. This ranges from going to classes and break time. The researcher observed that there are three important timetables that each school has drawn; the master timetable, timetable for each class group and also the educators' timetable. There are also other timetables like the invigilation timetable, examination timetable, supervision timetable and others, but in none of the timetables are peer education clubs given a slot. Findings revealed that peer education is taken as an extra-curricular activity, where learners and the teachers responsible have to create their own time to address learners with behaviour problems. For this reason, most learners complained about lack of time to talk to their peers. Asked about how they create time to address social issues in schools peer educators said that they were struggling to perform their roles in addressing social and emotional learning in schools. They all complained about lack of time.

A learner in FG1 had this to say:

Yu, mam, we have a lot of problems in terms of time to perform our duties. We are not there on the timetable which means we have to find spare time to talk to our peers or visit the orphanages or old people's homes. We are mainly worried about this because at times we spend a whole week without talking to any client (peer). Just imagine how much damage would have happened to our fellow

students. We are supposed to find our own time to do counselling, community service as well as visiting the disadvantaged people in the community.

A learner in FG2 added:

We do not have much time to move from one place to another because we have to do everything on one day when we meet on Tuesday. We force ourselves into classrooms during study and talk to our peers on general issues which we can talk about in public. We cannot discuss anything private during this time because we should observe the confidentiality rule.

A learner in FG3 supported:

Our peers don't come forward with their problems once they discover that there is no secrecy and confidentiality in the discussions. We barely have time to meet regularly with our peers in privacy; hence we do not perform our duties well. Whenever we have time to meet our peers the teachers usually ask us to pick up some papers or water the flower beds.

A learner in FG4 stated:

Most of the time we are told to assist with fundraising and we barely have time to talk to our peers about the problems which they have. Last week we were busy with tree planting and our teacher invited the social workers, district coordinator and the peer group trainer. Most learners did not attend this ceremony because it was in the afternoon and most of the learners had gone home. I do not know how we can manage our schoolwork together with extra work in peer education. I like the club so much that I cannot find myself in any other club but the issue of time worries me a lot.

T1 had this to say:

Peer educators meet every Tuesday afternoon. Tuesday alone cannot give them enough time to talk to their peers. We usually rely on peer educators for cleaning the school yard as well as watering of our flower garden.

T2 concurred:

Peer educators are ever busy with school activities. We rely on peer educators in many things. We have discovered that learners in peer education clubs are very obedient and whenever you want your work to be well done, and then you better give the it to peer educators. The learners in this club are very cooperative and are willing to work. So even when we have visitors in the school the peer educators help us with catering and cleaning of the rooms. We can see that they are actually telling the truth to say they do not have enough time to address their peers on social problems.

T3 added:

It is true that peer educators need a lot of time to deal with pastoral issues in the school. We have tried to give them two days per week, but still it is not easy to work during lunch, break or after lunch when school is on. It is now a norm in the school that learners do not stay for study during the afternoon. Instead, they dismiss early. Peer educators then utilise sports days when they go around in the sports fields talking to peers. This is not welcomed by most learners who see this as disturbing since some would be busy watching games. So, ma'm, the time factor is a challenge in this club.

T4 explained:

I think we should be clear about intervention programmes like peer education, because they are not part of the curriculum. Putting them on the school timetable would cause confusion because they are as good as an extracurricular activity. I must however admit that the time factor is a problem even for us as teachers, because we have to go and teach and later on organize for the extracurricular activities.

Peer group trainer:

We hardly get the time to discuss all issues. When training the peer educators they miss out school for five days and we go out and camp in some places as a district. We mainly rely on nongovernmental organisations for training so they schedule these sessions as they wish. I hardly get enough time with peer educators in all the schools. When I get there at times I find out that there are other activities that they will be doing in the afternoon. This alone is a problem in that we do not do all the activities as per plan.

4.10.3 Sustainability

Findings revealed that peer education clubs have different members each year. Peer education in schools under study is made up of grade 8-11 learners. Grade 12 learners are not allowed to join the club because they are preparing for their matric examinations. Teachers revealed that they were not happy about the way learners join the clubs. Child Welfare South Africa needs only 10 learners for training per school. This, however, means that if more and more learners were to be trained, the school is forced to send different learners for training each year. As a result of this,

learners who were trained previously think that their term is over. Observations revealed that in all the meetings held in schools by the different clubs there were few old peer educators. The numbers remained low in all the clubs, meaning that old members do not continue in the clubs. Peer educators had this to say:

One learner in FG1 explained:

We are only 10 in our group. I don't remember having any old members in the group. We are all new members and our teacher told us that next year new members will be trained. We are not supposed to drop out, but the reason why people end up dropping out is that they are not invited even in meetings. We are supposed to continue working as peer educators, that much we know, but we do not have the chance to get new information.

A learner in FG2 stated:

We have very few numbers in the club, yet the enrolment in the school is very high. We are not in a position to address all the social problems in the school. We are remaining with few senior members in the club, yet it is this age group which needs a lot of counselling. We, as junior members, we cannot approach the older children and address them on behaviour problems. So it was going to be better if we were many and if we had some senior members who could address the older learners on social issues like drug abuse, learner pregnancy, [and] violence, since they are the ones who mainly engage themselves in these behaviour problems.

One learner in FG3 also added:

It is in peer education clubs that we have learnt how to address some behaviour problems in our school. The problem is that we are in the club just for one year and the coming year we are supposed to give a chance to others. It is the Department of Education in collaboration with Child Welfare South Africa and MTN which requires only ten learners per school per year. Learners are supposed to continue with their peer education even when they leave school, or even when they leave the club, but it seems as if people tell themselves that they are supposed to be in the clubs for them to be called peer educators.

A learner in FG4 explained:

I think peer education should take a further step and let peer educators be aware that they do not leave the club even if they go out of school. It is a misconception that one is a peer educator only when they are at school. Peer educators should be aware that they are supposed to do perform their roles even after they leave school in their communities.

T1 explained:

Peer educators do not last long in the clubs. Some of our learners just excuse themselves once they get to grade 11. I think this is because there is a lot of commitment that is needed when you are to deal with people's emotions. It is not easy to influence others by either your behaviour or by talking to them. So our learners shun this commitment; hence they decide to drop out.

