

**EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS OF THE CLIMATE FOR CREATIVITY IN THE  
WORKPLACE OF THEKWINI FET COLLEGE, DURBAN**

**by**

**KASAVAN GOVENDER  
(STUDENT No. 965117280)**

**submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements**

**for the degree of**

**MASTER OF EDUCATION (ADULT EDUCATION)**

**in the subject**

**WORKPLACE LEARNING**

**at the**

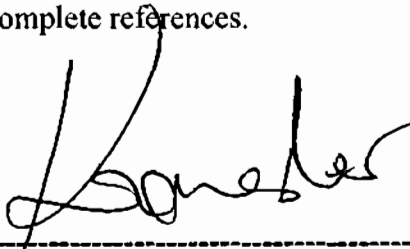
**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**SUPERVISOR: Dr Sylvia Kaye**

**DECEMBER 2005**

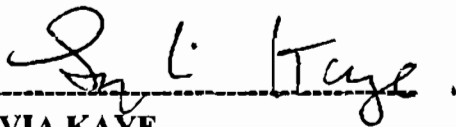
## DECLARATION

I, Kasavan Govender, hereby declare that this dissertation, which was prepared and written under the guidance and supervision of Dr. Sylvia Kaye, is my own work and that all the sources that I have quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



---

**KASAVAN GOVENDER**



---

**DR. SYLVIA KAYE**

10-04-2006

**DATE**

## **DEDICATION**

To my wife, Sharmila and son, Keyur. Your belief in me and unlimited support. Thank you for your endearing love.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF ACCRONYMS</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	2
Further Education and Training in South Africa	2
Thekwini College – A Public FET Institution	3
1.3 CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH AND THE PROBLEM STATEMENT	5
Major Questions	6
Sub-questions	6
1.4 OBJECTIVE OF STUDY	6
1.5 RESEARCH METHODS	7
Instrument Construction	7
Data Collection	8
1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	8
1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT	9
1.8 CONCLUSION	9
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE STUDY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION	10
2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW	11
Adult Learning	12
The Adaption – Innovation Theory	14
Tacit Knowledge	15
Informal Incidental Learning	16
Brain based learning	19
Intuition in the Workplace	20
2.3 MEANING OF CREATIVITY AND CLIMATE	22
Creativity	23

	Climate	24
2.4	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	26
	Creative Persons	28
	Creative Processes	28
	Product	30
	Albert Einstein	30
	Malcolm McLean	31
	General Electric	31
	Apple Computer	31
	Sony	32
	Press- Assessing Creative Environments	34
2.5	CONCLUSION	38
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY</b>		<b>40</b>
3.1	INTRODUCTION	40
3.2	RESEARCH DESIGN	40
	Constructivism and the nature of perceptions	41
	Phenomenology	42
3.3	RESEARCH PARADIGM	43
	Qualitative Paradigm	43
	Qualitative Research differs from Quantitative Research	44
3.4	RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	45
	Sampling Rationale	46
	Non-probability Sampling	47
3.5	ETHICAL ISSUES	49
	Acknowledging the Probable Presence of Bias	50
	Informed Consent	51
	Anonymity and Confidentiality	52
	Trust Development	53
3.6	DATA COLLECTION METHODS	54
	Interviews	55

	Pilot Interview	56
	Tape Recording	57
	Transcribing the Interviews	57
	Observations	58
	Analysing documents	59
3.7	DATA ANALYSIS	60
	Stages in Data Analysis	61
	Theories and Methods used in qualitative data analysis	62
	Justification of Approach	64
3.8	ENSURING RIGOUR	65
	Reliability	65
	Validity	65
3.9	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	67
	Study	67
	Interviews	67
	Transcribing qualitative interviews	68
3.10	CONCLUSION	69
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS</b>		<b>70</b>
4.1	INTRODUCTION	70
	Major Questions	70
	Sub-questions	70
	Sample Profile	71
4.2	FINDINGS	72
	Assessing Environmental Stimulants to Creativity	72
	Theme One	72
	Theme Two	75
	Theme Three	79
	Theme Four	82
	Theme Five	86
	Theme Six	90
	Theme Seven	92
	Theme Eight	94

	Assessing Environmental obstacles to Creativity	96
	Theme Nine	96
	Theme Ten	99
4.3	CONCLUSION	101
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS</b>		<b>102</b>
5.1	INTRODUCTION	102
5.2	ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	104
	Theme One: Organisational Support/Idea Support	104
	Theme Two: Supervisory Encouragement/Trust/Openness	105
	Theme Three: Workgroup Supports/Dynamism/Liveliness	107
	Theme Four: Freedom	109
	Theme Five: Sufficient Resources/Idea Time	111
	Theme Six: Challenging Work	113
	Theme Seven: Playfulness/Humour	115
	Theme Eight: Debates	116
	Theme Nine and Ten : Organisational Impediments/Conflicts and Workload Pressure	118
	Other Emerging Themes	122
	Theme Eleven: Coping Mechanisms	122
	Theme Twelve: Informal Learning	125
5.3	CONCLUSION	126
<b>CHAPTER SIX: SYNOPSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>		<b>131</b>
6.1	INTRODUCTION	131
6.2	RECOMMENDATIONS	133
	Improve the Organisational culture at Thekwini College	134
	Acknowledging the benefits of Socialisation	143
6.3	CONCLUSION	145
<b>REFERENCES</b>		<b>147</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>		<b>154</b>

APPENDIX A:	INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	154
APPENDIX B:	INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	157
APPENDIX C:	CRITERIA FOR OBSERVATIONS	161
APPENDIX D:	OLD AND NEW PARADIGM OF VALUES	162

### **LIST OF TABLES**

TABLE 3.1:	Qualitative research differs from quantitative research in this study	44
TABLE 3.2:	Research participants of Thekwini FET College	46
TABLE 3.3:	Total Group Demographics	48
TABLE 3.4:	Key to Code Names of Participants & Campuses	52
TABLE 4.1:	Key to Anonymity of Respondents	71

### **LIST OF FIGURES**

FIGURE 1.1:	Thekwini College Organogram	4
FIGURE 2.1:	Marsick and Watkins Informal and Incidental Learning Model	17
FIGURE 2.2:	Factors Affecting Climate	25
FIGURE 2.3:	Four P's of Creativity	27
FIGURE 3.1:	Basic format of the research design adopted in this study	41
FIGURE 5.1:	Analysing and Discussing Data for this Study	103
FIGURE 5.2:	Behaviours inhibiting creativity	118
FIGURE 6.1:	Improving the Organisational Culture	135
FIGURE 6.2:	Benefits from Informal Socialisation	143



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

For the completion of this thesis I am indebted to many people for their love, support and co-operation during my studies into research.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Dr Sylvia Kaye, my supervisor, for her guidance and academic support.

An acknowledgement, with gratitude, is made to Mr Rick Andries my Campus Manager.

Mrs Kogie Doorasamy for her support and assistance throughout the duration of this study.

Finally to special friends Gnanam Pillay and Soorian Govender, deep appreciation is expressed for your unfailing kindness and understanding through the difficult times. You have given me a lifetime of inspiration and encouragement.

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ABET</b>	Adult Basic Education and Training
<b>CCQ</b>	Creative Climate Questionnaire
<b>DoE</b>	Department of Education
<b>FET</b>	Further Education and Training
<b>GET</b>	General Education and Training
<b>HE</b>	Higher Education
<b>KEYS</b>	Assessing Climate for Creativity
<b>LEVEL 1</b>	Lecturers
<b>LEVEL 2</b>	Senior Lecturers
<b>NQF</b>	National Qualifications Framework
<b>SAQA</b>	South African Qualifications Authority
<b>SETAs</b>	Sector Education Training Authority
<b>SMME's</b>	Small, Medium, Micro Enterprise
<b>SOQ</b>	Situational Outlook Questionnaire

## ABSTRACT

A climate that stimulates creativity and encourages optimal performance is essential for enhancing the knowledge capacity of organisations. This encompasses the roles played by diverse aspects such as organisational support, freedom, work pressure, idea time/support, workplace challenges and trust/openness.

This study is located in the field of Adult Education in general with a specific focus on Workplace Learning. A qualitative study was conducted to describe the perceptions of managers and non-managers in five campuses of Thekwini FET College as either potential enablers or disablers of a creative climate. The research explicates what and how these professionals learn in creative climates. This study examines four research questions: In what ways do employees perceive the climate for creativity in the workplace?; How is the climate for creativity nurtured or stifled in the workplace?; What is meant by a 'creative climate'?; What are the critical success factors for inducing and facilitating a creative climate at Thekwini FET College? Thirteen participants, who had working knowledge experience and were able to provide a rich description of their work climate, were selected.

A comprehensive collection and analysis of data was yielded through: (a) semi-structured individual interviews; (b) looking at words, sentences and paragraphs of documents; and (c) informal observations. Data was analysed and interpreted by identifying the themes promulgated by Ekvall's Creative Climate Questionnaire and Amabile's KEYS survey. The findings led to the emergence of two new themes of coping mechanism and informal learning. The discussions inform and support the research from the perspective of employee experience and the theoretical model. The following recommendations were made in terms of: (a) Organisational Culture – devalue bureaucracy with greater interpersonal functioning of trust, freedom and support; (b) People – value and make people central in the workplace; and (c) Value Socialisation - organisational support for informal learning, playful about ideas, tolerant of spirited debates and challenges.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The role of creativity in the workplace is becoming acknowledged as a critical factor in a radically changing world and economy. Nurturing a creative environment is championed by creative researchers to enhance knowledge capital and workplace practices. Emerging literature indicates that the workplace climate can nurture and stimulate creativity in its employees, or it can provide barriers that prevent employees from working proficiently. In most workplaces, particularly Further Education and Training (FET) colleges, the stimulants and barriers seem undistinguishable. While there appears to be no single expression of rules or policies for nurturing an effective creative environment, there are definitive activities that can be taken to enhance the work climate, improve and increase employee skills, and establish processes and mechanisms that continue to support creative thinking.

The creative climate of the industrial-age was all about hierarchy, production and stability. The knowledge-age organisation subsequently focuses learning to transform its business practice: learning to manage change; learning to keep up with new technology; and learning how to learn. The workplace should value its people as a crucial resource that has a wealth of diverse attitudes, intuitive feelings and creative behaviours. But how does the workplace influence and value such people? This is a study of one FET College in KwaZulu-Natal that attempts to yield a much richer understanding of the relationship between the creative climate of the FET organisation and its employees.

This chapter provides the background of the study, context of the research and problem statement, objectives, research methods and limitations.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

### **Further Education and Training in South Africa**

The Department of Education (DoE) (2001) in South Africa states that one of the most important objectives of the FET policy framework is to make FET institutions (former technical colleges) more responsive to their environments. Strong, visionary leadership as well as trained and effective staff will be required to lead, manage and sustain these colleges. The increased institutional authority will require better-qualified, sophisticated, capable leaders and managers.

FET consists of all learning and training programmes from NQF Levels 2 to 4, or the equivalent of Grades 10 to 12 in the school system. It is the band within the NQF which follows directly on GET (General Education Training) and precedes HE (Higher Education). Learners enter FET after the completion of the compulsory phase of education at Grade 9 or Level 1 of the NQF (DoE, 1998).

The FET system challenges the climate of institutions to find a creative balance between the employment objectives and the social development of its human resources. The transition from the old technical colleges to the new FET colleges has anchored itself in a changing and challenging environment. The old technical colleges represented the old apartheid system of technical/vocational education and training in South Africa. The provision of vocational training under apartheid was characterised by unequal access to learning opportunities based on race, the division between theory and practice, and unequal allocation of funding between historically white and black institutions.

The new FET landscape, according to DoE (2001), has to respond to the pressures presented by globalisation. The global economy has changed to an information and technology system with implications for high levels of collaboration and competition between countries. Developing countries are in competition to attract scarce capital from developed countries. Growing economies are characterised by a highly-skilled workforce, therefore, in order to grow the South African economy, it is necessary to develop its skills-base.

Globalisation, and the competition that accompanies it, further adds to the need for a stimulating creative climate. Despite the new visions of FET, it is surmised that there still

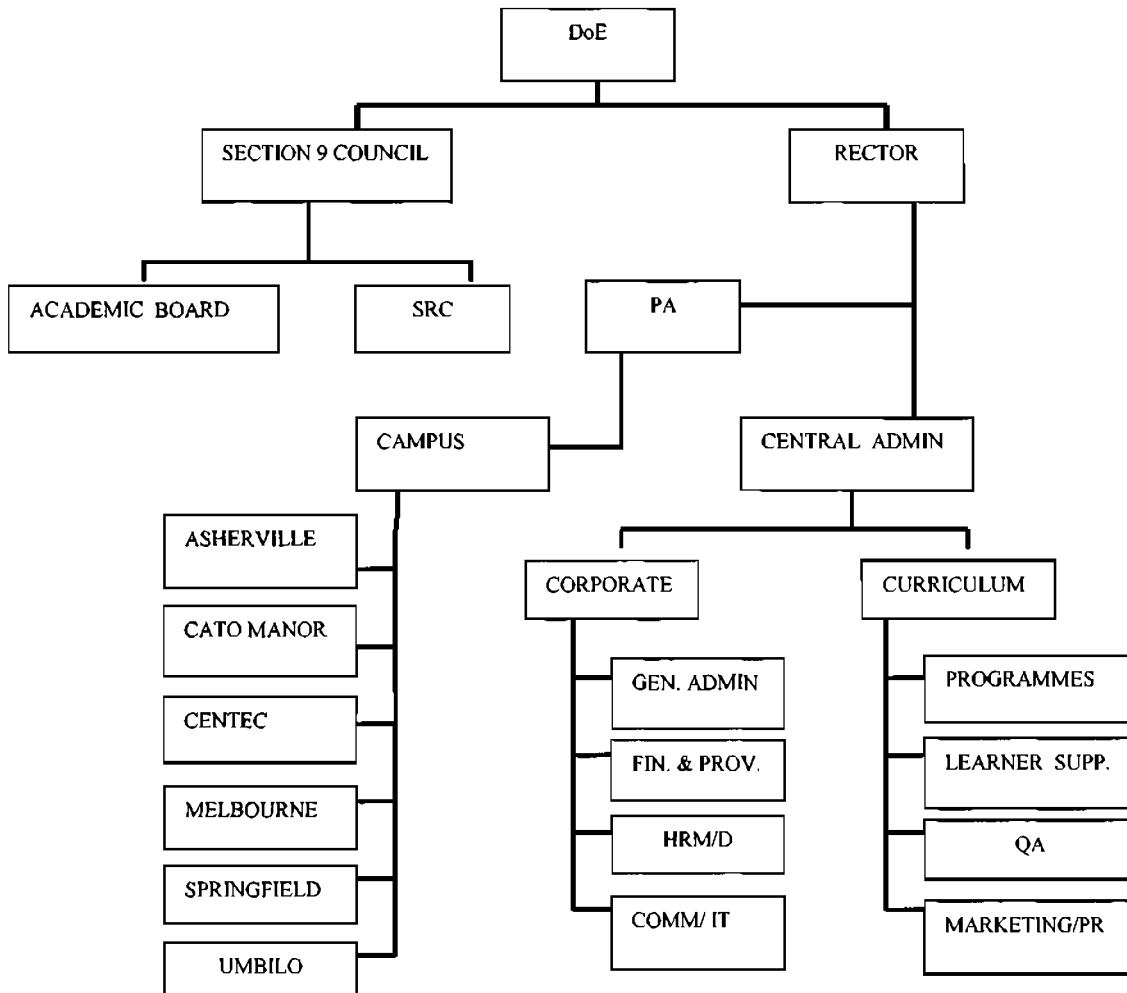
persists administrative structures that support bureaucratic forms of organising work. Bureaucracy, according to the researcher, is a way of organising work in which people are treated as interchangeable and replaceable cogs to fill specialised roles. Two key features of bureaucracy are hierarchy and a specialised division of labour. Other characteristics of an 'ideal' bureaucracy are rules which describe the duties of members, a set of standard operating procedures, and impersonal relations between members. Initiatives and policy directions come only from the top echelons. Work done at the lower levels is within the guidelines set from above (Martin 1990).

### **Thekwini College – A Public FET Institution**

In 2001, in accordance with the Further Education and Training Act 1998, Cato Manor Technical College, Durban Central Technical College and LC Johnson Technical College merged to form the Thekwini FET College, a Public Further Education and Training Institution as per KwaZulu-Natal Government Gazette No.117, 2002 published on 11 April 2002. As a public, multi-purpose, nationally-recognised provider, the College is managed and administered in accordance with regulations stipulated by the FET Act and by national education policy as determined by the Minister of Education.