T2 added:

We have new learners each year. It is of course the department's requirements that 10 learners per school per year are trained. So our learners lose interest once they leave the club. It is worse when they leave the school. A lot of awareness campaigns need to be done so that learners are aware that they remain peer educators even when they leave school.

T3 Explained:

When peer education came into our school I thought it was just like any other club in the school, only to find out that there are different principles that are followed by this club. The Department of Education needs only 10 learners to be trained as peer educators per year. It is amazing that of these 10 peer educators one is expected to influence or address at least 50 learners in their schools. This is, however, too much for adolescents who also have their own problems.

T3 & T4 echoed exactly the same sentiments. They argued that if peer education is to be sustainable, then the Department of Education should revisit the number of peer educators who need to be trained per year. 10 is too small a number considering that there are a lot of social issues experienced in schools.

The District Coordinator also supported:

It is not our will that peer educators drop out of the club every year. We expect the peer education clubs continue to grow, but schools seem not to understand how it is supposed to be done. Learners should continue to work with the clubs even after their secondary education. It should be the same learners who should work as peer group trainers even after they leave school, because they have the experience, unlike having new recruits every year.

Social Worker highlighted:

Peer educators need a lot of determination to become peer educators. There is hardly time to perform their role freely. As a result of this, peer educators may find this demanding such that given a chance they might find themselves not performing their duties once they leave school.

4.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher clarified a number of issues including school profiles, biographical data and responses, professional qualifications for school principals and teachers, gender representation, objectives of peer-education programmes in schools, the role of peer education clubs in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools.

Also covered were the topical issues in these associations such as: poverty, orphanage, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse and human rights and how they impact on teaching and learning in schools. The researcher presented this data precisely as given by the respondents during interviews and further attempted to explore and bring to light the views and feelings of the respondents on the role of peer educators in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools.

During these interviews, the researcher made it a point that personal beliefs and values on the subject under study did not influence the participants' responses. In order to ensure that the voices of the participants were heard, the researcher adopted the style of quoting the actual words as they were uttered by the participants. Data was collected through the use of interviews, club activities observations, and analysis of documents such as minute's books and PEMs. Also, tables were used to highlight such things as professional qualifications for principals, teachers, and number of learners in each peer-education club at each of the four schools as well as teaching experience of teachers who are responsible for these clubs. Member checking was also done to ensure that trustworthiness was achieved.

5 CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 4 analysed and presented findings from the data collected with respect to the main research questions. This chapter discusses the main findings of the study and analyses the main themes, validating them against what other scholars have found on the same issues. For the study the main findings were the role of peer educators, objectives of peer educators, issues discussed in peer educators, the link of issues discussed in peer educators to learning and challenges of peer educator clubs in enhancing learning. However, although the purpose of this research did not include the biographical data of the respondents, the composition of the biographical data tells a very interesting story that the researcher saw fit to discuss. The biographical data includes qualifications, education qualification and the gender and age of the respondents.

5.2 Biographical Data of Respondents

The gender and age of teachers, peer educators and principals will be discussed below.

5.2.1 Gender of teachers, principals and peer educators

The findings of this study revealed that the majority of the LO teachers who were in charge of peer educator clubs were females and only one was male. According to HEAIDS (2009), the main reason could be that Life Orientation was feminised, or associated with attributes such as care and empathy, which were seen as embodied in women teachers. In Fort Beaufort District analysis of the EMIS (2011) statistics revealed that the teaching force in schools is mainly made up of females. Most of the respondents in a related report carried out in South Africa by Deutch

and Swartz, (2002), females make better peer educators than males, given the kinds of caring roles that females may have been used to playing outside the school and in family environments. This study also discovered that there are more female than male teachers. In a similar study, Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, Schellinger (in press) draws attention to the current status of the teaching force: how it is changing; and how it may need to change to meet new demands. His analysis suggests that, relative to the labour force as a whole, those employed as teachers tend to be women. The study's findings revealed that male life orientation teachers are not usually taken seriously, owing to societal perceptions which regard this subject as being a female's domain (HEAIDS, 2009).

Out of the four principals who were interviewed, only one was a female. Findings in this study agree with similar studies carried out by Olorunsola & Olayemi (2000) quoted in Zins et al (2003) , which revealed that male teachers are more involved in managerial positions than their female counterparts.

The study found that in comparison to the demographic profile of the school pupils, there is a marked over-representation of girls as peer educators. Boys, particularly those in senior grades are evidently underrepresented among peer educators (HEAIDS, 2009). This contradicts with Bandura's social learning theory which states that people learn indirectly by observing and modeling on others whom the person identifies (for example how young people see their peers behaving). In this case the clubs have the majority of learners being girls hence boys have few role models in the peer education clubs. More so according to Deutch and Swartz (2002) social learning therefore suggests that peer education clubs should include interactive experimental learning activities. From the findings it might be difficult for the female peer educators to talk freely to their male counterparts hence the need to motivate boys so that they join the club in large numbers. The over-representation of girls in peer education clubs represents an additional burden on girls who carry out peer education as an essentially voluntary activity.

5.2.2 Teachers' Age and Experience

The research established that teaching experience and expertise in all four schools under study was not one of the major factors for one to be a peer education mentor because LO teachers in schools were taken as peer mentors automatically without undergoing any training. This is contrary to what Miske (2005) postulate that expertise and experience must be considered in deciding who should lead peer education clubs. This is a reasonable idea, because someone who is experienced has cases to refer to during counselling sessions and knows what can be expected from certain situations with those being mentored. This confirms Fullarton (2002)'s findings that teachers and learners with the most experience are put in strategic boards that are fundamental to running the school so that their experience works for the benefit of the school.

5.3 Objectives of the Peer Education Clubs

The study's findings revealed that peer education clubs were made up of learners between the ages 15 to 19 years. This confirms Wolf, Tawfik and Bond's social network theory, as cited in Deutsch and Swartz (2002), who concluded that youth who believe that peer educators tend to reach people similar to themselves, particularly with respect to sex, age, education, marital status, religion and ethnicity. This therefore means that to reach specific populations it is important to recruit peer educators who come from the target population. Thus, for one to achieve the objectives it is crucial to increase the number of peer educators who attend school so that they can also reach youth who also attend school. To reach out-of-school youth then it is necessary to recruit out- of-school peer educators to keep pace with increasing social problems being experienced in schools. Williams (undated) goes on to say that sharing a conversation on HIV and AIDS with people of the same age or social group makes for a relaxed learning environment. Young people feel free to

ask questions to their peers on 'taboo' subjects, such as sex and men who have sex with men (MSM) and are able to discuss without the fear of being judged and labelled.