The College currently operates on six sites viz. Springfield, Cato Manor, Centec, Melbourne, Umbilo and Asherville that houses the central administration and has conference and hostel facilities. Delivery sites include modern workshops and specialist facilities as well as smaller ultra-modern conference facilities. The Springfield facility possesses an ultra-modern Cyber Centre and the largest FET library in KZN. Programmes offered cover General Education Training (GET), Further Education Training (FET) and Higher Education (HE) levels in the fields of Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET), Business and Computer Studies, Hospitality and Tourism, Hair Care and Cosmetology, Engineering, Art and Design, Early Childhood Development, cultural enrichment, recreation and community courses, correspondence and distance education. The range encompasses short courses to National Certificates that can culminate in National Diplomas. A skills unit comprising a Learner Unit is at present working towards the conversion of all programmes in accordance with SAQA principles to ensure that courses are on track so that all training earns credits on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Service provision is being tailored to meet the demands of the labour market and in particular to access learnerships. **Figure 1.1** below depicts the institution's structure.

**Figure 1.1 Thekwini College Organogram**



Strategic partnerships to access further education and training opportunities are being established with other FET providers, Higher Education (HE) institutions, organised labour, the community, relevant government departments and non-governmental organisations, business and industry, Small, Medium, Micro Enterprise (SMMEs) and Sector Education Training Authority (SETAs) which is a body that plans and control by rule provision of education and training within a particular sector. The College vision is aimed at engaging constructively in problem-solving and capacity-building to develop a center of excellence in KwaZulu-Natal.

### **1.3 CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH AND THE PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The researcher perceived that the majority of studies on creativity explored the creative person and process rather than creativity of the social environments which can stimulate or inhibit creativity. Amabile (1996:5) corroborates this by stating that:

The most active area of creativity research, then, has been the description of the peculiar characteristics of famous or widely recognized creative people, or the description of differences of personality and intellect between people who do well on creativity tests and people who do not. As a result of the focus on individual differences, some potentially important areas of inquiry into creativity have been virtually ignored. There has been a narrow focus on internal determinants of creativity to the exclusion of external determinants.

Supervisory experience over the years in the Art and Design Department at Thekwini FET College, has informed the researcher that a certain tolerance is required for mistakes and failures so that creative thinking in the workplace can be nurtured and cultivated. This also implies establishing a climate of trust and for staff to have the freedom to express possible solutions to existing problems. It has been argued that it is essential to foster the climate for creativity in order for staff to visualize new solutions to problems in today's workplace. Since the college merger in 2001 and the establishment of a mega institution with six campuses, the researcher was keen to confirm whether practices of organisational encouragement, risk taking, new ideas generation, and the usefulness of creativity throughout all levels of the organisation were valued or devalued.

In studies about creativity, findings show that the usefulness of creativity can be devalued by organizations, and employees in the organisation practice creativity in spite of the structure. The researcher's experience at Thekwini College FET College have indicated that, employees are inherently creative, although they can be blocked by their own assumptions and by the organisational systems.

As a result the researcher developed a keen interest in the creative climate in the workplace and its consequences. The experiences, observations and conversations with professionals at all levels within the institution helped to identify the context of the research problem and embark on its study.

In view of the context and the source of the problem as discussed above, the main research questions investigated were formulated as follows:



## **Major Questions**

1. In what ways do employees perceive the climate for creativity in the workplace?
2. How is this climate for creativity nurtured or stifled in the workplace?

## **Sub-questions**

3. What is meant by a 'creative climate'?
4. What are the critical success factors for inducing and facilitating a creative climate at Thekwini FET College?

## **1.4 OBJECTIVE OF STUDY**

The objective of this study was to examine the climate for creativity through the perceptions of managers (senior lecturers) and non-managers (lecturers) at Thekwini FET College. By understanding their perceptions, observing their relationships and understanding their views through the lens of their experiences, the researcher was hoping to describe and share a rich description of the creative climate practices at this organisation.

Another objective was to validate the 'Four Ps' of Creativity, composed of four strands: person, process, product and press, as an effective tool for assessing creativity.

People and their relationship to their creative work climate has always been a topic of enquiry. The general objective was to examine the levels of creative-climate factors in the Thekwini FET College's five campuses. By understanding how these factors affect people, steps can be taken to improve Thekwini FET College's work climate.

To foster a better understanding of a creative climate, improve existing creative activities, promote and accommodate new ideas, behaviours and renew established business.

The study also intended to examine the variables as set out in the Ekvall Creative Climate Questionnaire (CCQ) and Amabile's KEYS Scale to determine factors either stifling or nurturing creative climates at the College. The Creative Climate Questionnaire and KEYS provided useful interpretations of the relationship between person, process, product and press. The researcher believes that the more people know about factors that enhance or stifle

creativity within press (environment/climate), the more necessary it becomes to address the issues concerned and to continue to nurture persons and processes in the creative climate.

## **1.5 RESEARCH METHODS**

A major approach to this research study is phenomenology, which is a descriptive study of how individuals perceive and experience the creative climate (phenomenon) in the workplace. Since any exploration of phenomenology as a research method needs to be set in a wider context, this study concentrated on the qualitative paradigm.

The sample of this descriptive study comprised mainly lecturers (level 1) and senior lecturers (Level 2) at the six campuses of Thekwini FET College. It was not practical to interview all the College staff-members, therefore purposive sampling of the staff was the only option and 13 participants were interviewed for this study.

### **Instrument Construction**

Two instruments were used for this study which were KEYS and CCQ. These were based on Swedish industrial psychologist, Goran Ekvall's CCQ, later known as the Situational Outlook Questionnaire (SOQ) and Harvard Business School's Professor Teresa Amabile's Model for Assessing the Climate for Creativity (KEYS). Both researchers in the field of creativity and creative climates developed these instruments for their previous research purposes and had them validated.

Amabile's KEYS instrument played an integral role in the formation of the questionnaire for the interview schedule, employing the original eight dimensions of organisational stimulants and organisational obstacles. The original dimensions of Ekvall's CCQ formed part of the observation schedule.

Although the researcher was aware of the incredible difficulty in assessing workplace creativity, he continued to pursue the study because of his keen interests in using the tested models of CCQ and KEYS in his work environment.

## **Data Collection**

The research methods used in this study are indicated below. The research questions were addressed by using three methods of data collection: observation; interviews; and analysis of written documents.

By using the Observation method the researcher was able to use Ekvall's Creative Climate Questionnaire to collect data to describe the setting of the organisation; activities undertaken by staff and managers; and both informal and formal conversations held between staff members. By spending time in informal social gatherings and hearing other people's perspectives and ideas, the researcher gathered new data on informal learning. This was followed through with information on the meanings of what was observed from the interviewee's perspective.

For the Interview method, the researcher used open-ended questions so that the participants were able to discuss their attitudes, beliefs and practices. Feedback given about creative practices were free-flowing and more conversational. Managers and staff were able to share their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge about creativity in the workplace. Interview questions, written in English with the appropriate language level used Theresa Amabile's eight managerial practices of Challenge, Freedom, Resources, Work-Group Features, Supervisory Encouragement, Organisational Support, Workload Pressures and Organisational Impediments as benchmarks to guide all interviews.

By using the Analysis of Written Documents method the researcher looked at the choice of words, sentences and paragraphs, which could motivate or de-motivate staff members. Since this study was conducted within a qualitative paradigm, the researcher analysed the data primarily using the inductive process. Data collected from observations, interviews and analysis of documents were organised into categories, identifying patterns of best practice among the categories.

## **1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study was restricted to one FET institution, Thekwini College in which the major focus of the research was only associated with the lecturers (non-managers) and senior lecturers (managers). This limited the findings of the study because not all the FET Colleges in

KwaZulu-Natal were represented. The researcher was aware that the fundamental challenge in this study would be identifying creative practices. This made it difficult to draw several conclusions.

## **1.7 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT**

This research report is divided into six chapters:

- Chapter One: 'Introduction and Overview' provides a brief introduction on the manner in which nurturing or stifling a creative climate could have an impact on the institution/ organisation. A discussion on the context of the study, the focus of the study, research methods and the limitations of the study are provided.
- Chapter 2: 'Literature Study' is a discussion on the concept of creativity. This is followed by a theoretical framework.
- Chapter 3: 'Research Methods' provides an insight into the design of research methodology used in this study. It examines the research goals, research questions, research methods, research participants and their job descriptions, research instruments used and the limitations of the design and methodology.
- Chapter 4: 'The Presentation of findings' focuses on important findings that were obtained.
- Chapter 5 analyses and discusses the feedback from the findings.
- Chapter 6: 'Summary and Recommendations' presents a summary of the critical success factors and recommendations for best practices.

## **1.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has presented an overview of the research problem addressed in this study. It has also explored the rationale by demonstrating the key research questions and sub-questions addressed.

The next chapter reviews and provides the theoretical, psychological and philosophical foundations of a creative climate. The working definitions of creativity, climate and creative climate are addressed as well as the presentation of the linkage of these concepts to the examination of climate.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE STUDY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter provides a conceptual framework of key theories and literature related to creativity, creative climate and methodological issues associated with identifying perceptions of the climate for creativity in the workplace and factors either enhancing or stifling creativity.

The four research questions that guide this study will also direct the literature review and theoretical framework: In what ways do employees perceive the climate for creativity in the workplace?; How is the climate for creativity nurtured or stifled in the workplace?; What is meant by a 'creative climate'?; What are the critical success factors for inducing and facilitating creative climate at Thekwini FET College? Embedded in these questions are issues regarding brain-based thinking; intuition in the workplace; creative influences/life experiences of great inventors and prominent people. These embedded issues remain at the heart of adult learning and employees 'lived' experiences of a creative climate at their workplace.

The chapter is organised into two sections: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework. The chapter has combined the literature review with conceptual issues that are important for the clarification of the literature and the development of a theoretical framework that supports the research in this study. Furthermore, it patterns the study through the conceptual problem of how creative climates can be perceived in the workplace.

The researcher understands the difficulty of assessing creativity, therefore, for the purposes of clarity the researcher embarked on breaking down the concept into variables that could be analysed.

## 2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

A new institutional landscape for Further Education and Training (FET) colleges represents a significant and decisive break from the old system of technical/vocational education and training in South Africa and ushers in the new FET college landscape that will respond to human resource development needs of the country, as seen by the DoE (2001).

According to Kraak (1999) the pressures of change in the South African FET sector are dual. In the first instance, change arises out of socio-political demands that have to do with redressing the dismantling of apartheid in the educational realm. It also concerns the construction of democratic social relationships among the State, civil society and education and training institutions. In the second instance, change is also required because of socio-economic pressures. These primarily concern the phenomenon of 'globalisation' and South Africa's re-entry into a highly competitive and volatile world economy. Theories and ideas of workplace creativity thus have important organisational and individual implications, and the workplace climate needs to influence creative performance on the job.

Gay (2002) reveals that research is turning away from trying to identify general attributes of creativity, and is looking more toward domain specific abilities that are fostered and developed through a supportive environment, and perhaps through some portion of natural ability. According to Amabile (1996), research in social psychology suggests that supportive behaviour on the part of others in the workplace (i.e. co-workers and supervisors) enhance employees' creativity. Henry (2001) holds the view that encouragement from managers certainly fosters creativity, but creativity is truly enhanced when the entire organisation supports it. Moorhead & Griffin (2004) are of the opinion that managers who wish to enhance and promote creativity in their organisations can do so in a variety of ways and make it part of the organisation's culture, often through explicit goals.

But it is not always agreed that creativity can be fostered at the workplace, Himmelfarb (1999:9) believes that:

Most people have their most creative ideas away from the job environment. When asked, they will say that they do their best thinking while in the shower, while shaving, while in bed, early in the morning or just before drifting off to sleep, in the car and when walking. Few people mention that they have great ideas while at work. They are too busy and they are not relaxed enough.

From this perspective, intuition, insight and feelings in the workplace are natural abilities that for most employees are compartmentalised into boxes and used during a crisis. In spite of this view, many organisations are increasingly acknowledging that intuition is important in creating a vision for the success of the business.

Often the question arises whether intuition, insight, feelings and creativity are personality traits that are available to only a few people. Hughes (1998:58) says that:

Research has shown everyone has some creativity. There are 120 different, special and measurable aspects of creative thinking which particularly distinguish humans from other species. These wide-ranging creative faculties have been, and continue to be, critical to mankind's ability to adopt to changing situations, environments, and systems (...). The challenge is to create an environment that will bring out the creativity of everyone and make those who have demonstrated creativity even more creative.

One place where creativity flourishes is in informal learning practices in spite of the constraints of the organisation's linear structure. Informal learning is an indispensable, but very often invisible, part of the organisation with the capacity to play an active role in workforce development. It is understood that significant learning experiences in various informal situations, for example, informal conversations, increasingly unfold outside the hierarchical structure of the organisation. However, it can also be argued that informal learning is not the only setting in which creativity flourishes. Socialisation is assumed to enable tacit knowledge to be transferred between individuals through shared experience, space and time. More importantly, socialisation drives creation and growth of personal tacit knowledge bases (Handzic & Chaimungkalanont 2004).

### **Adult Learning**

Learning from experience is a fundamental concept of adult learning. A common thread in Adult Learning is that learning takes place from the interactions of life experiences and adults construct meaning in different ways. Jarvis (1987) believes that adult learning is socially embedded and a socially-constructed phenomenon. However, in Bloom's Taxonomy learning is not restricted to one domain. Rather, learning involves progress and a change in thought and behaviour in more than a single domain. The three domains are Cognitive (intellectual learning), Psychomotor (skills-related learning) and Affective (value and attitude-related learning). Brookfield (1986) is of the opinion that in a very important sense we construct our experience: how we sense and interpret what happens to us and to the world around us is a

function of structures of understanding and perceptual filters that are so culturally embedded that we are scarcely aware of their existence or operation. According to Svensson & Ellstrom (2000:7):

There is a constant interaction between the individual and the environment. The individual both acts and reflects in interaction with the environment, that is, is both affected by and affects the conditions for his or her own life. But individuals do not act alone, rather, most often together with others or at least within the context where decisions are made for the most part by others-in the form of rules, values, attitudes, expectations, etcetera. (...) it is important to underline that action and interaction is not in itself a guarantee for positive learning to occur, that is a learning that contributes to the development of the individual and/or the organisation. Human action is to a considerable degree habitual or routinized.

Research shows that adults come to any learning experience with a wide range of previous experience, knowledge, skills, interests and competence. Adults will learn, retain and use what they observe to be pertinent to their personal and professional needs. In this way their experiences are culturally framed and shaped. In Brookfield (1986:13):

The quantity or length of experience is not necessarily connected to its richness or intensity. For example, in an adult educational career spanning 30 years the same one-year's experience can, in effect, be repeated thirty times. Indeed, one's 'experience' over these 30 years can be interpreted using uncritically assimilated cultural filters.

Although an adult life's experience is regarded as a rich resource for his/her learning it must be noted within the context of this study that the quality and quantity of adult experiences can have several outcomes for learning. Knowles (1990:47) concurs:

But the fact of greater experience also has some potentially negative effects. As we accumulate experience, we tend to develop mental habits, biases, and presuppositions that tend to cause us to close our minds to new ideas, fresh perceptions, and alternative ways of thinking. (...) There is another more subtle reason for emphasizing the utilisation of the experiences of the learners; it has to do with the learners' self-identity. The implication for adult education is that in any situation in which adults' experience is ignored or devalued, they perceive this as not rejecting just their experience but rejecting them as persons.

Learning from experience is fundamental in the way people in the workplace construct meaning and share relationships in the milieu of the organisation. The mere fact that if adult learning is changed then learning from experience will surely challenge the hegemonic logic of convergent processes in the workplace. Further, if experience becomes the starting point for learning then staff in the organisation will have the ability to erode traditional boundaries of cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains in the workplace.



The next section provides an overview of the three theories of learning that are relevant to the research participant's perception of the climate for creativity seen through the lens of their experiences. The purpose of any model is to describe, or simulate to some degree, some aspect of a reality so that we can understand and discuss that reality (Jackson 1996).

### **The Adaption – Innovation Theory**

The Adaption /Innovation theory commonly referred to as “creative style” was introduced by Michael Kirton in 1976. It presented people as preferring to use their cognitive abilities to solve problems in different ways.