The peer education clubs' objectives were found to be similar to those outlined in the various documents on peer education, for example, the Peer Education Manuals from the department. The International Federation of Red Cross Society (IFRCS) (2009) states that, overall, the objectives of any peer education programme, using a behaviour change approach, should be to promote safer practices in relation to HIV, drug abuse, violence, learner pregnancy amongst the target populations. This is in agreement with the diffusion of innovations theory which argues that social influence plays an important role in behaviour change. The key element of the theory is the role of opinion leaders in a community acting as agents for behaviour change (Deutch and Swartz, 2002). Their influence on group norms or customs is predominantly seen as a result of person to person exchanges and discussions. This therefore means that the selected peer educators should be trustworthy since their role in outreach work is very important.

All the peer education clubs revealed that one of their major objectives is that of advocacy, within and outside their schools, with school 2 revealing that the club uses the school's quarterly magazines to share information pertaining to HIV and AIDS and other social problems like drug abuse, teenage pregnancy and violence. This is in line with the communication of innovations theory which states that innovation (behaviour change) is influenced by the characteristic of innovation (problem at hand) and the characteristics of change agents (peer educators) (Deutch and Swartz, 2002). This therefore means that peers seek leaders like peer educators who will influence them because they feel that they are more competent than themselves (peers) (Lave and Wenger 1991). There are similarities here with social learning theory in the claim that peers are influential because of their credibility through their status and competence. Thus the IFRCS (2009), states that

one of the major objectives of peer education clubs is to offer adequate training to peer educators and ensure that they are equipped with social skills which they will in turn pass on to their peers.

While all the schools acknowledged the need for adequate training for peer educators and regular supervision of their activities, they all expressed the aspect of limited resources that only allowed them to train peer educators only in three days. All the clubs admitted to the fact that three days are not enough for peer educators' training, as the limited number of days only produces inadequately trained products. The social inoculation theory is based on the belief that young people lack the negotiation skills to resist unhealthy behaviour arising from peer pressure and other influences (Deutch and Swartz, 2002). This therefore means that there is great need to train peer educators so that they are in a position to perform their roles effectively.

5.4 Selection of Peer Educators

In this study, the researcher first sought to find out what kind of learners were involved in peer education clubs and how they were being selected into these clubs. The findings were that some learners did not voluntarily join these clubs; instead, they were being selected by their mentors (teachers) to join these clubs. This is somewhat different from what peer education originally was. The manuals somewhat contradict with Deutsch and Swartz (2002), who claim that peer educators have to be essentially volunteers so that they fulfil their commitment to their roles in the clubs.

According to Crossier et al (2010), theories of diffusion suggest that change is initiated by a few key people in a group who are trusted, liked and whose views are valued by others. Others copy their actions. Peer educators are often selected because they have this potential to positively influence their peers. By communicating healthy messages regarding social behaviour, peer educators may

be effective. The study revealed that most schools tried to a large extent to apply this diffusion theory, as most of the peer educators are chosen on the basis of discipline. They then become role models, and effectively communicate healthy messages regarding positive social behaviour among their peers both within and outside the school environments. The study also revealed that most of the peer educators are natural opinion leaders, who are regarded as credible and trustworthy sources of information amongst their peers and the whole school in general. Some of these peer educators had a status that increases their influence and their popularity gives them access to wide social networks, which is essential for their roles (Kindiki 2009).

5.5 Activities carried out by peer education clubs

Findings revealed that learners in peer education clubs took the role of teachers and they were trained as leaders in their associations. Also noted was the fact that although peer activities, such as those involving HIV/AIDS were being administered in schools, club members were extending their educational role to the local communities surrounding their respective schools. This is in line with their roles as outlined in the DoE (2009), PEM (2009) and in Deutsch and Swartz (2002), which are: educators, role models, supporters, referral agents and advocates. The study revealed that at most of the schools, the clubs were not concentrating on their core business of teaching, and addressing their peers on issues to do with behaviour change.

What came out clearly was that peer educators go out on outreach programmes where they stage awareness campaigns on HIV/AIDS, drug abuse and violence. The social network theory attempts to define who people are in contact with and over which issues (Deutsch and Swartz, 2002). It is therefore important for peer educators to look at factors like sex, age, education, marital status and religion before reaching them (peers) in order to give them relevant information. This is also

crucial in that to reach a specific target population it is important to send peer educators who come from the target population. This is in agreement with the findings in that peer educators in the school are sons and daughters of the communities in which they live (Rudduck, 2004). They know the culture in their communities and they go to people and areas which they know in terms of problems experienced. However scholars like Crouch, (2003) cited in HEAIDS , (2010) argue that peer educators are mostly concentrating on fundraising money to buy food stuffs for the needy for example HIV/AIDS patients and to orphanages in their local communities at the expense of counselling sessions with peers in the schools. This might be because of cultures within communities (Pearlman 2002). The African culture advocates for the spirit of ubuntu, hence these peer educators feel that they are supposed to share what they have with their peers who are in need. This might be reason they supply the old people's homes and orphanages with goodies.

All the focus groups expressed the need to have peer education activities to be put on official school timetables, as at the time of writing they have to create their own time to perform their roles, which goes back to the importance of selection. Only volunteers would be able to find this extra time to carry out these duties (Turner and Shepherd (1999). Hence it is crucial to team peer educators in schools with other youth in their local communities.

What this study also revealed is that in some schools, peer education activities are being conducted at a very low level, owing to this shortage of time. Advocacy activities are however found to be carried out at a limited level at all the schools owing to lack of resources and time factors. This is in line with Norton and Mutonyi (2007) who advocate for the provision of resource materials to peer education clubs in order to minimise potential challenges. These resources include the following: internet facilities to enable peer educators to carry out research, charts to make posters, regular magazines with updated topical issues, for example, on HIV/AIDS, and booklets.

The study also revealed that other roles, like advocacy work within the schools to reduce stigma and discrimination against those learners living with HIV are hampered by lack of time. Although some peer education clubs revealed that they carry out activities which stimulate dialogue and discussions on vulnerability risk behaviours, risk settings and local solutions, these are limited by lack of time. However, while referral agents' activities are also said to be taking place in these clubs, the study revealed that it was the teachers, not peer educators who are taking active roles in communicating with the different social services organisations (police, Correctional Services, Social Welfare, NGOs, etc.). Teachers are not peer educators per se, thus when they assume peer educator roles, as in this case, it is a sign that peer education clubs only exist as tokenism (Arnstein, 2006), hence behavioural problems in schools persist.

The study once again revealed that most clubs are carrying out activities that promote community services that is build empathy. These activities include supplying food stuffs to orphanages and old people's homes as well as conducting cleaning sessions at these institutions. Elias (2006) argues that community service plays an essential role in fostering generalization of Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) skills, particularly in building empathy. Properly conducted community service activities, which begin at the earliest level of schooling and continues throughout all subsequent years, provides an opportunity for children to learn life skills, integrate them, apply them, reflect on them and demonstrate them. He further argues that this process solidifies their learning and also provides a climate in which others are more likely to engage in community services. Service experiences usually help students to encounter other people, ideas, and circumstances in ways that broaden their sense of perspective and build an empathic understanding and caring connections to the world around them (Elias,2006).The study found out that the peer educators who are active in the sourcing and distribution of cash and food stuffs to the less privileged have been provided with an opportunity to nourish a universal need to be generous and contributing members of the important associations to which they belong. This has been found to be critical in that it

prepares learners for their eventual roles in the larger society, as well as work and family set-ups of which they will be part of, when they eventually leave school. According to Norton and Mutonyi (2007), peer education associations should carry out peer education and be a forum for affected students to share their experiences with peers. The study revealed that there is little use of innovative peer education methods in all the four schools, which include dramas, popular culture and community outreach, all which have great appeal to youth, and also provide unique opportunities for female learners to raise gender issues and at the same time develop leadership skills. On community outreach, Campbell and McPhail (2002) point out that positive community relations are important in providing contexts that will support health-enhancing behaviour change and that the neighbourhood often function as an extended family, in which many people help one another in times of crisis. Besides, the involvement of learners in the wider community activities has an effect which increases levels of trust, civic participation and positive local identity, which all are supportive of positive behaviour change.

5.6 Linking PE clubs to SEL

According to Elias (2006), schools worldwide must give children intellectual and practical tools they can bring to their classrooms, families and communities. SEL provides many of these tools. It is a way of teaching and organizing classrooms and schools that helps children learn a set of skills needed to successfully manage life tasks such as learning, forming relationships, communicating effectively, being sensitive to others' needs, and getting along with others. When schools implement high-quality SEL programmes and approaches effectively, academic achievement of children increases, incidences of problem behaviours decrease, the relationships that surround each child are improved, and the climate of classrooms and schools changes for the better. This study revealed a somewhat different school environment which makes it difficult for schools to achieve Elias's ideal world cited

above. The peer education clubs are not really functional, due to a number of challenges which include among others, non-availability of time to perform peer education activities, and lack of adequate training on the part of peer educators. This has resulted in the academic side of the school lacking improvement as behavioural problems are making it difficult for school administrators to control learners.

The study revealed that peer educators have no adequate time to sit down with their peers to discuss and address social issues that affect their learning, such as drug abuse, bullying, violence and teenage pregnancy, as should be the case. The clubs are not vibrant, also stemming from the fact that some members of these clubs did not voluntarily join them, but were just selected into these clubs by their teachers, hence there is nothing meaningful taking place as far as improving the learning environment through their mandated roles goes.

According to Kriete and Betchel (2002), as cited in Elias (2006), there is abundant research in support of the idea that students are most responsive academically to classrooms and schools that are not threatening to students and challenge them to learn more, but do so in ways that do not discourage them. Also, these schools are places where students feel cared about, welcomed, valued, and seen as more than just learners, but they are seen as resources. The study revealed that, peer education associations, whose role is to give explicit, developmentally sensitive instructions in the prevention of specific problems, such as smoking, drug use, alcohol, pregnancy, violence and bullying to their peers are mostly incapacitated, while in some clubs, this is being done at insignificant levels. As a result, this has affected negatively on the learning processes in schools.

This study also revealed that Social-Emotional Learning is a still relatively new area to many educators, and that there is little regard to the importance of peer education activities as an aid to learners' academic improvement. Elias (2006) also

notes this deficiency on the part of educators' knowledge and advocates for teacher training in SEL. Effective academic and social-emotional instruction benefits from well-planned professional development for school personnel; especially helpful is a system of support during the initial period of implementation. The kinds of professional development activities that are beneficial include training staff in children's social-emotional development.

Thus this study also revealed that learning activities are suffering because teachers lack an understanding of how to deal with learners' emotional problems, or the schools do not provide adequate time for them to be addressed at peer level.

5.7 Challenges

The main challenges, this study revealed, were club settings, time, the fact that PE participants are mixed in terms of gender, adult intervention, the need for training, and the non-cooperation of other stakeholders.

5.7.1 Club Settings

Observations of the workshops and meetings revealed that there are challenges in some settings. The peer educators will have little or no choice about where they will carry out their discussions. All sessions attended in the schools were attended in classrooms, making it difficult for some peers with problems to come up and present their problems in such a public place. There were no special rooms used for counselling in all the schools under study. It is the teachers who had offices, and not peer educators, yet there is need for confidentiality when discussing personal issues with peers. In some settings young people may find it very difficult to be open and honest about their sexual health needs. In response, peer educators will

need to engage with them in less direct and less personal ways (Crossier et al. 2010). Crossier et al (2010) adds that peer educators should negotiate to obtain the best conditions under which to deliver their work, for example, by ensuring that they have sufficient time for discussion of issues raised during a session and the best available space. The study revealed similar findings, whereby peer educators expressed the need for confidential places to conduct their activities, particularly when they discuss sensitive issues. Concerns have been raised by some education stakeholders as to the effectiveness of peer education clubs, as they have failed to enhance social learning in schools, thus they are failing on their roles to address social problems in schools.

5.7.2 Time

Findings revealed that peer educators in all the four schools had to create their own time, as all focus groups complained that they had difficulties in conducting their duties since they needed more contact time with their peers who have problems. Break time and lunch time was not enough. Some used sports days but they said they end up being unpopular because some learners want to relax during this time and asking them to have discussions with them would be a great disadvantage. So some issues were said to be left hanging. International Planned Parenthood Federation, (IPPF, 1999) in Bleeker (2001) found the same challenges and revealed that most of the Peer Education Programmes were constrained by lack of sufficient time to promote long-lasting behavioural changes and full implementation of the projects due to the current donor imposed time limits that suppress implementation. There is also a lack of sufficient time for material development to ensure that Peer Education go into the field with sufficient material. This has resulted in questions being raised by stakeholders about the effectiveness of these peer education clubs in schools, as they have failed to effectively deal with social problems in a way that should have enhanced social learning.