Kirton's theory states that regardless of how much ability, skill, or talent a person has, each one has a natural tendency to solve problems with a certain style. His theory states that a person will consistently approach any problem using his/her preferred manner, or style. The Kirton Adaption/Innovation theory provides a construct in which to identify these styles (Grivas 1996). This theory indicates that people can be located along a continuum ranging from highly adaptive to highly innovative. In other words, according to Kirton, the stronger the preference the individual has, the more characteristics will emerge which are indicative of his/her style. For the purpose of this study, the Kirton Adaption/Innovation Inventory (KAI) will not be used to measure cognitive style, rather the behaviour descriptions of adaptors and innovators will be used to describe the creative climate.

The distinct difference between the two is that those people who demonstrated -

- An adaptive approach to their creative style:

are people who like to work within a structure, system, or paradigm to bring about incremental change. They would prefer to alter the system slightly to fix a problem, rather than overhaul a system. Adaptors are concerned with the norms of the group. They prefer to have rules, which they can follow, so they rarely go against the tide. When solving problems, adaptors tend to stick with methods they have used in the past; methods they feel are tried and true. They tend to generate a few, safe, and relevant ideas when confronting a problem. Others see adaptors as reliable, conforming, methodical, and efficient (Kirton 1994:63).

- An innovative approach to their creative style:

do not often recognise that there is a structure, system, or paradigm to work within, so they often create solutions, which bring about radical change. They would show no hesitation in altering a system completely. Innovators have little regard for the norms of a group. They prefer not to have rules, which they have to follow, so they often go against the tide. When solving problems, innovators often challenge past methods, tending to generate many, varied, unusual ideas to solve problems. These ideas are often seen as risky, unsound, or irrelevant. Innovators are often seen as undisciplined, abrasive, egotistic, and unconventional (Kirton 1994:63).

## **Tacit Knowledge**

The adult's construction of meaning from experience is strongly influenced by tacit learning i.e. knowledge that is acquired subconsciously or instinctively without awareness. Tacit learning is acquired through experience, socialisation and practice that lead to tacit knowledge - "that which we know but cannot tell" (Polanyi 1967 cited in Smith 1999). According to Hodkinson et.al. (2004:7):

Work performance has strong tacit dimensions. These implicit or hidden dimensions of knowledge and skills are key elements of 'mastery', which experienced workers draw upon in everyday activities and expand in tackling new or unexpected situations. However, there is little previous research, which focuses on tacit skills utilisation, and its contribution to learning.

Yet tacit knowledge is a key component of intuition that senses hidden capabilities used for problem-solving. This tacit knowledge places this new experience in a context that influences the imagination to find a solution. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) are of the opinion that tacit knowledge is personal, difficult to formalize, subjective, intuitive, and rooted in one's actions and experiences, ideals, values and emotions. More specifically, tacit knowledge can be broken down into two components: informal skills captured in the term "know-how" (this is the technical dimension), and a cognitive dimension consisting of schemata, mental models, beliefs, and perceptions so ingrained that we take them for granted. The cognitive dimension of tacit knowledge reflects our image of reality (what is) and our vision for the future (what ought to be). Therefore Smith (1999) argues that tacit knowledge provides much of the basis for the way we interact with people and situations. We have a 'taken-for-granted' understanding of others. Because this is not explored in any coherent way, such knowledge can be self-perpetuating and lead to behaviour that is inappropriate, or not the most productive.

## **Informal and Incidental Learning**

Informal and Incidental learning are central to adult education because people try to learn from life experiences and through participation in the social life of the workplace. Research in informal and incidental workplace learning is of importance because it is a fundamental area of human endeavour and researchers are just beginning to study and act on these forms of learning (Foley 2004). In the workplace most incidental learning is almost always takes place although people are not always conscious of it (Marsick & Watkins 2001) and informal learning is unstructured, intentional, tacit and taken for granted. Marsick & Volpe (1999) on one hand, defines informal learning as learning that is predominantly unstructured, not taking place in an institution of learning. It is experiential and, due to its nature, unable to be fully programmed. Informal learning takes place spontaneously within the context of real work and does not lead to predetermined outcomes. Coombs and Ahmed (1974 cited in Smith 1999) express their definition of informal education as unorganised, unsystematic and even unintentional at times, yet accounts for the great bulk of any person's total lifetime learning.

Therefore, informal learning according to Marsick and Volpe (1999:28) is characterised as follows:

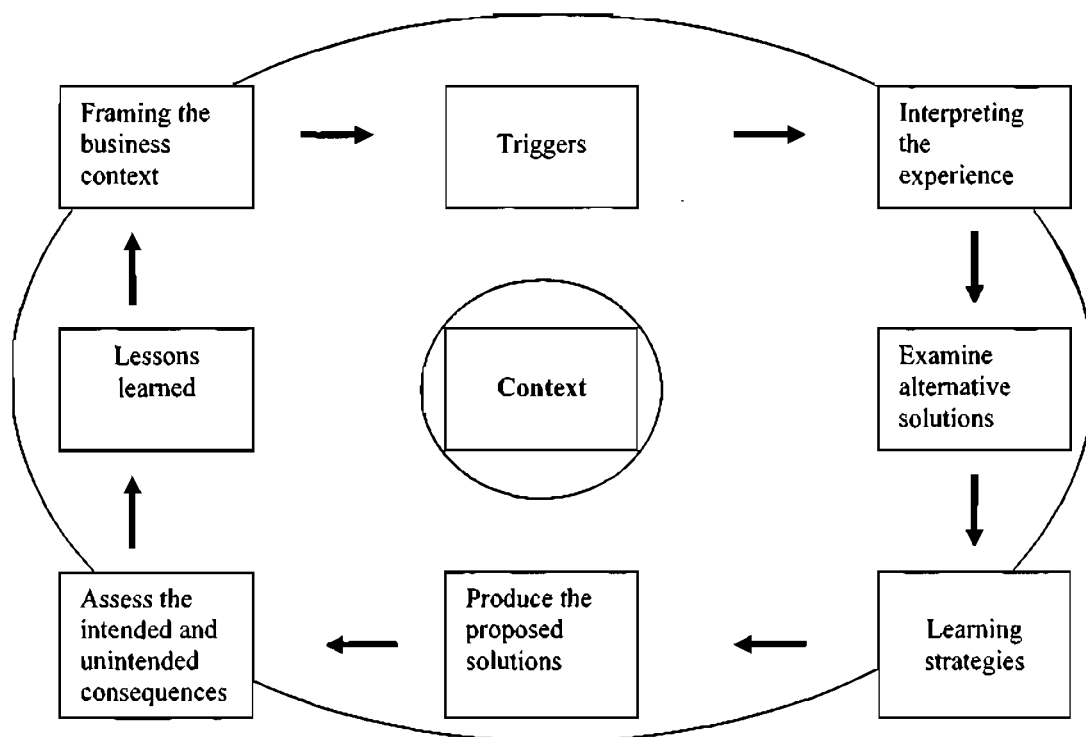
- It is integrated with daily routines.
- It is triggered by an internal or external jolt.
- It is not highly conscious.
- It is haphazard and influenced by chance.
- It is an inductive process of reflection and action.
- It is linked to learning of others.

On the other hand, Foley (2004) describes incidental learning as often unplanned, is often tacit, and may be constructive or destructive. The content of learning may be technical (about how to do a particular task); or it may be social, cultural and political (about how people relate to each other in a particular situation, about what their actual core values are, or about who has power and how they use it).

Furthermore, Marsick and Watkins (2001:31) states that:

Because informal and incidental learning are unstructured, it is easy to become trapped by blind spots about one's own needs, assumptions, and values that influence the way people frame a situation, and by misperceptions about one's own responsibility when errors occur. When people learn in families, groups, workplaces, or other social settings, their interpretation of a situation and consequent actions are highly influenced by social and cultural norms of others. Yet, people often do not deeply question their own or other's views. Power dynamics may distort the way in which they understand events.

Marsick and Watkins (2001:29) illustrate the Informal and Incidental Learning Model as adapted with Cseh in **Figure 2.1**.



**Figure 2.1 Marsick and Watkins Informal and Incidental Learning Model**

Although **figure 2.1** is diagrammatically planned in a circle, the steps indicated are not in sequential order nor communicated in a linear way. The circle in the center represents our belief that learning grows out of everyday encounters while working and living in a given context. A new life experience may offer a challenge, a problem to be resolved, or a vision of a future state. The outer circle represents the context within which the experience occurs, the personal, social, business, and cultural context for learning that plays a key role in influencing the way people interpret the situation, their choices, the actions they take, and the learning that is affected (Marsick & Watkins 2001). There is a progression of meaning outlined in the above model and with each new perception, employees are able make sense of the situation by going back and questioning earlier understandings. Signals of employee

dissatisfaction with current practices and lines of thought trigger learning. The model that precedes the trigger model is framing the workplace. Here, people's worldview is framed by how they see things and how they will interpret this new trigger. This frame is important in the model since it can impact on the lessons learned at the end of a cycle. Our model shows that people diagnose or frame a new experience that they encounter. They assess what is problematic or challenging about it. They compare the new situation with prior experience, identify similarities or differences, and use their interpretation to make sense of the new challenge. People refine their diagnosis by interpreting the context. They attend to the different factors in the context that influence their interpretation (Marsick & Watkins 2001).

By interpreting the contextual factors employees are able to make choices of other actions.

According to Marsick and Watkins (2001:30):

these choices are guided by recollections of past solutions and by a search for other potential models for action. Success in implementation depends on drawing on capabilities that are adequate to the task. If the solution calls for new skills, the person needs to acquire these. Many contextual factors influence the ability to learn well enough to successfully implement the desired solution. These include, but may not be limited to, the availability of appropriate resources (time, money, people from whom they learn, available knowledge about an unknown or ambiguous phenomena), willingness and motivation to learn and the emotional capacity to take new capabilities in the middle of what could be a stressful challenge.

When employees produce the proposed solutions, they assess intended and unintended consequences (outcomes). By judging the consequences employees are able to prepare lessons learned to plan future actions. The new understandings (frame) employees bring to new situations bring them back full circle.

Therefore the central feature of informal and incidental learning in this study is context. The context refers to the workplace where learning is seen as formal and that which occurs implicitly as incidental or informal. However, researchers have pointed out that informal learning is an antecedent over formal learning and most of what is learnt inside and outside of the workplace occurs during informal practice. It is, however, argued that both formal and informal learning are valuable to skill formation, and it is important to find the right balance between them. Therefore, Svensson & Ellstrom (2000) state that the distinction between formal and informal learning is important in order to emphasize that learning is not to be equated to education. Education offers explicit, theoretical knowledge - so-called propositional knowledge. In workplace study Crossan et.al (1999) showed that participants

stressed informal and tacit learning over formal learning as having greater impact on their jobs. Svensson & Ellstrom (2000) propose that the concept of informal learning refers to learning that occurs in everyday life or at work. Everyday learning occurs spontaneously for the most part, but it can in part be organised and supported for example in the form of work rotation, exchange of experiences, network meetings, supervisorial input, mentorship. In modern work life neither formal education nor everyday learning alone is sufficient - both are needed and the two modes of learning should be viewed as complementary.

### **Brain-based learning**

It is helpful to examine theories about how the brain functions and the link of emotions to learning and creativity.

The notions “emotional intelligence”, “multiple intelligence”, “natural learning”, “accelerated learning”, and, “whole brain learning” have emerged from “brain-based” research.

Creative human beings are the torch-bearers of civilization. How does their creativity arise? What causes some minds/brains to achieve awe-inspiring artistic or scientific achievements? What genetic influences shaped their brains to create. How did their environments promote or impede them? Would Michelangelo have been great without the patronage of the Medics or the competitive edge induced by Leonardo? Great art and great science are indeed often forged in the smithy of pain- with the fire fueled by self-doubt, obsessive preoccupation, sorrow, depression, competition, or economic needs (Andreasen 2004:7).

Since everything in the body, including the brain, is connected to and affected by everything else, right-brain-, left-brain- and triune brain theories are no longer considered to be adequate explanations of how the brain functions (Gibson & McKay 2000). Brain-based learning is now a comprehensive approach to instruction based on current research in neuroscience, which suggests our brain learns naturally. This theory is based on what we currently know about the actual structure and function of the human brain at varying stages of development (Spears & Wilson 2002). Neuroscientists have discovered that people’s feelings are significant to their learning process. If people are not experiencing any stress and feel enthusiastic about a task, then learning will not take place. If people work in a negative environment and feel insecure, then learning will not take place. Therefore “emotions” are critical to learning and cannot be separated from learning. Emotions create meaning and help people to make decisions that are value-based.

Spears & Wilson (2002) reveal that there is powerful evidence that emotions play a far greater role in thought, decision making and individual life-long success than is commonly acknowledged. The most effective learning is when the emotions are positively engaged and where positive self-esteem is encouraged. Co-operative learning, a sense of belonging, having meaningful goals and targets, and achieving success all contribute to learning. Motivation is a necessary precursor to learning, that positively engages the emotions and maximizes attention, understanding, meaning and memory. According to Gibson & McKay (2000: 23):

Experience has been found to affect the physical structure of the brain, a phenomenon known as plasticity. The brain grows new connections with environmental stimulation and modifies itself structurally depending on the amount and type of usage. Each new stimulation and experience rewires the brain. Enriched environments enable the brain to grow more neural connections, thickening the cortex of the brain, while less stimulating environments actually have a thinning effect on the cortex. Enriched environments provide challenge by (...) stimulating surroundings, and a wide variety of approaches to thinking and problem-solving.

Brain-based learning is effective when the person faced with challenges has the capacity to learn in a relaxed, secure environment, where acknowledgement and praise outweigh criticism and punishment. Therefore creativity can be enhanced if the environment is conducive to learning. This implies that creativity may be fluid and responsive to stimulus. Some core principles of this theory can be summarized as follows:

- Complex learning is fostered by challenge and impeded stress;
- Enhanced learning is connected with positive emotions and feelings;
- Effective learning is constructed through informal interaction, hence the need for social setting and collaboration; and
- associated logical, creative and intuitive powers of thinking.

### **Intuition in the workplace**

If you ever had hunches or flashes of insight or found yourself guided by your own “good judgement,” even once - then you’re intuitive. If you find yourself at the right place the right time, or your “guesses” are sometimes uncannily accurate, it isn’t pure coincidence or “luck,” you’re intuitive. If you feel the impulse to do something that is contrary to your sense of reason or feel the presence of higher powers guiding your life, you are probably witnessing the blossoming of inner wisdom, your inborn intuitive self (Guiley 2002:7).

Since analytical and logical thought is believed to emanate from the left hemisphere of the brain, intuition stems from the right hemisphere where creative processes take shape. McCoy (2000) points out that in using both sides of the brain, logic and intuition become integrated to provide a more balanced approach. People who are in touch with their intuitive skills are better listeners and are better able to see the big picture. Intuition has been called many things: a rational brain skill, a hunch, a gut feeling, a knowing, inner wisdom, a feeling or thought that is void of logical and rational basis or foundation. Men and women use different language to describe intuition. Women often use the words 'feelings', 'gut reaction', and 'sense'. Men can refer to it as 'I know', 'it is my estimation', 'my thoughts', and 'my guess'. People, who rely on intuition to make decisions often trust their instincts (Pietrokowsky n.d.).

According to McCoy (2000) making decisions by intuition is becoming a more widely-accepted approach in business and is gaining attention from management scholars and practitioners alike. Far from being a mystical force, intuition is the ability to think about things subconsciously. Intuition allows one to draw on unconscious knowledge and past experiences, including accumulated successes and failures, in both work and personal life. Pietrokowsky (n.d.) indicates that intuitives can be a great asset to an organisation, because they easily generate ideas, grasp abstract concepts, and visualize "the big picture". They often use feeling words like 'gut', 'sense', 'feel' and 'instincts'.

Managers and executives in most companies are aware that their creative potential greatly exceeds their creative performance. The problem is that they don't know what to do about it. Most creative acts, as they now occur in companies, are not planned for, and come from where they're least expected. It's impossible to predict what they'll be, who will be involved in them, and when and how they'll happen. This is the nature of corporate creativity, and it's here that a company's creative potential really lies. For corporate creativity, the real power is in the unexpected. (Robinson & Stern 1997:12)

As a major component of creativity, many organisations use intuition to make corporate decisions. Yet intuition is often not openly acknowledged - although senior management, middle management and personnel use it successfully, intuition with one's 'feelings' about a situation and one's 'gut reaction' is not openly discussed.