Crossier et al (2010) argue that it is important to secure enough time in order for a peer education intervention to be coherent and useful. There is no clear research evidence for what constitutes an appropriate period over which a peer education session should run, but research on school-based peer education suggests that to be effective, programmes need to last a sufficient length of time (i.e. more than just a few hours). In their study Crossier et al (2010) aver that most peer educators and teachers admitted those peer education sessions which ran for less than an hour did not aid the cause of the clubs. They go on to say that once off sessions may be appropriate if there is a simple message to be communicated, for example, if the sole aim is to promote a local service, but a single session will usually be insufficient to incorporate discussion of all the issues that will have been raised. Hence, peer education clubs which are supposed to enhance social learning have not managed to do so because as evidenced by concerns raised by other stakeholders, schools, and media etc. that the clubs are not effectively functioning as they are supposed to be addressing these issues.

5.7.3 *Mixed Gender Groups*

Findings revealed that there are mixed gender groups in schools under study. Sessions which the researcher attended were all comprised of mixed gender groups. Crossier et al (2010) argued that group discussions with single gender groups are likely to yield different responses from discussions with mixed gender groups. Some young people feel more comfortable in single gender environments when discussing sensitive issues, while others feel that mixed gender groups tend to lead to more mature and reflective discussion. Mixed sessions provide opportunities to learn about and rehearse interactions with the other gender. The International Planned Parenthood Federation, (IPPF, 1999) in Bleeker (2001) revealed that there is no evidence that peer education approaches are more or less

successful when conducted with single gender. Peer education clubs which are supposed to enhance social learning have not managed to do so as evidenced by the growing number of concerns raised by stakeholders, schools, media who are questioning the effectiveness of these clubs, when social problems keeps increasing.

5.7.4 Adult Presence

Firstly, Peer Education sits uncomfortably at the intersection of cultural domains, between the professional cultures of health and education and the peer cultures of young people who are the intended recipients (Frankenham, 1998). Observations revealed that some learners were not open enough during discussions where adults were part of the forum. In groups outside the classroom, some learners were very outspoken but when they went back into the room for feedback, some did not say it as they would have initially discussed outside. Crossier et al (2010) averred that projects need to consider the role that adults should play during peer interventions. Adults could remain in the session to offer assistance if needed and or for health and safety reasons. Without them, the peer educators may find managing a group challenging. However, their presence may lessen young people's willingness to be open and may detract from young people having control over the intervention. This may emanate from an underlying position where adults decide what is good for young people and what is not (Frankenham, 1998). Hence peer education clubs which are supposed to enhance social learning by addressing social ills in schools have not managed to do so as evidenced by concerns raised by stakeholders, schools, media etc. about the increasing number of these social problems in schools, which is a sign that the clubs are not functioning well.

Similarly, findings revealed that selection of peer educators is done by teachers. This is similar to findings by Campbell and McPhail (2002) in a research study carried out in Summerton, South Africa, when a peer education club ended up disbanding because teachers had assumed more control of its activities as well as their insistence that peer educators be chosen by them. While the Peer Education Manual also subscribes to the notion that peer educators be chosen by teachers, there is a high likelihood that some peer educators will be forced to join the clubs, while it is also true that there is a likelihood of others who will not be chosen but being willing to join the clubs. This scenario has the potential to affect sustainability of peer education clubs since some learners may decide to leave at any time, thereby posing a challenge of cases which are supposed to be tackled such as drug abuse, violence, learner pregnancy and HIV and AIDS thus the role of peer education in enhancing learning is hampered.

5.5.7 Training

Findings revealed that training of peer educators takes a maximum of five days and respondents revealed that it was not enough for someone to have skills to deal with human behaviour. Another key challenge is training of both peer educators and the technical /supervisory staff due to inadequate funds to provide continuing education (refresher training) and updated information for peer educators as well as well as training sessions for new peer educators as old educators graduate or move away from the programme area. The low educational levels of peer educators or peer group trainers warrants additional training that is often not carried out (IPPF, 1999) quoted in Bleeker (2001).

This in turn requires that peer education training needs to be more practical and participatory in nature, with a structured curricula and support materials. The nature of training given to peer educators in the four schools is abstract. They are trained in hotels with flip charts but when they go to the community they find a totally

different scenario (HEIDS ,2010). They are therefore unable to fully put into practice what they have been taught for they don't have the teaching aids for demonstration and materials to distribute. The training methods are not participatory and communication skills-building to sustain the motivation of peer educators, as well as in topics such as care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS, data collection, and training of trainers for technical/supervisory staff are insufficient (IPPF,1999 cited in Bleeker 2001) . Supervisory/technical staff in peer education lack education on the attitudes, knowledge and practices of the peer educators. Peer education implies a philosophical vision in terms of respect for the population and trying to see things from their cultural perspective, in our case from the lens of the poor and marginalized individual who lives in a society laden with issues of violence and dependence. This process often raises issues of race, gender, and class (UNAIDS ,2001).

Peer Education is a high maintenance intervention strategy requiring high-quality coordination, leadership, and supervision to facilitate follow-up and supervision Campbell and Mzaidume (2002). This relies heavily on part-time coordinators, social workers, to train the technical/ supervisory staff. Expansion of Peer education programmes from the local to the regional or to national level has also been identified as one catastrophe in South Africa. This is due to poor policy implementation, as well as lack of financial and political backing of local government in order to make such a transition more feasible (Kirby, 2006).

Selection of Peer educators who are mutually acceptable to programme organizers and community members poses a bigger problem because it's difficult to assess peer educators' skills and talents so that they might better utilize peer educators in dealing with the diversity of educational levels and backgrounds within a given population. It is also difficult to find Peer Educators with a minimum education requirement and skills background that are readily available and willing to work as volunteers (Kirby, 2006). It is therefore partly because of this background that the

effectiveness of these peer education clubs has been questioned by some stakeholders, like the media, for failing to enhance social learning in schools, making it necessary for such things like training to be re-visited.