Intuition has definite credibility and is an important ingredient for success in the workplace. Intuition is often used in areas where old assumptions are being challenged and new methods of working are required. However, it must be noted that intuition is not a substitute for analytic thinking as it only enhances the thinking process. Goldberg (2002:5) states that:

Intuition cannot be arranged into a set of rules that can be taught the way logic and quantitative procedures are. It cannot be pinned down, cannot be directly observed and measured. It has also been considered as a chance phenomenon, something that either happens or doesn't.

Having a more intuitive workforce can add high value for the employer by anticipating solutions at early stages of a problem, improving client satisfaction, and even increasing workforce retention (Tesolin 2005).

There are three main attributes of intuition which contend with the current workplace climate: intuition is **non-hierarchical** (employees who are at the bottom of the company's pyramid, who may have the intuition to know the future direction of the organisation or its future success, may handle a situation that should be handled with senior members that remain at the top of the pyramid); **non-analytic** (employees are encouraged to use their hunches and gut feelings to take actions on certain issues in the workplace); and **unpredictable** (intuitive information can be developed and included in the decision-making process but may not conform to the rules and regulations of the company).

Goldberg (2002:3) says that:

Both Einstein and Newton agreed that the path to the natural laws rested on extraordinary intuition being the instruments of discovery. Individuals become intense advocates of their ideas, not always because of rational deduction but because of unexplainable convictions, which, when proven incorrect, we call them madmen; but, when they are right, they secure a place in history

In summary the literature review has provided interesting aspects of the relationship between theory and practice.

### **2.3 MEANING OF CREATIVITY AND CLIMATE**

Understanding the meaning of creativity and climate is essential to the discussions in this study. While the focus is mainly on creative climate, the relationship between creativity and climate cannot be ignored.

### **Creativity**

Many researchers have referred to creativity in psychological studies and other perspectives to synthesize and identify theoretical approaches. There are five major approaches to the study of creativity. Lauer (1994:4) enumerates them with their prominent researchers as:

1) Cognitive, Rational and Semantic approaches (e.g., Guilford, 1950; Osborn, 1953; Torrance, 1962; Parnes, 1967), 2) Personality and Environmental approaches (e.g., Barron, 1972; MacKinnon, 1975; Stein, 1974; Crutchfield, 1962; Taylor, 1975), 3) Third force Psychology approaches (e.g., Maslow, 1971; Rogers, 1954), 4) Psychoanalytic or Psychodynamic approaches (e.g., Freud, 1920; Kris, 1952; Kubie, 1958; Rank, 1932), and 5) Psychedelic approaches (e.g., Barron, 1969; Payne, 1973).

Over the years researchers and practitioners from different perspectives have examined the concept of creativity. Any definition of creativity that aspires to objectivity, and therefore requires an inter-subjective dimension, will have to recognise the fact that the audience is as important to its constitution as the individual to whom it is credited (Csikszentmihalyi 2001). A creative environment can take advantage of knowledge in different fields to produce radical innovations (Greve 2004). Research on the concept of creativity has been challenging due to the fact that creativity is a complex phenomenon that is somewhat obscure, elusive and unpredictable.

The early definitions of creativity were on the notion of the creative process in which the outcomes were known as creative. Yet there are many recent diverse definitions of creativity that compounds its complexity and elusiveness. Most of the dominant writers on creativity acknowledge a broad spectrum of activity, that can be described as creative (Craft 2001). For example, Montuori (n.d) explains that creativity involves constant organising, disorganising, and re-organising. It involves actively breaking down assumptions, givens, and traditions, pushing boundaries and moving out of comfort zones. Hughes (1998) argues that creativity is nothing more than going beyond the current boundaries, whether those are boundaries of technology, knowledge, current practices, social norms, or beliefs. Creativity is nothing more than seeing and acting on new relationships, thereby bringing them to life.

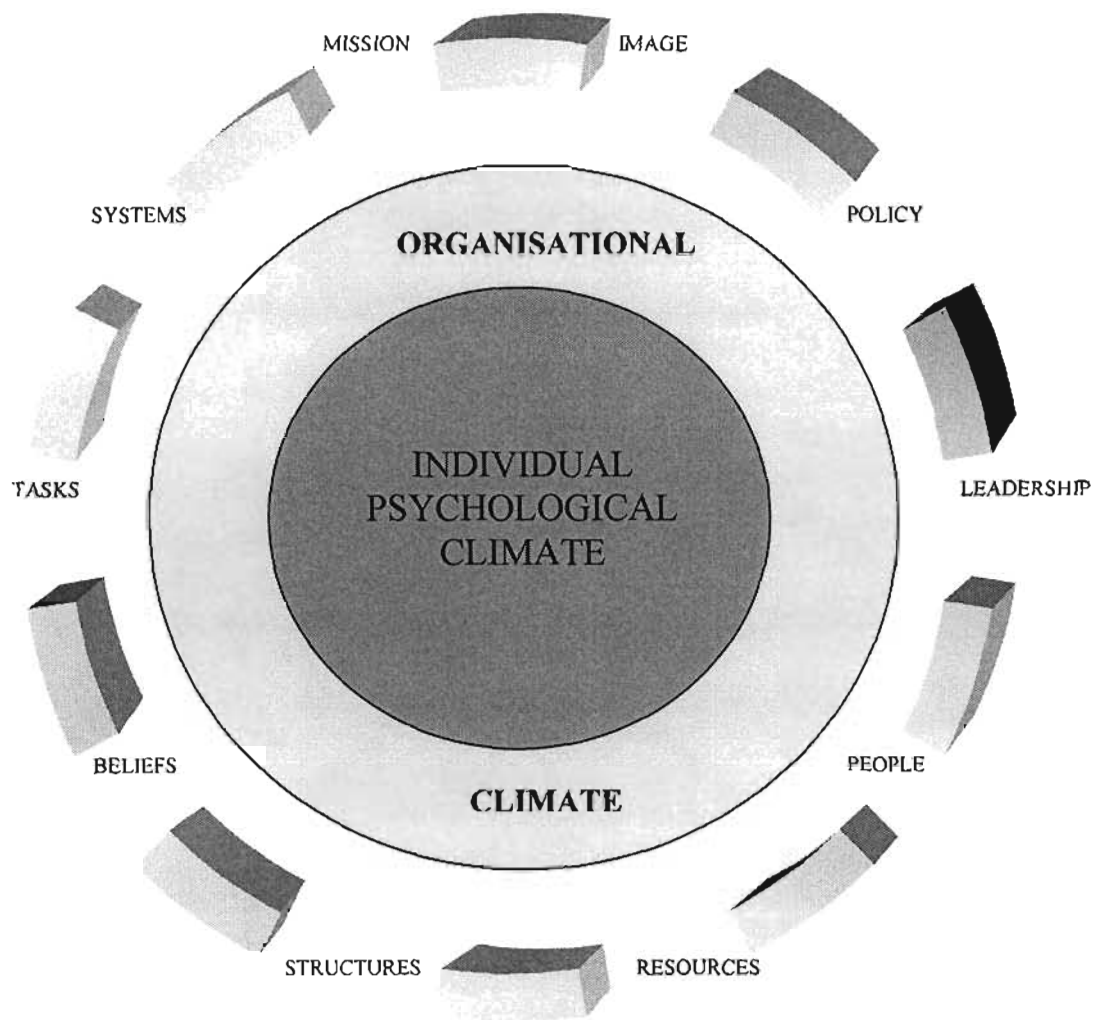
Hence, the focus on creativity in organisations has tended to expand in recent years due to increasing worldwide competition in the market place. Another reason is that for business survival, creativity is now becoming an organisational aspiration. Studies show that creativity is now encouraged to see a 'problem' from a novel perspective that involves escaping from old methods and ideas. Solutions to problems can be acted on spontaneously or as a result of sustained effort.

Because the brain organises information in patterns and people are encouraged to be analytical and evaluative in their thinking, staff are also encouraged to form new patterns in the brain by using intuitive approaches. Creativity connects the mind with problem-finding abilities, mental mobility, with a personal aesthetic, inner motivation and risk-taking. Creativity is also influenced by spatial environments, group dynamics, resources, time and by work pressures. In this respect it has been perceived that the best way to meet this challenge is by making the organisation flexible enough to meet the challenge of competition through: 1) better utilisation of their employees' talents including creative abilities; 2) making the organisation more open to change; and 3) increasing the ability of the organisation to be innovative through the development of new products (Lauer 1994). Implicit with the above concept of creativity, the heart of this study would relate to the perceptions and interactions between the employees and variables of the work climate of Thekwini FET College.

### **Climate**

To understand human behaviour at this institution, creative climate emerges as a meaningful concept. Climate describes the atmosphere of the interpersonal functioning of people within a given environment. By understanding the climate of an organisation, one may begin to see the dynamic, inter-actional role climate has in relation to the behaviour of those within the organisation (Grivas 1996). Therefore climate is a contributing variable to creative behaviour. **Figure 2.2** was adapted from Isaksen & Lauer (1998).

**Figure 2.2 Factors Affecting Climate**



In the above **figure 2.2** Ekvall (1991:7) summarises the relationship between climate and organisation:

In the context of organisational processes climate plays a part of an intervening variable, which affects the results of the operations of the organisation. The climate has this moderating power because it influences organisational processes such as problem solving, decision-making, communications, coordination, controlling and psychological processes of learning, creating, motivation and commitment.

Literature defines climate as the recurring patterns of behaviour, attitudes, and feelings that characterise life in the organisation. At the individual level of analysis, the concept is called

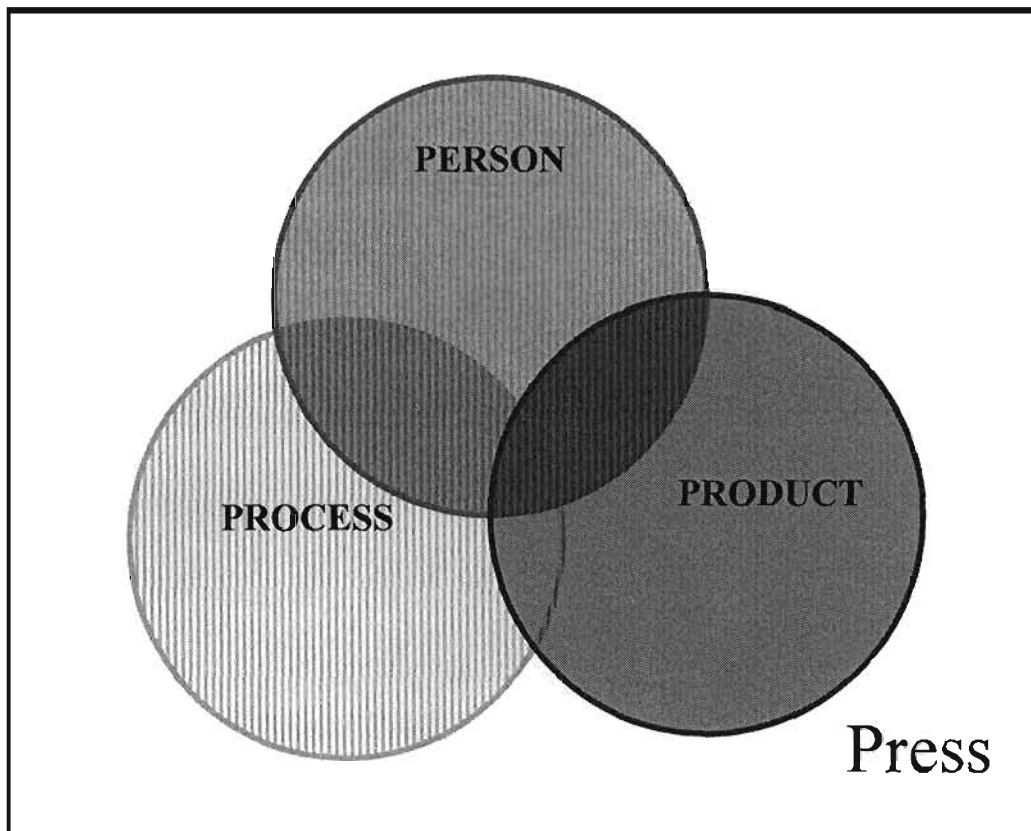
psychological climate. At this level, the concept of climate refers to the individual perceptions of behaviours. When aggregated, the concept is called organisational climate. These are the objectively shared perceptions that characterise life in the organisation (Isaksen et.al 2001).

Organisational climate is described as a phenomenon between employees and the organisational situation. Factors in the organisational climate such as bureaucracy, procedures, rules, policies, monotonous work and physical environment elicit reactions in the individuals involved. Ekvall (1991) indicates that it is these reactions in the form of behaviour, feelings, and attitudes that constitute the climate in the realistic sense. But we also have to count the people themselves as part of the organisational situation. Phenomenologically speaking, it is the individual's apperceptions of these conditions, factors and events in the organisation that constitute the climate. It is their way of assigning meaning to procedures, policies, and events that come to constitute the climate.

A study by Ekvall (1987 cited in Isaksen & Kaufmann 1990) shows that organisational climate can be understood according to objectivistic or subjectivistic viewpoints. The objectivistic views climate through behaviours, attitudes and feelings and sees the climate as existing independently as a part of organisational reality. The subjectivistic view regards climate as a perceptual and cognitive structuring common to those who comprise the organisation.

## **2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The definition of creativity is very broad, and in order to analyse it, it can be categorized into component parts. One perspective to understanding the definition of creativity emerges from Rhodes' research in 1961 and adapted by Grivas (1996) and Isaksen (2001) that identified the interactive model (**fig. 2.3**) of four broad, interrelated strands: person, process, product, and press. This became Rhodes all-inclusive definition for creativity. Other approaches to researching the broad topic of creativity have been examined, but this orientational framework has emerged as the most consensually valid among creativity researchers (Lauer 1994).



**Figure 2.3 Four Ps of Creativity**

A description and understanding of the interrelationship between the four Ps within the context of this study will follow in this section. Recent creative studies, examined empirically, focused on the relationship of press (i.e. environment, situation, culture, or climate) to the concept of creativity.

Regardless of whether creativity is considered to be a process or an outcome, it is ultimately linked to social processes and contexts and can be considered from a systems perspective (Csikszentmihalyi 1988).

The nature of this type of research focuses on the concept of creative climate in the workplace. Since the creativity component of press is receiving empirical scrutiny in recent years, this study will concentrate on creative climates in the work environment and will use the dimensions of the climate assessment instruments of Amabile and Ekvall. The objective

of this section is to respond to the research questions, gaining a well-grounded understanding of the nature of the research topic and its related literature to establish findings and discussions in the subsequent chapters of this study.

### **Creative persons**

This strand looks at factors within people that influence their creativity. Research suggests that individuals with creative personalities exhibit higher creativity than those with less creative personalities (Politis 1996 cited in Feist 1999). While there is generally current debate as to whether creativity is for the selected few or for everyone and while certain people are more creative on their own accord than others, creativity can be stimulated and supported through training, and by creating the right work environment and atmosphere. Creativity cannot be methodical - it relies much more on intrinsic motivation; on people being enthusiastic, inspired and knowledgeable. According to the intrinsic motivation principle of creativity, people will be most creative when they are motivated primarily by the interest, enjoyment, satisfaction, and challenge of work itself (Amabile 2001).

Warner (n.d.) believes that truly creative people are intensely career-oriented and devote enormous amounts of energy to their work. They pay particular attention to the intrinsic satisfaction in their work and look for interesting, stimulating, challenging creative projects. Money, it turns out, does not foster creativity; Amabile found that people doing creative, innovative work do not focus daily on salary or a potential bonus (Potier 2005). However, according to Amabile & Grysiewicz (1987) there are factors (i.e. internal political problems, conservatism and rigid formal structures) that could impede creativity amongst individuals.

From the perspective of this study, current views point out that managerial style is important in the workplace. The manager must be willing to practice “flexible-inflexible” management style. Managers generally manage creative tasks by providing goals and objectives that usually link to performance. In addition, the literature revealed that it is also expected of all managers to control resources through budget allocation, deadlines, competitive pressures, company reputation and market demands. Thus the manager of creativity needs to link creative practices with the business goals of the organisation. According to Kao (1989) he or she must know when to melt into the background, and when to push; when to leave expectations ambiguous, and when to clarify them. These skills involve the development of creative management rather than the memorisation of rules and regulations.

### **Creative processes**

This strand looks at methods, steps and techniques that individuals use when applying their creativity. Creative processes suggest imaginative thinking, which is expansive in nature, as opposed to evaluative thinking, which is convergent in character (Henry 1991). There are many models for the process of creative thinking and all of them evidently show a consistent theme. The following creative-solving model further elaborates other concepts of creative processes.

Moorhead & Griffin (2004) illustrate four useful steps in the creative process. This early model is the basis for most of the creative thinking processes available today.

1. Preparation
2. Incubation
3. Illumination
4. Verification

Preparation is the first step in which education and training of creative people never ends. It involves gaining the necessary skills and knowledge and trying to find the right answers by addressing the problem from different perspectives. Creative problem-solving often involves reframing the problem from a number of angles, with the aim of reaching some kind of problem-statement that encapsulates the nub of the issue to be addressed (Henry 1991).

The next step is the incubation period of less intense conscious concentration. Here, the creative person allows the knowledge and ideas emanated from the previous stage to mature



and develop. Ideas are pooled by a group of people through brainstorming techniques and other analytical procedures. In this stage mind maps are created to classify ideas and place them into categories.

In the third step, insight is a breakthrough of new understanding of the problem in which the creative person synchronizes thoughts and ideas maturing during the incubation stage. This is the expansive phase where the question-context is considered, and account is taken of the people, resources, policy, climate, etc., that will support the idea, and those factors that are likely to hinder its implementation (Henry 1991).

The final step of the creative process is verification or implementation that determines the validity or truthfulness of the insight. The notion that creative and analytical thinking are complementary in this model, rather than opposing and that creative thinking is a subconscious mental process that cannot be directed would inform this study.

Although there are many creative models for fostering the process of current creative thinking, it is clear that a consistent unifying idea extends throughout the models. The older models advocate that generation of creative ideas emanate outside the control of the individual thinker whilst modern models advocate conscious generation of ideas that is controlled by the individual thinker. Hence the modern theory of creativity supports the creative process that involves purposeful analysis, imaginative idea generation, and critical evaluation – the total creative process is a balance of imagination and analysis (Plsek 1996).

### **Product**

This strand would focus on creative outcomes that may be both tangible and intangible (knowledge, attitudes, behavioural patterns). While there is no known prescription for stimulating an effective work environment, there are desired actions that can be taken to enhance the creative climate, increase employee skills, and establish processes and procedures that support creative thinking. To enrich this study the researcher will discuss creative influences as the creative outcome that may be concrete or “touchable” like an invention or marketable product or personal development, the development of a new service or improvement to an existing one or social technology (Grivas 1996).

The following creative influences are:

### **Albert Einstein**

As a German theoretical physicist, Einstein regarded intuition as the highest form of knowing and regarded it as timeless. Einstein is viewed as the greatest scientist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and was awarded the 1921 Nobel Prize for Physics. Yet his interest in science and, presumably, his creativity, were undermined by forces that exerted external control over his work (Amabile 1996). The headmaster once told Einstein's father that it wouldn't matter what Einstein chose as a profession, because "he'll never make a success at anything". On the contrary, Albert Einstein was unfathomably profound - the genius among geniuses who discovered, merely by thinking about it, that the universe was not as it seemed (Golden 2000). This earned him global recognition for his theory of relativity and the contributions he made to the development of quantum mechanics, cosmology and statistical mechanics. Albert Einstein according to Bronte (n.d.:4):

At the age of five, his father showed him a pocket compass, and Einstein realized that something in "empty" space acted upon the needle; he would later describe the experiences as one of the most revelatory of his life. Though he built models and mechanical devices for fun, he was considered a slow learner, possibly due to dyslexia, simple shyness, or the significantly rare and unusual structure of his brain (examined after his death). He later credited his development of the theory of relativity to this slowness, saying that by pondering space and time later than most children, he was able to apply a more developed intellect.

### **Malcolm McLean**

Malcolm McLean in the mid-1950s created the concept of containerised shipping. The idea later evolved as the basis of the Sea-Land Company which became the first shipping company to ship goods in containers. The break-through idea was generated when McLean imagined that it was not sensible to package goods into crates that had to later be unloaded from a truck at the dockside and loaded aboard a ship. He thought that this process could be eliminated if the entire truck-container was put on the ship. In this way the handling costs would decrease considerably and there would be less breakage and theft. McLean's thinking was creative. It enabled his company to take off and prosper. This sort of creativity is necessary for any company that wants to experience significant growth from its new-product development activities, especially if it intends to accomplish anything other than develop 'me-to' products (Himmelfarb 1999).

## **General Electric**

As CEO of General Electric, Jack Welch made this company one of America's most admired and profitable. "Neutron Jack", as he became known because of his early decision to downsize 100 000 people, had a build-and-rebuild style with people, assets and strategies (Chowdhury 2002). And, because he practiced a constant build-and-rebuild cycle instead of a build-and-maintain cycle, Jack Welch became the company's most admired and successful CEO for the resultant transformation. He was able to consistently deliver profits for 20 years.

## **Apple Computer**

Customers embraced Apple computers when the mouse was introduced. This mouse was developed at Xerox, however, when it was first commercially implemented on the Apple Lisa, it failed. It was not until the Mac was released that the mouse succeeded. Although Apple computers did very well for several years, in the late 1990s sales dropped and the stock price plunged rapidly. In order to get back into the market, the company brought back the creativity of Steve Jobs who had first made it successful. He introduced new colours to Apple computers with which, according to Chowdhury (2002), consumers fell in love. Within a year Apple's stock quadrupled. The innovation wasn't revolutionary from a technology perspective, but excited customers perceived evolutionary innovation as revolutionary.

## **Sony**

Sony is a company devoted to the CELEBRATION of life. We create things for every kind of IMAGINATION. Products that stimulate the SENSES and refresh the spirit. Ideas that always surprise and never disappoint. INNOVATIONS that are easy to love, and EFFORTLESS to use, things that are essential, yet hard to live without. We are not here to be logical. Or predictable. We're here to pursue INFINITE possibilities. We allow the BRIGHTEST minds to interact freely, so the UNEXPECTED can emerge. We invite new THINKING so even more fantastic ideas can evolve. CREATIVITY is our essence. We take chances. We EXCEED expectations. We help dreamers DREAM (Sony South Africa 2005).

Sony is a \$60 billion global organisation which was founded in 1946 by Masaru Ibuka and Aki Morita. The name of the company was created by combining two words, 'sonus' and 'sonny'. The former, in Latin, means 'sound' and 'sonic' and the latter means 'little son'.

The words were used to describe Sony as a very small group of young people who have the energy and passion toward unlimited creation. According to Sony South Africa (2005:3):

Ibuka was a practical visionary who could foretell what products and technologies could be applied to everyday life. He inspired in his engineers a spirit of innovation and pushed them to reach beyond their own expectations. Ibuka also fostered an exciting working atmosphere and an open-minded corporate culture. In the founding prospectus, he wrote of his wish to build a company whose employees gained satisfaction and pleasure from their work and his desire to create a fun, dynamic workplace.

Sony has since been at the cutting edge of technology throughout history and has captured the imagination and enhanced people's lives. The following products have made Sony the leader in innovation: the first magnetic tape and tape recorder in 1950; the transistor radio in 1955; the world's first all-transistor TV set in 1960; the Compact Disc (CD) in 1982; the first 8mm camcorder in 1985; the MiniDisc (MD) player in 1992; the PlayStation game system in 1995; Digital Mavica camera in 1997; Digital Versatile Disc (DVD) player in 1998; and the Network Walkman digital music player in 1990.

As a result, Sony has captivated the minds of the consumers as the provider of the world's greatest brands. The company has always enjoyed brand equity that is rooted in product innovations.

When remarking about the importance of the Sony brand name, consider this quote from the Chairman of the Board, Norio Ohga: "In April of every year a large number of new employees join the company. And what I always say to them is that we have many marvelous assets here. The most valuable asset of all is the four letters, S, O, N, and Y. I tell them, make sure the basis of your actions is increasing the value of these four letters. In other words, when you consider doing something, you must consider whether your action will increase the value of SONY, or lower its value (Sony South Africa 2005:4).

In order to ensure the company continues to promote a world-class brand, Sony in the US recently embarked on an extensive company-wide programme aimed at fostering a common understanding of the Sony brand among staff (employees), consumers and customers.

The examples above clearly indicate that the work climate is of primary importance if creativity is to be nurtured and maximised. There are some climates that promote a challenging, supportive and caring spirit, which is a fundamental stimulant to the creative process. The creative self is influenced by the climate, which is therefore responsible for the development and maximisation of creativity, and the launching of initiative processes. Even suppressed personalities may thrive in an atmosphere of freedom and institutional support.

The essential criterion for the work climate is that it must be provocative. Leaders, mentors, facilitators, entrepreneurs and even children play an important role by educating people as to what creativity entails and showing that creativity is within the grasp of everybody (Sony South Africa 2005).

Furthermore Amabile (1996) believes that intrinsic motivation is conducive to creativity, but extrinsic motivation is detrimental. When individuals need to embark on any creative activity for themselves, they appear to be more creative because of their self-interest and the enjoyment the creative process brings. However, the same level of creativity does not exist when individuals are primarily motivated by goals imposed on them by others. Although the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation principle is still crucial in the theory of creativity, the researcher has focused more attention on other aspects of social influence on creativity.

### **Press - Assessing Creative Environments**

This strand underlies all the above strands and it is the place where creativity occurs. The strands of press, person and product interrelate with each other in the workplace environment. Factors contributing to this particular strand are creativity, climate, and systems, among others. The purpose of this section is to use the work of Amabile's KEYS instrument and Ekvall's Creative Climate Questionnaire to aid in identifying components of Press. Hence, the two models were used and are similar in many ways.

In her research Harvard Business School Professor Amabile (1996) drew on literature of creativity and developed an instrument (KEYS) that assesses the dimensions of the work environment that stimulated or impeded creativity. KEYS assesses the climate for creativity and innovation that exists within a work group, division or organisation. The KEYS scale is a survey and consists of 78 questions and can be completed in only 20 minutes, the researcher in this study used only the dimensions and formulated an interview schedule so that participants could be interviewed for about two hours. In this way in-depth views/opinions were valued and gathered.

KEYS assess six management practices that support the work environment and two management practices that inhibit the work environment. The following dimensions used in

his study, to collect data during interviews were fully acknowledged from Amabile (1996: 233),

**KEYS SCALES** and are defined as follows:

#### **Assessing Environmental Stimulants to Creativity**

**Organisational encouragement and support:** an organisational culture that encourages creativity through the fair, constructive judgment of ideas, reward and recognition for creative work, mechanisms for developing new ideas, and active flow of ideas, and a shared vision of what the organisation is trying to do. Sample item: "People are encouraged to solve problems creatively in this organisation."

**Supervisory encouragement:** A supervisor, who serves as a good work model, sets goals appropriately, supports the work group, values individual contributions, and shows confidence in the work group. Sample item: "My supervisor serves as a good work model."

**Work group supports:** a diversely skilled work group in which people communicate well, are open to new ideas, constructively challenge each other's work, trust and help each other, and feel committed to the work they are doing. Sample item: "There is free and open communication between my work group."

**Freedom:** freedom in deciding what work to do or how to do it; a sense of control over one's work. Sample item: "I have the freedom to decide how I am going to carry out my projects."

**Sufficient Resources:** access to appropriate resources, including funds, materials, facilities, and information. Sample item: "Generally, I can get the resources I need for my work."

**Challenging Work:** a sense of having to work hard on challenging tasks and important projects. Sample item: "I feel challenged by the work I am currently doing."

#### **Assessing Environmental Obstacles to Creativity:**

**Organisational Impediments:** an organisational culture that impedes creativity through internal political problems, harsh criticism of new ideas, destructive internal competition, an avoidance of risk, and an overemphasis of the status quo. Sample item: "There are many political problems in this organisation."

**Workload Pressure:** extreme time pressures, unrealistic expectations for productivity, and distractions from creative work. Sample item: "I have too much to do in too little time."

These dimensions, according to Politis (1996), evolve out of the context, the social and work conditions of the organisation and their impact is conditioned by the subjective perceptions of creative individuals whose experience is ruled by the history of their work environment. By understanding the creative process and characteristics of a creative environment the creative manager is better placed to remove the barriers to creative action (Henry 1991).

The second instrument was based on the work of an industrial psychologist who worked for large Swedish companies. Goran Ekvall first designed the Creative Climate Questionnaire (CCQ) in 1983, and later validated this earlier version. This instrument was related to research conducted in Sweden on organisational conditions that either stimulate or stifle creativity in 1980. It is a measure of climate which is defined as an attribute of the organisation composed of behaviours, attitudes, and feelings which characterise life in the organisation (Ekvall 1996 cited in Isaksen et.al 2001). This instrument was later known as the Situational Outlook Questionnaire (SOQ).

The version of the instrument used in this research is the Creative Climate Questionnaire (CCQ) and it includes ten dimensions. It must be noted that although the English CCQ is a Likert-type questionnaire that consists of 50 items forming 10 scales with five items each, this study has only considered the nine out of the 10 dimensions to measure the creative climate, and formulated an observation schedule so that participants could be observed against the criteria of the dimensions. The dimension of risk-taking was omitted because it was not observable. The following nine dimensions were adapted by Scott G. Isaksen (Creativity Research Unit, Buffalo) from Goran Ekvall in 1988. It was used in this study, to collect data during interviews and was fully acknowledged from Lauer (1994:57), **CREATIVE CLIMATE QUESTIONNAIRE (CCQ)** and is defined as follows:

### **Challenge**

The emotional involvement of the members of the organisation in its operations and goals. A high-challenge climate is seen when the people are experiencing joy and meaningfulness in their job, and therefore, they invest much energy. Low challenge means feelings of alienation and indifference; the common sentiment and attitude is apathy and lack of interest for the job and the organisation.

### **Freedom**

The independence in behavior exerted by people in the organisation. In a climate with much of this kind of freedom people are making contacts to give and receive information and discuss problems and alternatives; they plan and take initiatives of different kinds and they make decisions. The opposite climate would include people who are passive, rule-fixed and anxious to stay inside the frames and established boundaries.

### **Dynamism/Liveliness**

The eventfulness of life in the organisation. In the highly dynamic situation, new things are happening all the time and alterations between ways of thinking about and handling issues often occur. There is a kind of psychological turbulence, which is described by people in those organisations as “full speed”, “go,” “breakneck,” “maelstrom,” and the like. The opposite situation could be compared to a slow jog-trot with no surprises. There are no new projects; no different plans. Everything goes its usual way

### **Trust/Openness**

The emotional safety in relationships. When there is a strong level of trust, everyone in the organisation dares to put forward ideas and opinions. Initiatives can be taken without fear of reprisals and ridicule in case of failure. The communication is open and straightforward. Where trust is missing, people are suspicious of each other and count on high expenses for mistakes that may come. They also are afraid of being exploited and robbed of their good ideas.

### **Idea Time**

The amount of time people can use (and do use) for elaborating ideas. In the idea-time situation, the possibilities exist to discuss and test impulses and fresh suggestions that are not planned or included in the task assignment; and people tend to use these possibilities. In the reverse case, every minute is booked and specified. The time pressure makes outside the instructions and planned routines impossible.

### **Playfulness/Humour**

The spontaneity and ease is displayed. A relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter characterizes the organisation, which is high in this dimension. The opposite climate is characterized by gravity and seriousness. The atmosphere is stiff, gloomy and cumbersome. Jokes and laughter are regarded as improper.

### **Conflicts**

The presence of personal and emotional tensions (in contrast to idea tensions in the debates dimension) in the organisation. When the level of conflict is a high, group and single individuals hate each other and the climate can be characterized by “warfare.” Plots and traps are usual elements in the life of the organization. There is gossip and slander going on. In the opposite case, people behave in a more mature manner; they have psychological insight and control of the impulses.

### **Idea Support**



The ways new ideas are treated. In the supportive climate, bosses and workmates receive ideas and suggestions in an attentive and kind way. People listen to each other and encourage initiatives. Possibilities for trying out new ideas are created. The atmosphere is constructive and positive. When idea support is low, the reflexive “no” is prevailing. Every suggestion is immediately refuted by a counter-argument. Faultfinding and obstacle raising are the usual styles of responding to ideas.

### **Debates**

The occurrence of encounters and clashes between viewpoints, ideas, and differing experiences and knowledge. In the debating organisation many voices are heard and people are keen on putting forward their ideas. Where debates are missing, people follow authoritarian patterns without questioning.

Ekvall (1991) had suggested that the organisational climate originates in the interplay between people in the organisation and the structure and the environment obtained there. Then, by way of the individual’s perception, the organisational climate will produce a variety of effects on profitability, job satisfaction, innovativeness, and so on. The CCQ instrument developed by Ekvall and colleagues does have important implications for research of creative climate.