5.7.5 Non-Cooperation of other Stakeholders

According to UNICEF, (2000) argue that stakeholders and/or interest groups such as police, organized crime, teachers, and/or industry managers create obstacles to programme implementation since they sometimes see it not very necessary to be called into the programmes for lectures. This is due to the inability of peer educators to convince the stakeholders to accept the process and foresee the long run advantages of the peer education activities. Some peer educators also become frustrated by working with government agencies due to ill-defined or non-existent policies regarding the target population as well as bureaucracy and/or lack of government funding for the programmes (Kirby, 2006).

This also poses challenges of developing a rapport both with community and stakeholders to facilitate the effective implementation and acceptance of programme activities. Therefore stakeholders can be involved in programmes from the onset so that they do not sabotage its implementation thereby integrate their needs and priorities as well as capitalize on their potential financial, human resource and workspace contributions to the project.

Kirby, (2006) Further states that stakeholders can therefore partner the target population and implementing agency in ownership of the programme through involvement and negotiations with stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental actors and institutions) in consultation agendas. Hence peer education clubs which are supposed to enhance social learning have not managed to do so resulting in concerns being raised by participants that despite the fact that the clubs are functioning, they have failed to address those issues. This is a clear

sign that these clubs are not functioning well, hence the need for a stronger all-stakeholders' approach to the social problems bedeviling schools.

5.7.6 Summary

This chapter discussed the findings of the study. The data was grouped according to themes found in chapter 4. The findings show that peer education clubs are intervention strategies meant to enhance social and emotional learning of learners in schools in order to enhance academic performance of learners. However peer education clubs are failing to fulfill their roles because of limited time, lack of proper training and shortage of resources. The findings also revealed that some teachers also lack the expertise on how to run these clubs. The findings also provide valuable preliminary information about the role of peer education in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools.

The next chapter provides a summary of the study, the major conclusions, that were drawn from the study as well as some recommendations that could be adopted by policymakers in an effort to address the problems facing the role of peer educators in enhancing social emotional learning.

6 CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The major purpose of the study was to investigate the role of peer education in enhancing social-emotional learning in schools. The summary of findings is organized around the themes that were abstracted from the research questions, namely: objectives of peer education, role of peer education, theories that guide peer education, activities carried out in peer education clubs and challenges.

6.2 Summary of Key Ideas

6.2.1 Role of Peer Education

Peer education's role is to developing a group's basic skills to bring about better understanding, academic progress or to teach about health life-styles and choices, for example, around sex and relationships or drugs (Blacker, 2007). Findings revealed that peer educators were responsible for social-emotional learning in schools, and it has the following main four roles to play:

- i. Educating
- ii. Recognition and Referral (Recognizing problems and then referring them to relevant experts, e.g. Police, social welfare, health departments)
- iii. Role Modelling
- iv. Informal Influences

Findings also revealed that peer education plays an important role of educating their peers on life skills, for example, the negative effects of drug abuse, learner pregnancy, and violence. In order to achieve this, peer educators use various

strategies to convey this education to peers. Some of these strategies include; awareness campaigns, outreach programmes, role play, advocacy, and role modelling. Participants revealed that issues that are discussed in these peer education clubs do enhance learning in that learners do gain life-skills which boost their self-esteem, improved informed decision making.

6.2.2 Role of Teachers in Peer Education

Teachers play a critical role in peer education in that they are the school mentors of the programme. They are responsible for the selection of peer educators into these clubs and they supervise activities. In addition to these roles, teachers are also the final decision makers in these clubs when there arise a need to refer certain cases to external experts. They are the clubs' resource persons and the link between the Department of Education and the school and also between the school and peer educators. However, the study revealed that the role of selecting peer educators into these clubs is one of the main problems that is affecting these clubs' sustainability and effectiveness of these clubs. The Manual on Peer Education stresses the need for peer educators to be volunteers so that they can give full commitment to the clubs' causes. Their supervisory role has also been accused of tending to be over- controlling the clubs. Peer educators need ownership of the association as is prescribed in the manual (DoE, 2009).

6.2.3 Activities Carried In Peer Education Clubs

The study revealed that some of the activities carried out in peer education clubs include among others: educational approach, outreach approach, diffusion approach, and community based approach.

- **Educational Approach** – This is the form of approach used widely in schools and it usually involves the presentation of information in a formal setting, usually a school or Youth Club. Activities may include developing

and presenting school assemblies, devising role-plays and facilitating discussions with whole classes and small groups. The educational approach also provides age appropriate Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), and tackles issues of self-esteem, communication and negotiation skills.

- **Outreach Approach** – The findings revealed that this intervention is tailored closely to the characteristics of the target group and takes place in settings where they congregate, for example, shopping centres, and bars. According to Crossier et al. (2010), while they may be formal instructive elements, outreach programmes are more likely to involve discussions and information sharing. They may be the same age, from the same ethnic group, speak a common language or share the same sexual orientation.
- **Diffusion Approach** – The study revealed that the approach focuses on influencing opinions and beliefs through informal interactions that take place within young people’s networks. This involves the use of natural opinion leaders who are regarded as credible and trustworthy sources of information.
- **Community-Based Approach** – Findings revealed that peer educators are typically involved in the development and implementation of projects that aim to develop a coalition of organizations or representatives within a community to address an issue.

6.2.4 How Peer Education Promote Social-Emotional Learning

The study revealed that peer education programmes have the potential to increase knowledge and have a positive impact on attitudes, intentions and self-efficacy (Crossier et al. 2010; Bernard 1990). Behavioural interventions through peer education programmes can translate into increased academic achievement. When

learners' emotional problems are attended to, it promotes a conducive classroom environment, leading to learners' success.

6.3 Challenges Faced By Peer Clubs

The study revealed that peer education clubs face a number of challenges which include among others; time, training, non-cooperation of other stakeholders, adult presence, mixed gender groups, length of intervention, limitations of the settings and sustainability.

6.3.1 Training

The study revealed that one of the major challenges being faced by peer education clubs is that of lack of adequate training on both the teachers and peer educators. Peer educators are trained for five days, and this has been viewed by stakeholders as inadequate period of training. Also, it imaged that teachers also lack the pre-quisite training to supervise peer education clubs.