To focus the study of a climate for creativity, it is envisaged that Amabile’s KEYS and Ekvall’s CCQ stimulant and obstacle dimensions will seek to establish dynamic parallel interactions challenging managers and non-managers to nurture tangible creative practices at Thekwini FET College.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter considers the climate of the work environment and its association with factors known to contribute to creativity. Discussion in this chapter included the need for a dynamic interaction between creative people, creative processes, creative products and creative environments by way of supporting and encouraging related behaviours, moods and performance. By understanding the creative process and characteristics of a creative environment the creative manager is better placed to remove the barriers to creative action (Henry 1991).

The goal of creative climate in this research is directed at the definition in this study which supports the methods selected to validate the investigation. Also since it is only in recent years that creative climate has received empirical investigation, it is only appropriate to

conduct this research so that it will contribute and add value to the field of workplace learning.

This chapter has provided a wide spectrum of conceptual influences/strands with regard to the perceptions of creativity and climate. These now merge to form method with concept. To support this, KEYS and CCQ assess all work environment dimensions into perceptions of climate stimulants to creativity and climate stimulants to obstacles. The researcher essentially summarised the versions of both instruments. Therefore this study answers the major questions and sub-questions that are raised in this research.

The next chapter describes the qualitative research design including the methods and procedures employed in the present study. Chapter 3 allows the researcher to follow appropriate procedures in order to collect and analyse data that are in accordance with acceptable standards of conducting research.

**s**

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the research design and research paradigms that underpin the study. The research paradigm includes qualitative methodological techniques of sampling, data collection and data analysis. Ethical issues, validity and reliability are also presented in this chapter. A starting point in trying to understand the design of the study involves the research questions that influenced the research design.

The major questions were:

- (1) In what ways do employees perceive the climate for creativity in the workplace?
- (2) How is this climate for creativity nurtured or stifled in the workplace?

The sub-questions were:

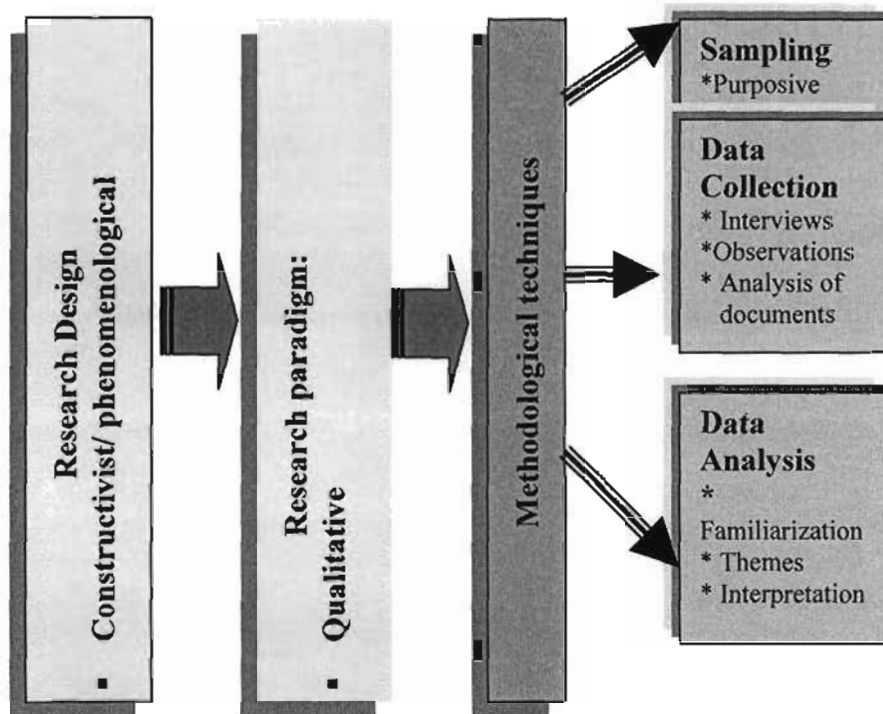
- (3) What is meant by a 'creative climate'?
- (4) What are the critical success factors for inducing and facilitating a creative climate at Thekwini FET College?

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This section describes the foundation that supports the methodologies and creative climate investigations employed in this study.

Leedy & Ormrod (2001) define research design as a design that is the complete strategy of attack on the central research problem. It provides the overall structure for the procedures that the researcher follows; the data that the researcher collects; and the data analyses that the researcher conducts. Simply put, research design is planning. To demonstrate this planning the following figure demonstrates the strategic framework employed in this dissertation.

**Figure 3.1: Basic format of the research design adopted in this study**



Each facet of the research design will be discussed in the following subsections.

### **Constructivism and the nature of perceptions**

The dissertation is underpinned by the constructivist learning theory, applied both to learning theory and to epistemology. Constructivism states that we organise the world around us perceptually, visually, intellectually, and with respect to behaviour from what is available to our senses and experience – that this is not a learned process from an outside source or other form of input, that we gather information via perception and assemble it in human terms because of our internal structure (neutral), which does not vary much from one individual to another (Bray 1999).

Since perceptions describe this study, in understanding the climate for creativity, the notion of constructivism is at the heart of this design. The relationship between the employees and the workplace is acknowledged and interacts with each other to shape the environment. Therefore, any meanings or realities constructed in this environment depend on self-made constructs. Employees' perceptions of the climate for creativity at Thekwini FET College may be distorted or unerrred depending on the nature of these constructs.

Constructivism within the workplace-learning context positions managers and non-managers as people who do not learn in isolation from the rest of their lives: these people learn in relationship to what else they know, what they believe, their prejudices and their fears. The social view of constructivism, exemplified by Vygotsky, posits that knowledge is co-constructed through social and cultural contexts, rendering reality non-objective. Knowledge socially constructed as reality is created during physical and social activity (Gibson & McKay 2000). On reflection, research on the manner in which people learn in the workplace becomes clear that this point is actually a corollary of the idea that learning is active and social. Learning cannot be separated from people's lives. Billet (1993) indicates that although learning is a matter of personal and unique interpretation, it takes place within the social context. In addition, learning must be useful to the learner; intrinsic motivation emerges from the desire to understand, to construct meaning.

Research on how people learn in the workplace demonstrates that what is taking place is constructivist (Kerka 1997). Therefore, Billett (1993) argues that research findings support the value of contextualised learning that provides opportunities for knowledge acquisition and construction, practice and reinforcement, in "natural settings" such as the workplace.

### **Phenomenology**

According to Rubin & Babbie (1993), the more philosophical term phenomenology is often used to emphasize a focus on people's subjective experiences and interpretations of the world. In particular, phenomenology has become a way of researching the gaps in the discipline, those areas that previously were not considered important to research because they had little to do with the public and the patriarchal world of geography (Campbell n.d.). Often we are surrounded by many phenomena such as events, situations, experiences and concepts of which we are aware but do not fully understand. Phenomenological research emerges with the recognition that there is a gap in our understanding of any lived experience and as a human response that awareness or clarification will be of benefit.

A major approach to this research study is phenomenology, which is a descriptive study of how individuals perceive and experience the creative climate (phenomenon) in the workplace. Leedy & Ormrod (2001) indicate that a descriptive study is often a very 'busy' research method: The researcher must decide on the population; choose a sampling technique; minimise the entrance of bias into the study; develop a valid means of collecting

the desired information; and then actually collect, record, organise, and analyse the data. Descriptive research is thus a type of research that is primarily concerned with describing the present situation in detail according to the degree of the prevalent nature or conditions. The emphasis is on describing rather than on judging or interpreting (Landman 1988). The type of research engaged in this context does not necessarily provide definitive explanations but it does raise awareness and increases insight into ways that knowledge is constructed.

By describing the climate for creativity the researcher was able to look at learning styles and attitudes in the workplace and the recurring patterns of behaviour that interact with other variables such as organisational stimulants and obstacles.

### **3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM**

#### **Qualitative Paradigm**

Since any exploration of phenomenology as a research method needs to be set in a wider context, this study concentrated on the qualitative paradigm. Gay & Airasian (1996) theorised that the underlying belief of qualitative research is that meaning is situated in a particular perspective or context, and, since different people and groups have different perspectives and contexts, there are many different meanings in the world, none of which is necessarily more valid or true than the other. Qualitative researchers are concerned primarily with process, rather than outcomes or products (Merriam 1988). In this study the research process was descriptive and inductive. The researcher builds abstractions, concepts and theories by gathering information concerning the current status of the phenomena and describes existing variables or conditions in the situation. For that reason, qualitative researchers believe that this paradigm emphasises the importance of taking into account all variables in the natural setting, including how research participants understand and make sense of the topic which the researcher is exploring.

By placing the interviewer as the integral part of the study, the researcher was able to acquire detailed data through open-ended questions that provided direct quotations. This research is illustrated by substantial extracts in Chapter Four and makes the processes of analysis transparent for discussion in Chapter Five. In this way, the qualitative research has provided people with a means of attempting to understand this phenomenon that could not be understood in terms of numbers and objectivity.

**Qualitative Research differs from Quantitative Research:**

In order to gain a clearer understanding of qualitative research, it is necessary to compare its characteristics to those of quantitative research. The differences mainly result from the positivist (the belief that the world can be measured, understood, and generalised about) perspective of quantitative research versus the constructivist (the belief that the world has different meanings) perspective of qualitative research.

**Table 3.1: Qualitative research differs from quantitative research in this study**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Qualitative Research</b>	<b>Quantitative Research</b>
<b>Approach</b>	Inductive form of reasoning	Deductive form of reasoning
<b>Purpose</b>	Describes social phenomena as they occur naturally, Describing multiple realities, developing in-depth understanding of social aspects of the world	Hypothesis testing, Prediction, Control, Causal explanations
<b>Research Focus</b>	Concerned with opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals producing subjective data, examines full context, collects data through one to one interviews or by observation	Uses large, random, representative samples, Anonymous to the research participants, uses inanimate instruments such as surveys, tests, scales, questionnaires and computers.
<b>Goal of investigation</b>	Understanding, description, Discovery, hypothesis generating	Prediction, control, description, Confirmation, Hypothesis testing
<b>Data Analysis</b>	Mainly descriptive, interpretive	Mainly statistical

<b>Philosophical roots</b>	Phenomenology, Symbolic interaction	Positivism, Logical empiricism

In summary Leedy & Ormrod (2001:101) noted that:

Both approaches involve similar processes (e.g. formation of one or more hypotheses, review of the related literature, collection and analysis of data). Yet these processes are often combined and carried out in different ways, leading to distinctly different research methods. For instance, quantitative researchers usually start with a specific hypothesis to be tested. They isolate the variables they want to study, control for extraneous variables, use a standardized procedure to collect some form of numerical data, and use statistical procedures to analyze and draw conclusions from the data. In contrast, qualitative researchers often start with a general research questions rather than specific hypothesis, collect an extensive amount of verbal data from a small number of participants, organize those data into some form that gives them coherence, and use verbal descriptions to portray the situation they have studied.

In Creswell (1998:68), three philosophical assumptions of qualitative research frame the design of this research:

- a.) The climate for creativity experienced in the participants' workplace is subjective with multiple interpretations (ontological *assumption*);
- b.) The interpretations and constructed meaning of the perceptions and experience, based on the participants' work life /history, are biased (axiological *assumption*);
- c.) An inductive process revealing patterns that will heighten cognition of the participants' experience (*methodological assumption*).

### 3.4 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The researcher identified Thekwini FET College for this study because of easy access to the various campuses during his non-teaching time; no excessive loss of time; or having to incur excessive travelling costs. **Table 3.2** below shows the number of participants from each of Thekwini FET College's campuses. All campuses offer full-time national Department of Education instructional programmes in both the FET and HE and Training bands. The Sharks Academy is a satellite campus in which young sportsmen are enrolled for a one-, two- or three-year course in Sports Management and Administration (with a rugby focus). Lessons



in Marketing Management at the Academy (ABSA Stadium) are conducted by specialist staff from the Centec Campus. Since the staff members move from one campus to another (i.e. from Centec campus to ABSA Stadium) and, thus, operate outside government bureaucracy, the researcher wanted to capture staff perceptions on the climate for creativity in this unique set up.

**Table 3.2 Research participants of Thekwini FET College**

<b>Departments</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Participants</b>
a. Business Studies	Springfield	1 senior lecturer & 2 staff members
b. Catering & Hospitality	Centec	1 senior lecturer and 2 staff members
c. Hair & Beauty	Cato manor	1 senior lecturer and 2 staff members
d. Business Studies	Umbilo	1 senior lecturer and 1 staff member
e. Business Studies	Sharks Academy	2 staff members

### **Sampling Rationale**

The researcher who conducts a descriptive study wants to determine the nature of how things are. In many cases, the researcher will want to describe one or more characteristics of a fairly large population. In such situations, he/she will usually not study the entire population of interest. Instead, the researcher will select a subset, or sample, of that population. But the results obtained from the sample can only be used to make generalisations about the entire population if the sample is truly representative of the population (Leedy & Ormrod 2001)

The sample of this descriptive study comprised mainly lecturers (level 1) and senior lecturers (Level 2) at Thekwini FET College. It was not practical to interview all the College staff-members, therefore sampling of the staff was the only option. Table 3.2 shows the 13 participants who were interviewed for this study. The selection of the participants for this study was critical with regard to their experiences and their capacity to genuinely share their perceptions of the climate for creativity. This served as the primary data source. The sample provided the researcher with a manageable and applicable unit of analysis from which reliable and valid data was produced. A brief description of the respondents is necessary to prevent confusion in this study.

The following informed participants were:

- Senior lecturers (managers)
- Lecturers (non-managers)

Since senior lecturers are effectively Heads of Department and manage staff they are referred to as 'managers' and lecturers 'non-managers'. In some instances in this study, both managers and non-managers are also referred to collectively as 'employees' or 'professionals'. For the purposes of this study, it is necessary to understand the job functions of the senior lecturer and lecturer so that their job roles frame the context of organisational behaviour that prevails in the workplace. By sensitising one's self to the hierarchical context of this organisation, the researcher was able to comprehend participant's perceptions of the climate for creativity at Thekwini FET College. The role functions of the manager (senior lecturer) and non-manager (lecturer) are outlined below:

### **SENIOR LECTURER**

*Rank: Post level 2*

Campus management is the responsibility of the Campus Manager and the Campus Management Team consisting of the Head/s of Division, Senior Lecturer and the Administration Officer. Heads of Division are senior managers of the Academic Branch, assisted by the Senior Lecturers who, effectively, are Heads of Department. The role function of senior lecturers are to engage in lecturing, be responsible for the effective functioning of the department and to organise relevant/related extra-curricular activities so as to ensure that the subject, learning area or phase and the education of learners is promoted in a proper manner.

### **LECTURER**

*Rank: Post level 1*

The role functions of lecturers are to engage in class teaching, including the academic, administrative, educational and disciplinary aspects and to organise extra and co-curricular activities so as to ensure that the education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner. The core duties and responsibilities of the lecturers are individual and varied.

### **Non-probability Sampling**

In order to respond to the challenges of a representative sample, non-probability sampling was adopted. Leedy & Ormrod (2001) maintain that in non-probability sampling, the researcher has no way of forecasting or guaranteeing that each element of the population will

be represented in the sample. Furthermore, some members of the population have little or no chance of being sampled. Johnson (1994:75) concurs that:

a non-probability sample deliberately avoids representing the wider population; it seeks only to represent a particular group, a particular named section of the wider population, for example, a class of students, a group of students who are not taking a particular examination, a group of teachers. In this latter type, the researcher has deliberately, purposely selected a particular section of the wider population to include in or exclude from the sample.

There are three types of non-probability sampling, i.e. convenience sampling, quota sampling and purposive sampling. This study adopted the latter. In purposive sampling, people or other units are chosen, as the name implies, for a particular purpose. For instance, we might choose people who we have decided are 'typical' of a group or those who represent diverse perspectives on an issue (Leedy & Ormrod 2001).

For the purpose of this study, the raw qualitative data of transcripts from interviews with managers and non-managers at Thekwini FET College accentuate the importance of purposive sampling in selecting participants. Participants were systematically selected to heighten differences along the dimensions of the KEYS scale and the CCQ, to exhibit effects of changes and to validate relationships between dimensions. Participants' status within the institution was presented with demographic information in **Table 3.3**.

**Table 3.3 Total Group Demographics**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total Group	13
Males	4
Females	9
Age Range	32 – 54 years
Work Experience	6 months – 32years

From this population, all individuals work as professionals within the context of everyday organisational life. In this sample, there are four senior lecturers (three female and one male

participant). Three senior lecturers are 50-years-old and above. These participants have each served the Department of Education for more than 20 years. The fourth senior lecturer is 40-years-old and has worked in this institution for 13 years. All four participants volunteered to participate in this study after understanding the nature of the research topic.

This sample also includes nine lecturers from selected Thekwini FET College' departments and comprises six female and three male lecturers. The youngest lecturer is 32-years-of-age and the oldest lecturer is 54-years-old. It is important to note that all respondents previously worked for other organisations and spoke informally about the respective creative climates. Participants provided details of their experiences in their former workplaces. Many respondents, therefore, were easily able to identify with the topic.

After a preliminary meeting with all the volunteers, the researcher was able to establish his sample size as a catalyst for his study. All participants met the following criteria:

- Had working knowledge experience and were able to provide a rich description of the creative climate in their work environment;
- Were responsive and amenable to articulate emotions, reflections, insights, thoughts and open-mindedness (impartiality) on their experiences in the workplace;
- Participants stood a better chance of legitimately highlighting salient factors that could either enhance or stifle creativity at Thekwini FET College.

Once the sample size was established the researcher had to take cognisance of ethical issues discussed in the next section.

### **3.5. ETHICAL ISSUES**

In most dictionaries and in common usage, ethics is typically associated with morality and both deal with matters of right and wrong (Rubin & Babbie 1993).

Ethical issues arise from our interaction with other people, other beings (such as animals) and the environment, especially at the point where there is potential or actual conflict of interests. In many cases, what is right for one person might not be right for other people. In some cases, doing the right thing might involve placing the greater good ahead of specific benefits that might accrue to one. In many cases, ethical choices involve a trade-off or compromise between the interests and rights of different parties (Mouton 2001:239).

An ethical obligation remains with the researcher to safeguard participants against any form of vexation and victimisation, which may emerge, within reasonable limits, from the nature of this research project.

The following ethical issues are relevant to this study:

- The researcher was open and honest with all participants. The profile and circumstances of the researcher was revealed to all participants through verbal and written communication;
- The objectives of the research and the procedures to be followed were thoroughly explained to all the participants through verbal and written communication;
- The outcome of the final study will be made available to the Chief Executive Officer (Rector) and the College Council. Thekwini FET College will be the beneficiary of this study;
- Any controversial findings in this study were handled with sensitivity;
- Informed consent was obtained from the CEO of Thekwini FET College and the research participants;
- Participants were given the opportunity to withdraw their participation from the study at any time if they so wished;
- The respect, privacy and support of all interested participants were embraced through the guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity;
- A letter of gratitude/ appreciation will be forwarded to the CEO, College Council and participants for allowing and accommodating the researcher to conduct the studies at Thekwini FET College.

### **Acknowledging the Probable Presence of Bias**

In the research environment, the researcher cannot avoid having data contaminated by bias of one sort or another. What is unprofessional, however, is for the researcher to fail to acknowledge the likelihood of biased data or fail to recognise the possibility of bias in the study (Leedy & Ormrod 2001).

It became clear to the researcher that in trying to understand the depth of creativity in a bureaucratic climate it would require flexibility in the research to incorporate subjectivist points of view. In this research it was necessary to make provision for subjectivity in order to understand the creative climate of the workplace. There was always the element of multiple perspectives of describing the creative climate, all of which were 'valid' and needed to be

explored. Throughout the research it was important for the researcher to be aware of this subjectivity and to consciously reflect on it and remain unbiased at all times. By being unbiased means the tendency to not focus on certain points of view more than others. In this way the researcher was able to preclude prejudices that would have not only influenced the direction of the research but flaw this study with the possibility of misjudgments.

### **Informed Consent**

The key element in informed consent is not the comprehensiveness of the study provided to the prospective research participant, but rather its relevance to the participant's decision to give consent. Research participants should be told the nature of the study to be conducted and be given the choice of either participating or not participating. Furthermore, they should be told that, if they agree to participate, they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary (Leedy & Ormrod 2001).

Moreover it is important that the ethical principle of respect for the participants be upheld at all times. The participants in this study were given a valid informed consent form that included the following pertinent points:

- Unveiled and acknowledged significant information to prospective participants about the study and that it involved valuable research;
- An explanation of the purpose of the research and establishment of the participant's comprehension of the information ;
- A description of the procedures to be followed and the timeframe of the subject's participation;
- A description of the necessary risk management strategies and countermeasures taken to minimise them;
- An important averment included the extent to which records were to be kept confidential as well as disclosure of any benefits to the participant and the organisation;
- The participants voluntarily agreed to be part of the sample and were free from intimidation and undue influence to participate.

Strydom (2000) cites that emphasis must be placed on accurate and complete information so that subjects will fully comprehend the investigation and, consequently, be able to make a voluntary, thoroughly reasoned decision about their possible participation.

## Anonymity and Confidentiality

Mouton (2001:243) emphasizes that:

Informants have a right to remain anonymous. The right should be respected because where it has been promised explicitly and where no clear understanding to the contrary has been reached. The conditions of anonymity apply to the collection of data by means of cameras, tape recorders and other data gathering devices, as well as to data collected in face-to-face interviews or in participant observation. Those being studied should understand the workings of such devices and should be free to reject them if they so wish. (...). Whereas anonymity refers to the principle that the identity of an individual is kept secret, the principle of confidentiality refers to the information gathered from subjects.

Therefore, it is proper practice to assure respondents that their identity will remain anonymous and their responses confidential. As part of the selection process, each participant agreed to follow an ethical code explained in the informed consent form. To comply ethically and methodologically the researcher discussed confidentiality and anonymity with each participant (lecturers and senior lecturers) before they could sign the consent form. Each participant selected a code name to ensure anonymity – these names were taken from the Daler-Rowney Georgian Oil Colour Chart. The names of the campuses were also coded in alphabetical order and were followed by a numerical sequence with four digits.

**Table 3.4 Key to Code Names of Participant & Campuses**

		<b>Campus Codes</b>	<b>NAMES</b>
A	2	000	Mrs Naples Yellow
A	2	000	Mrs Lemon Yellow
B	3	000	Mr Permanent Geranium
B	3	000	Mr Scarlet Lake
B	3	000	Mr Crimson Alizarin
C	4	000	Mrs French Ultramarine
C	4	000	Mrs Permanent Blue
C	4	000	Miss Cobalt Blue
D	5	000	Mrs Light Red
D	5	000	Miss Venetian Red
D	5	000	Mr Indian Red
E	6	000	Mrs Ivory Black
E	6	000	Ms Lamp Black

An audio typist assisted in typing the full transcripts and was debriefed about the sensitivity of the responses recorded and collected during the interviews. With the obligation to constantly reflect on the guardianship of such data and to avert any foreseeable problems, the

audio typist signed an ethical clearance form to respect the anonymity and confidentiality of all respondents in this study. Mouton (2001:244) concurs that:

Confidential information provided by research participants must be treated as such by researchers, even when this information enjoys no legal protection or privilege, and no legal force is applied. The obligation to respect confidentiality also applies to members of research organisations (interviewers, coders, clerical staff, etc.) who have access to the information. Anyone who works with the data at any point should be made aware of this obligation.

### **Trust Development**

Establishing on-going, reciprocal trust development is often easier to write about or verbalise than to do. In order to earn the trust of the participants the researcher was well aware that it was essential to respect them and actively use effective listening and understanding skills. Some examples of listening skills used in this research were accepting participant's reality, asking open-ended questions, paraphrasing questions and responses, demonstrating attentive body language during the interviews. This resulted in both the interviewer and interviewee understanding tacitly that the norm, in all interviews, would be mutual respect, effective listening and espousing the codes of ethics. Consequently, the researcher made certain that before he commenced the interview, ethical considerations were addressed to participants about informed consent, right of privacy and protection from physical or emotional harm in the organisation.

Another aspect of trust development was ensuring that participants were safe and secure with the location of their interviews. Interviews with two of the participants took place in the students' toilet so that they would not be identified by any other staff-members and that there would be no eavesdropping on the responses to the questions. Interviews with two other participants took place in the campus library's storeroom.

Participants felt intimidated about being interviewed in the senior lecturer's office. Due to the location of some of the interviews, unplanned interruptions were inevitable but posed no problems. As a result there was a strengthening of the trust between the interviewer and the interviewee with the inherent support of agreed-upon protocol for anonymity and confidentiality.

During the data collection phase (that evolved over two months) participants showed a commitment to the process and responsibly kept their interview appointments. They



willingly shared their perceptions of the climate for creativity in the workplace by openly responding to the scheduled questions and shared their views and emotions about the hierarchical structures of communication, about co-workers, resources, organisational impediments, workload pressures, supervisory encouragement and other sensitive issues practiced in the workplace. By emphasizing confidentiality and anonymity in the interview the majority of the participants were comfortable about their interviews being taped, reinforcing the trust which had developed.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

Data and methodology are inextricably interdependent. For this reason, the methodology to be used for a particular research problem must always take into account the nature of the data that will be collected in the resolution of the problem (Leedy & Ormrod 2001). Qualitative approaches to data collection usually involve direct interaction with individuals on a one-on-one basis or in a group setting. Data collection methods are time-consuming and consequently data is collected from smaller numbers of people than would usually be the case in quantitative approaches such as the questionnaire survey. The benefits of using these approaches include richness of data and deeper insight into the phenomena under study (Hancock 1998).

This research employed triangulation and this infers the use of more than one method of data collection to guarantee validity and reliability of facts or information. Leedy & Ormrod (2001) says that qualitative researchers frequently use triangulation- comparing multiple data sources in search of common themes- to support the validity of their findings.

This qualitative method of triangulation was valuable to this study because findings that were deduced from data collected had minimal bias in this approach. For the purpose of validity and reliability, diverse methods of data collection were employed. This study was triangulated through the application of three research methods namely:

- (a) **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews;
- (b) **Observations:** informal; and
- (c) **Documentary analysis:** Analysis of all correspondence, department meetings, management meetings, etc.

## **Interviews**

Interviewing is an effective tool for data collection and can be highly-structured, semi-structured or unstructured. In this case the researcher employed the semi-structured interview technique. Participants were able to spontaneously quote their perceptions, experiences, workplace knowledge, feelings and opinions about research topic. A common protocol of the chosen interview is person-to-person, with a set of general and specific questions. The questions posed during the interviews were generally flexible and were presented by one person (interviewer) to acquire explanations and clarifications from the other person (interviewee). The objective of conducting face-to-face interviews was to elicit in-depth understanding of the informant's perception of the climate for creativity in the workplace. This type of interview comprised a series of open-ended questions that concentrated on senior lecturers' and lecturers' perceptions of the climate for creativity. The interview schedule was based on the questions of the following dimensions of KEYS. The questions were carefully prepared in categories that included organisational stimulants and obstacles. **[See Annexure A for Schedule]**

The categories are: Organisational encouragement and support; Supervisory encouragement; Work group supports; Freedom; Sufficient Resources; Challenging work; Organisational impediments and Workload pressure.

The open-ended nature of the questions defines the topic under investigation but provides opportunities for both interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail. If the interviewee has difficulty answering a question or provides only a brief response, the interviewer can use cues or prompts to encourage the interviewee to consider the question further (Hancock 1998). This type of interview allowed the researcher the freedom of objectivity and depth to probe the interviewee for further interpretation from their original responses of a question. An example is:

### **Interviewer:**

Do you think that employees are recognised as individuals? Or does the job give/deny you any chance to use personal initiative or judgment in carrying out the work?

**Interviewee:**

No! because I don't know. I always find that in any type of situation especially in terms of a work situation, but especially in education there is this feeling of superiority from certain people with more qualifications or high qualifications or or better qualifications or higher position or whatever so ... err everybody tries to like playing it up with power, so and I think individuality is lost through that.

**Interviewer:**

So does your job give you any chance to use personal initiative or judgment?

**Interviewee:**

No, it doesn't.

**Interviewer:**

What restricts you?

**Interviewer:**

Just the fact that, that we are stuck in the same thing you have to this is what I doing, it needs to get done and within a certain period of time and obviously you have to have results at the end of this semester, term or year and. err.. I think that because we are teaching groups of students, I think a lot of individuality is, lost there as well in terms of how you teach and in terms of how the students respond. I think in terms of work situation it's the same. If you are a manager and you managing four, five departments a lot of individuality is lost and I think because there's not enough communication between management, the different departments and the people.

According to Hancock (1998:23):

If the interview schedule is too tightly structured this may not enable the phenomenon under investigation to be explored in terms of either breadth or depth. Semi structured interviews tend to work well when the interviewer has already identified a number of aspects he wants to be sure of addressing. The interviewer can decide in advance what areas to cover but is open and receptive to unexpected information from the interviewee. This can be particularly important if a limited time is available for each interview and the interviewer wants to be sure that the "key issues" will be covered.

**Pilot Interview**

Most errors, such as misunderstanding questions because of their ambiguity, are caused by failure to pre-test the questionnaire (Mouton 2001). Prior to scheduling the formal interviews at Thekwini FET College, the researcher interviewed two volunteer staff members from the College who met the criteria of the study and were not part of the selected sample. The purpose of the pilot was to:

- Ensure that the study is made valid and reliable;
- Ensure that the questions set were appropriate in terms of level of language used;

- Assess the need to develop or clarify questions;
- Assess if the researcher used effective interviewing and listening techniques;
- Check duration of the interview;
- Ensure that participants are comfortable with the unobtrusive tape recorder; and
- Ensure that rich data is yielded from the interviewing techniques.

The participants in the pilot interview were two research colleagues who reviewed the transcripts and provided comments to the researcher. In this way the researcher was able to re-examine and modify the interview schedule.

### **Tape Recording**

During the interviews the researcher tape-recorded each participant's response, having acquired prior permission from the interviewees. The researcher preferred handling the qualitative responses in this way to avoid the distraction of writing down the verbal responses. However, in some cases notes were taken down to capture the non-verbal indicators, such as body language and facial expressions. By using a tape-recorder the researcher was able to attentively listen and respond to the interviewee. In this way, the interview / conversation progressed spontaneously without any interruptions. Hancock (1998) explained that in note-taking there is an increased risk of interviewer-bias because the interviewer is likely to make notes of the comments, which make immediate sense or are perceived as being directly relevant or particularly interesting. Tape-recording ensures that the whole interview is captured and provides complete data for analysis so that cues, which are missed the first time, can be recognised when listening to the recording.

### **Transcribing the Interviews**

The qualitative data gathered by interviewing participants was produced in a typed format known as a transcript. Because of the in-depth and open-endedness of qualitative interviews, recording responses poses quite a challenge to the interviewer (Babbie & Rubin 1993). All 13 interviews conducted were taped and transcribed. In this way the researcher was able to become familiar with key messages emerging from the data as well as the terminology and language contained in the interviews. Good quality transcribing is not simply transferring words from the tape to the page. Tone and inflection are good indicators of a whole range of feelings and meanings. When transcribing, consideration should be given to how these

feelings and meanings can be communicated on paper by using punctuation marks, and techniques such as upper case lettering, underlining and boldening (Hancock 1998).

### **Observations**

Johnson (1994) elaborates that in social research observation is generally used to record behaviour. It may be employed as a primary method of data collection to provide an accurate description of a situation; to gather supplementary data, which may qualify or help interpret other sources of data; or it may be used in an exploratory way, to gain insights, which can be tested by other techniques. In some research observation of people is not required but observation of the environment is. This can provide valuable background information about the environment where a research project is being undertaken (Hancock 1998). Observation was a primary method of data collection in this study and the researcher observed the behaviour of participants and recorded it.

Data collected from various campuses included:

- detailed descriptions of the participant's daily activities;
- power structure, lines of authority, decision making patterns;
- different ways in which participants organise themselves into groups and sub-groups - patterns of interaction;
- arrangement of physical setting, environment;
- interpersonal interactions, behaviours, actions (formally and informally);
- organisational processes, procedures; and
- The manner in which staff dress, non-verbal cues.

Observation was therefore an important aspect of gathering data for the researcher who uncovered covert behaviour in the workplace and unfolded issues that were not discussed by participants at their respective interviews. Johnson (1994) informs researchers of four types of observations:

- To participate actively in the group observed;
- To be a member of the group but keep participation to a minimum;
- To observe without becoming a member of the group;
- To keep his or her presence unknown.

The researcher, now and then, became a member of the group but kept participation to a minimum and to some extent observed 'from the outside'. The researcher had to constantly be conscious of any presumptions that he held and which might influence his findings, therefore this study warranted the use of an observation schedule [See **Annexure C for Schedule**].