6.3.2 Limitations of the Settings

The study revealed that the other challenge involve the issue of limited space to discuss the private and confidential issues which has resulted in some learners not being open or have such issues being discussed in public. One peer educator said they have resorted to meeting peers at sports fields to discuss their issues. At all the four schools, there are no allocated rooms for peer education activities, thus the issue of confidentiality is not being prioritized in schools (Butler; Wharton –Fields, Ferber and Pittman (1999).

6.3.3 Sustainability

During the study, it emerged that some of these peer education clubs do not last for longer periods because of alleged over-control of clubs by teachers. Peer educators view this as interference on their core responsibilities, thus they end up giving up. In most of the clubs, peer educators will only be in present in these clubs but not participating.

6.3.4 Mixed Gender Groups

Due to the fact that these clubs are made up of mixed learners, it emerged during the study that it poses challenges to peer educators to discuss certain issues, owing to culture.

6.3.5 Length of Interventions

The study found out that there are no official time tables allocated to peer education club activities, hence, peer educators have to find their personal free times to attend to their roles. They mostly do this during break and lunch times, and the time is hardly enough to conduct such important activities which have a bearing on the school's academic achievement. Length of intervention is thus short.

6.3.6 Adult Presence

The study also revealed that youth do not feel free to discuss certain issues that are regarded as taboo by adults in the presence of adults, for example, teachers. This result in some problems remain unsolved as they cannot be tabled for discussion.

6.3.7 Non-Cooperation of other Stakeholders

The study also revealed that peer educators find challenges in getting cooperation from other stakeholders, like the police, correctional services, justice department, health and social welfare when they do not see the importance of visiting schools to offer lectures on relevant problem issues affecting these schools.

6.4 Conclusion of the Study

Peer Education plays a critical role in enhancing the social-emotional learning in schools. Common behavioural problems affecting schools like, drug abuse, violence, teenage pregnancy and drop out can be potentially reduced by properly functioning peer education clubs in schools. Selection of peer educators and their subsequent training have to be conducted by the book and teacher interferences have to be minimal. Efforts should also be made to allocate enough time for peer education activities to take place, hence, the school administration has to be supportive of these club's activities. Major stakeholders, like the police, health, social welfare and correctional services should be encouraged to give support to peer education clubs, by taking complimentary roles when they are invited to take part in activities meant to address particular behavioural problems.

6.5 Recommendations

The researcher made the following recommendations based on the findings of this study and literature review.

6.5.1 There is greater need for peer education clubs to be clearly recognised as an important learning tool in schools, and also to recognise its contribution towards the social-emotional learning.

6.5.2 The study recommends that the Department of Education increases the number of both peer education trainers and trained peer educators. It is

impossible for example, ten peer educators to influence the behaviour of the whole school with an enrolment of over 400 learners.

- 6.5.3 Training period of peer educators should be increased, from the current five days. Peer Education is a life-skill and it is not possible that such an important wide field can be mastered in just five days.
- 6.5.4 Training of peer educators should have a larger practical component, and move away from the conducting these trainings in idealized places like hotels.
- 6.5.5 There is need for the Department of Education to formalize peer education clubs in schools and craft laws that makes it mandatory for schools to provide the clubs with decent facilities, like confidential rooms to conduct their activities.
- 6.5.6 There is also need to train all teachers, and not only LO have teachers as is currently the case, to ease the supervisory burdened on the few LO teachers.

6.6 FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has brought to light a significant number of issues, which may require further research. Firstly, the study has highlighted the importance of peer education in enhancing academic achievements in schools. Further research into more strategies to promote the role of peer education clubs would be most welcome. Secondly, a research into how best to evaluate peer education clubs so that they can be effective will also be a most welcome development.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS

INTRODUCTION

I am Nyarayi Chinyama a Masters student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on the role of peer educators in enhancing social emotional learning in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as a case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the schools to address problems related to the role of peer education in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools. Thank you.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE: 30-40 [] 41-45 [] 46-50 [] 51-60 []

GENDER: -----

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE SCHOOL-----

NUMBER OF YEARS AS A PRINCIPAL-----

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION: -----

1. Which clubs do you have in the school?
2. Please explain the general goals of clubs in the school?
3. Please explain how clubs contribute to social and emotional learning in the school?
4. How are members recruited in the club?
5. What role do teachers play in the club?
6. What role does the school pay in peer educators?
7. Who is legible to be a member of the peer education club?
8. How are the members recruited in the club?
9. What are the goals of the peer education ?
10. What issues do learners deal with in peer education clubs?
11. Please explain the major roles of learners in the peer education clubs?
12. How are issues discussed in peer education clubs linked to social and emotional learning in schools?
13. Please explain how their views are taken into consideration by the school?
14. What are the challenges faced by peer educators in performing their roles?

Appendix B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PEER EDUCATORS

INTRODUCTION

I am Nyarayi Chinyama a Masters student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on the role of peer educators in enhancing social emotional learning in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as a case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the schools to address problems related to the role of peer education in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools. Thank you.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE: 12-15 [] 16-19 [] 20+ []

GENDER: -----

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE SCHOOL-----

NAME OF ASSOCIATION-----

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE ASSOCIATION-----

1. What is the name of your association?
2. Who is eligible to be a member of your club?
3. What are the objectives of your club?
4. Can you please explain the issues that you deal with in peer education?
5. What are your major roles as peer educators in the association?
6. In what ways do issues discussed in peer education clubs linked to social and emotional learning?
6. What challenges do you face as peer educators?

Appendix C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

PERSONAL INFORMATION

I am Nyarayi Chinyama a Masters student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on the role of peer educators in enhancing social emotional learning in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as a case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the schools to address problems related to the role of peer education in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools. Thank you.

AGE: 30-40 [] 41-45 [] 46-50 [] 51-60 []

GENDER: -----

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE SCHOOL-----

NUMBER OF YEARS AS A PEER EDUCATION MENTOR-----

NUMBER OF YEARS IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION: -----

1. Which associations do you have in the school?
2. Who is eligible to be a member of the peer education club?
3. How are the members chosen?
4. Who chooses the group members?
5. What are the goals of peer educators?
6. What issues do learners deal with in peer education clubs?
7. Please explain the major roles of learners in the peer educators?
8. How are issues discussed in the clubs linked to social and emotional learning?
9. What are the challenges faced by peer educators in enhancing social and emotional learning?

Appendix D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SOCIAL WORKER

INTRODUCTION

I am Nyarayi Chinyama a Masters student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on the role of peer educators in enhancing social emotional learning in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as a case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the schools to address problems related to the role of peer education in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools. Thank you.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE: 30-40 [] 41-45 [] 46-50 [] 51-60 []

GENDER: -----

NUMBER OF YEARS AS A SOCIAL WORKER-----

NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING WITH PEER EDUCATION -----

1. Which clubs do you deal with in the schools?
2. Please explain the general goals of clubs in the schools?

3. How are members recruited in peer education clubs?
4. What role do peer educators play in the club?
5. What role does the school play in peer education club?
6. What issues do learners deal with in peer education clubs?
- 7 How are issues discussed in peer education clubs linked to social and emotional learning in schools?
10. What are the challenges faced by peer educators in performing their roles?

Appendix E: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PEER GROUP TRAINER

INTRODUCTION

I am Nyarayi Chinyama a Masters student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on the role of peer educators in enhancing social emotional learning in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as a case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the schools to address problems related to the role of peer education in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools. Thank you.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE: 30-40 [] 41-45 [] 46-50 [] 51-60 []

GENDER: -----

NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING WITH THE SCHOOL-----

NUMBER OF YEARS AS A PEER GROUP TRAINER-----

QUALIFICATION-----

1. Which clubs are there in the schools which you work with?
2. Please explain the goals of peer educators in the schools?
3. How are members recruited in the clubs?
4. What role do peer group trainers play in the clubs?

- 5 .What role does the school play in peer education clubs?
- 6 .Who is legible to be a member of the peer education club?
- 7 .How are the members recruited in the club?
8. Please explain the major roles of peer educators in enhancing social and emotional learning?
9. What issues do learners deal with in peer education clubs?
10. How are issues discussed in peer education clubs linked to social and emotional learning in schools?
11. What are the challenges faced by peer educators in performing their roles?

Appendix F: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PEER EDUCATION DISTRICT COORDINATOR

INTRODUCTION

I am Nyarayi Chinyama a Masters student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on the role of peer educators in enhancing social emotional learning in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as a case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the schools to address problems related to the role of peer education in enhancing social and emotional learning in schools. Thank you.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

AGE: 30-40 [] 41-45 [] 46-50 [] 51-60 []

GENDER: -----

WORKING EXPERIENCE-----

NUMBER OF YEARS AS A DISTRICT COORDINATOR-----

1. Which clubs do you work with in the school?

2. Please explain the general goals of clubs in the school?
3. Please explain how peer educators contribute to social and emotional learning in the school?
4. How are members recruited in the club?
5. What role do peer educators play in enhancing social and emotional learning?
5. What role do teachers play in the club?
- 6 .What role does the department of education play in peer education clubs?
7. What role does the school play in peer education clubs?
8. Who is legible to be a member of the peer education club?
9. How are the members recruited in the club?
10. What are the goals of the peer education clubs?
11. What issues do peer educators deal with in peer education clubs?
12. Please explain the major roles of peer educators in the peer education clubs?
12. How are issues discussed in peer education clubs linked to social and emotional learning in schools?
13. What are the challenges faced by peer educators in performing their roles?

Appendix G: OBSERVATION SHEET

I will observe peer educators during their meetings with social workers or with their teachers and peer group trainers. I will observe one meeting per school per group. I will observe the following general points.

1. Who leads the meetings?
2. What role do peer educators in the club play in the meetings?
3. Which gender dominates the clubs?
4. What issues are discussed in peer education clubs?

Appendix H: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS SCHEDULE


The Documents I will analyse are as follows:

1. Minute books and journals for meetings of peer educators to see issues discussed in the club.
3. Clubs' year plan to see activities that the clubs focuses on.
4. Calendar of the events which a school has drawn out of the school development plan to see if peer education clubs are included on decisions meant to improve academic performance in the school.

APPENDIX I: Letter of permission to collect Data

Faculty of Education
Department of Further and Continuing
Education
Stuart Hall, Alice

Phone: Alice: 040602412
| Email: nmayiya@ufh.ac.za



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

16 November 2011

The Principal

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to Collect Data: Mrs N. Chinyama (Student Number 200908234)

This is to confirm that is pursuing MEd degree at the University of Fort Hare. Her research title is **"The Role of Peer Education Clubs in enhancing Social and Emotional Learning: A Case Study of Four Secondary Schools in Fort Beaufort District"**. She is supposed to collect data during the months of November and December 2011. Kindly grant her permission. I would also be grateful if you could kindly provide her with documents that may assist with information regarding the area of her study.

I would like to assure you that any information that will be collected will remain confidential and no name of a person will be disclosed. The student will ensure that she does not disrupt ongoing activities during the period she will be collecting data.

Sincerely



C. Thomas

Director, School of Further and Continuing Education
Faculty of Education

Appendix J: Letter of permission to collect data from the Department of education



FORT BEAUFOR DISTRICT
CAPE COLLEGE BUILDING * Healdtown Road * Fort Beaufort * Private Bag X2041 * FORT BEAUFORT * 5720 * REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA * Tel: +27 46 645 7804 Fax: +27 46 6452783 * Website: thembele.ndzandze@edu.ecprov.gov.za *Date: 23 August 2012*

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir / Madam

This serves to inform you that the bearer of this letter **Mrs N. Chinyama (student no 200908234)** had been given permission to use our institutions of learning as sites of her research.

She is currently studying with the University of Fort Hare towards a masters Degree in Education. It is hoped that she will favour us with her finding as soon as she had concluded her studies.

Your cooperation regarding the matter will at all times be highly appreciated.

Yours in Service


.....
N.X. TOM

ACTING DISTRICT DIRECTOR

building blocks for growth



Appendix K: Letter of consent

To Whom It May Concern

My name is Nyarayi Chinyama. I am a Masters student at the University of Fort Hare and I am carrying out a study on the Role of Peer Educators on Enhancing Social and Emotional Learning in four secondary schools in Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. Your school has been selected as case study. Can you please devote a little of your valuable time to answer these questions. Your name and that of your school will remain confidential. The information that I am going to obtain will only be used for academic purposes and will not be given to anyone for whatever reason. May I also state that you are welcome to read through the final draft of the research project upon my completion if you like, hoping that some of my findings will be used by the school to address problems related to learner participation in decision making through teaching and learning issues.

Thank you.

Participant
signature.....