The natures of the campus/departments were observed in general: senior lecturer's offices, staff-room, classrooms, social networks amongst staff-members, informal gatherings, informal conversations, subject/ department meetings and the environment of the campuses in general. The researcher attended four department meetings (one in each department) and sat in places that were unobtrusive to the rest of the participants. At these meetings the researcher observed as a non-participant. He listened attentively, learnt to remember interesting events and as much as possible avoided note taking. Since ethical issues sensitised the researcher, he avoided intrusion and precluded participants from being nervous or emphasised that they were being observed.

According to Hancock (1998), in interviews, participants may be asked about how they behave in certain situations but there is no guarantee that they actually do what they say they do. Observing them in those situations is more reliable: it is possible to see how they actually behave. Observations can also serve as a technique for verifying or nullifying information provided in face-to-face encounters. This advantage of the observation technique enabled the researcher to use the participant's actual recorded behaviour to compare the validity of his/her responses. The disadvantage of observations was sometimes the researcher-identified data collected from observations that was not relevant to what was required by the research questions. Nevertheless, this data provided valuable background information that only enriched the study further.

### **Analysing documents**

A wide range of written materials can produce qualitative information. They can be particularly useful in trying to understand the philosophy of an organization. They can include policy documents, mission statements, annual reports, minutes of meetings, codes of conduct, etc. Notice boards can be a valuable source of data (Hancock 1998). By analysing relevant workplace documents, senior lecturer's and lecturer's perceptions of the climate for creativity in the workplace can either be strengthened or invalidated.

In this study, the researcher analysed the following documents, looking at words, sentences and paragraphs to synthesise or discredit responses from participants and assess data against the key questions:

- (a) Job Description: Senior Lecturer;
- (b) Job Description: Lecturer;
- (c) Agenda and Minutes of Subject Committee Meetings;
- (d) Electronic communications between managers and staff;
- (e) Campus Operational Management Plans;
- (f) Minutes of meetings of Academic Board;
- (g) Minutes of meetings of the Extended Management Team;
- (h) Minutes of meetings of the Executive Committee of the Staff Association;
- (i) Internal Memorandums at each campus;
- (j) Minutes of department/division meeting.

Although these documents were quite informative, they had their limitations, which are discussed in Chapter Five. Interpreting and analysing information from documents can lead to bias and in most cases the researcher had to check their authenticity and accuracy. Therefore, the researcher had to constantly be aware of these limitations when analysing the above documents.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

In qualitative research, Hancock (1998) explains that the analysis of data in a research project involves summarising the mass of data collected and presenting the results in a way that communicates the most important features. Analysing qualitative data in this study influenced the researcher to adopt an inductive process of identifying patterns in the thematic categories of the interview schedule.

With inductive analysis the research started with specific observations and developed towards general patterns. In this way the researcher was able to make sense of the situation by allowing categories/ determinants/ dimensions to uncover themselves.

The analysis necessitated the systematic process of selecting themes from KEYS and CCQ, placing them into categories, comparing data, synthesising meanings for interpretation. This interpretation of data incorporated a synopsis of the themes and variations of the managers' and non-managers' experiences of the climate for creativity within the context of Thekwini FET College. The findings and discussion supplemented data to review relevant literature and validate the single phenomenon of interest in this study. In this study, the findings merely described the current situation, individual's opinions and practices.

In this qualitative data analysis the conglomeration of words produced by interviews and observational data was described and summarised. Most important, the key and sub-research questions outlined in the introduction of this chapter were specifically used as a frame for intervention in the processes of data analysis

### **Stages in Data Analysis**

According to Lacey & Luff (2001) the question may require the researcher to seek relationships between various themes that have been identified, or to relate behaviour or ideas to biographical characteristics of respondents such as age or gender. Implications for policy or practice may be derived from data, or interpretation sought of puzzling findings from previous studies. Ultimately theory could be developed and tested using advanced analytical techniques.

In this study the analysis of data followed these stages:

- (a) Transcription of tape-recorded material;
- (b) Familiarisation of the data through reading, listening, reviewing;
- (c) Organisation of data for easy retrieval and identification;
- (d) Anonymisation of sensitive data;
- (e) Coding / indexing;
- (f) Identification of themes;
- (g) Re-coding;
- (h) Development of provisional categories;
- (i) Exploration of relationships between categories;
- (j) Development of theory and incorporation of pre-existing knowledge;
- (k) Testing of theory against data;



- (l) Report writing, including excerpts from original data, where appropriate (e.g. quotes from interviews).

### **Theories and Methods used in qualitative data analysis**

There is no one right way to analyse qualitative data, and there are several approaches available. Much qualitative analysis falls under the general heading of 'thematic analysis' (Lacey & Luff 2001:41). For this particular study the researcher employed the framework analysis approach.

Framework Analysis was explicitly developed in the context of applied policy research. Applied research aims to meet specific information needs and provide outcomes or recommendations, often within a short timescale. Framework Analysis shares many of the common features of much qualitative analysis, and of what is often called 'thematic analysis'. The benefit of Framework Analysis is that it provides systematic and visible stages to the analysis process (...) can be clear about the stages by which the results have been obtained from the data. Also, although the general approach in Framework Analysis is inductive, this form of analysis allows for the inclusion of a priori as well as emergent concepts, for example in coding. (Lacey & Luff 2001: 41)

There are five key stages in Framework Analysis. In this study all data was collected before the researcher could conduct the analysis. The key stages were:

- **Familiarisation:** the whole transcription was read for data analysis. The researcher re-listened to the audiotapes and this was done several times to become familiar with the data (regarding experiences, opinions, knowledge and feelings). Observation notes were also gathered (regarding behaviours, environment, organisational processes, interpersonal interactions) and all documents to be analysed were read (for words, paragraphs and sentences).
- **Identifying a thematic framework:** This framework was developed from the initial coding framework, from prior and emerging issues from the familiarisation stage. During subsequent stages this thematic framework was developed and refined. This was achieved by grouping similar issues and ideas expressed by respondents into preset categories related to organisational stimulants (e.g supervisory encouragement or obstacles such as workload pressure). For this study the following themes were used:

- (a) Theme 01 – organisational encouragement and support / Idea Support

- (b) Theme 02 – Supervisory encouragement/ Trust / Openness
- (c) Theme 03 – Work group Supports / Dynamism / Liveliness
- (d) Theme 04 – Freedom
- (e) Theme 05 – Sufficient Resources / Idea Time
- (f) Theme 06 - Challenging Work / Challenge
- (g) Theme 07 – Playfulness / Humour
- (h) Theme 08- Debates
- (i) Theme 09 – Organisational Impediments / Conflicts
- (j) Theme 10 – Workload Pressure

- **Indexing:** In this stage the researcher used textual codes to identify specific pieces of data that corresponded with various themes. This was the process of applying the thematic framework to the collected data. Two conventional systems were used by the researcher to code the data:

- *Cutting and Pasting:* the researcher was able to cut the transcripts into pieces of phrases, sentences or paragraphs and pasted the text on large sheets of paper representing categories/themes set. Since selected unit of analysis need to be traceable back to its context, a cross-referencing system was developed through colour coding;
- *Colour Coding:* Here highlighters were used to separate colours for each code or category. Since the researcher had already allocated colour names from the Daler-Rowney Georgian Oil Colour chart to each participant for the purpose of anonymity, highlighters of the same colours were used. Therefore linking participants to the context of the interview was not a problem.

The reader was informed as to how the researcher coded data; how codes led to themes; and how themes were included in the findings and analysis. This information was used along with most quotes in the next chapters. Along with each quote, the researcher placed in brackets – the participants’ name, line number, an indication of its theme and a campus code e.g. (‘Ivory Black’, lines 23-38, theme 1, code E6000).

- **Charting:** The researcher used charts by using headings from the thematic framework. This was quite useful as the researcher was able to read these charts across the whole dataset. In the case of this study, the researcher used thematic charts for each theme across all participants. In the chart/theme boxes had references to relevant paragraphs, issues, paraphrases in the transcripts and key words as a reminder of what is being referred to/ the content of the themes. For easy retrieval of the original data in the transcripts page references are also included.
  
- **Mapping and Interpretation:** This means searching for patterns, associations, concepts, and explanations in your data, aided by visual displays and plots. In this study, the researcher was able to move through the stages of Framework Analysis and developed established themes by charting and mapping exercises. Chapters Five and Six include mapping and interpretation.

### **Justification of Approach**

The researcher believed that the framework analysis was most appropriate in this study. This decision was justified by researching the following topic, *Employees Perceptions of the Climate for Creativity in the Workplace of Thekwini FET College, Durban*. The research topic was specific and had a pre-designed sample: employees (managers and non-managers as professional participants) as well as some prior issues: (perceptions of enhancing or stifling creativity), which were explicitly discussed in the previous chapters. The study generated theories that had been tested by many researchers elsewhere in the world, (adult learning, adaption-innovation theory, tacit knowledge, informal and incidental learning). However, the fundamental concern was to present the study with a description and interpretation of what was happening in the specific setting of Thekwini FET College. The researcher ensured that the ensuing rigour was pertinent to this research design so as to avoid the ambiguity of word meanings and categories.

### **3.8 ENSURING RIGOUR**

In all issues including qualitative research, reliability and validity are important issues. In this section, the researcher in ensuring rigour, discusses the issues of reliability and validity in the context of this study.

#### **Reliability**

Rubin & Babbie (1993) define reliability as a matter of whether a particular technique, applied repeatedly to the same object, would yield the same result each time. Although unreliability is always present to a certain extent, there will generally be good deal of consistency in the results of a quality instrument gathered at different times (Key 1997). In terms of assessing the data collected through triangulation in this study, the emphasis was on the reliability of the methods used. The researcher has demonstrated the approach to and procedures for data analysis. Mention was also made that the methods employed were reproducible and consistent.

#### **Validity**

The emphasis here was on the validity of the interpretation. The ability of the findings to represent the 'truth' may not be appropriate if we accept the existence and importance of multiple 'truths'. Rather, validity will be judged by the extent to which an account seems to fairly and accurately represent the data collected (Lacey & Luff 2001). According to Key (1997), validity can be defined as the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. The three basic approaches to validity are content validity; construct validity and criterion-related validity.

Maxwell (1992:282) indicates that:

All qualitative researchers agree that not all possible accounts of some individual, situation, phenomenon, activity, text, institution, or program are equally useful, credible, or legitimate. Furthermore, the ways in which researchers make these discriminations do not pertain entirely to the internal coherence, elegance, or plausibility of the account itself, but often refer to the relationship between the account and something external to it- that is, the phenomena that the account is about. Validity, in a broad sense, pertains to this relationship between an account and something outside of the account, whether this something is construed as objective reality, the constructions of actors, or a variety of other possible interpretations.

In this study the qualitative researcher strived for “descriptive validity.” This means that the researcher was accurately documenting the study and was not overstating or perverting from what he observed and heard. Maxwell (1992:285) simplifies this concept:

If you report that an informant made a particular statement in an interview, is this correct? Did he or she really make that statement, or did you miss-hear, miss-transcribe, or mis-remember his or her words? Did a particular student in a classroom throw an eraser on a specific occasion? These matters of descriptive accuracy are emphasised by almost every introductory qualitative methods textbook in its discussion of the recording of field notes and interviews. (...) behavior must be attended to, and with some exactness, because it is through the flow of behaviour – or, social action - that cultural forms find articulation (...) description is the foundation upon which qualitative research is built.

To demonstrate reliability and validity, the researcher used the following strategies:

- **Internal Validity**

The research design also instituted internal validity strategies which evaluated the research findings in this study in relation to the reality of the workplace. This confirmed the consistency of the perceptions of a creative climate experienced by the research participants.

Some strategies that were included in the research design were:

- Did the participants have the opportunity to verify the accuracy / inaccuracy of the researcher’s interpretation of their experiences in this study?
- Did the duration of data collection nurture the in-depth understanding of the phenomenon?

The research design procured possibilities for managers and non-managers to share their experiences in the workplace. The interpretation of reliability of research methods were observed in instances where some of the participants who were interviewed were given the opportunity of a second interview as a follow up to the previous one. The entire questionnaire was not repeated but only those questions that needed clarity and that yielded additional information from the participants. The research participants verified the transcription of each interview for accuracy. Typed transcripts were the raw data for analysis and for reporting the plausibility of the findings.

- **Triangulation**

Triangulation means gathering and analysing data from more than one source to gain fuller perspective on the situation which is being investigated. This may be more or less important, or possible, depending on the research question and setting (Lacey & Luff 2001). In this study triangulation means that the researcher conducted observations on the climate for creativity in the selected departments and analysed various documents in addition to semi-structured interviews on staff's perception of the climate for creativity, as a means of gaining different insights into the same situation. The researcher was also aware that triangulated data should not simply be used to examine the conclusions from one data source to another.

Often the data from one source will contradict or question the findings from another. This is not necessarily a failure of the research in itself, as 'real' life research situations are inevitably complex. Indeed a key strength of triangulation is the possibility of uncovering this complexity and of finding different views. The contradictions and differences within the data collected should spur the researcher on to further analysis, and sometimes, to further investigation until some 'sense' can be made of what is happening. Evidence that the analyst has used triangulation in this way and has effectively drawn the analysis of different forms of data together demonstrates rigour, rather than simply the use of different sources. (Lacey & Luff 2001:13)

Finally, the next section discusses the limitations of this study.

### **3.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

#### **Study**

The study was restricted to one Further Education and Training College in KwaZulu-Natal, Thekwini FET College. The major focus of the research was associated with lecturers and senior lecturers only. This limited the findings in the study to only Level One and Level Two lecturers. Another limitation was that not all the FET Colleges were represented. However, since all FET Colleges are government institutions and the mainstay of organisational behaviour is bureaucratic, staff-members were able to relate to this context and contributed their perceptions of the climate for creativity in such workplaces.

#### **Interviews**

Interviews are generally conducted to find out what is in or on the participant's mind. It is the responsibility of the interviewer to provide a framework to the interviewee. The purpose of this framework was to guide the interview and yield sufficient, accurate responses.

One of the major disadvantages of the interviews conducted in this study was that they were time consuming. In this study, each interview took approximately one-and-a-half to two hours. In most cases, participants expressed their desire to be interviewed during their non-teaching periods and were reluctant to spend time after college for their interviews. Fortunately, this did not negatively impact on all the interviews conducted.

Some of the participants were initially not in favour of using a tape-recorder during the interviews for fear that the recorded data might somehow be accessible to senior lecturers and senior management. The challenge posed here was that the issue of security was extremely important because the researcher was often dealing with sensitive data. This was achieved through establishing /developing trust and co-operation with the participants and describing the nature of research to them through legal documentation i.e. informed consent forms. The participants were reassured of their safety and the security of the tapes recorded during the interviews. However, this exercise of gaining co-operation and trust also proved to be time-consuming. Senior lecturers managing departments are very busy individuals, and if they were to commit themselves to participating in the research study they needed to be convinced of its value and elicit belief that they may gain from the study. This was a major challenge which made access and engagement to conduct interviews with some managers difficult. Often agreed appointments were cancelled at short notice or sometimes time-constraints meant that only short interviews could be conducted, resulting in rescheduling to continue the interview at another session. This resultant need to re-schedule interviews and conduct fragmented interviews called for much patience.

The role of the researcher was also at times obscured with that of an 'arbitrator', especially with two of the Level One lecturers. They had expectations that the researcher could intercede on their behalf in some of the departmental problems. This became evident when both lecturers requested my representation at a staff meeting. This request was subsequently declined.

### **Transcribing qualitative interviews**

This, too, was a time-consuming process. The researcher transcribed four of the interviews and it took about 20 hours or more to transcribe each of the two-hour interviews. Each transcript had about 19 pages of written text. Therefore, to transcribe the rest of the

interviews the researcher engaged in the services of an audio-typist. Since the project was not funded, the researcher used his own resources to pay the typist.

### **3.10 CONCLUSION**

This chapter appraised the instruments used to collect data for a qualitative design. In order to comply with the nature of this specific research phenomenon, it was necessary to gather data through the use of semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis. However, in order to safeguard the probity of this research and ensure its legitimacy, the ethical aspects governing this study were sustained at all times. Therefore, it is with ethical credence the researcher will address the research questions in the next chapter by reporting the findings.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the main findings of this study. In Chapter Three, the methodology was presented, and the major data collecting method used being interviews with different respondents, observations, complemented by document analysis. Chapter Three also indicated that this study focused on describing the perceptions and practices of managers' and non-managers' with respect to the climate for creativity of an FET college in Durban. In measuring the climate for creativity within the parameters of this study, the following questions formed the nucleus of the research:

##### Major Questions

1. In what ways do employees perceive the climate for creativity in the workplace?
2. How is this climate for creativity nurtured or stifled in the workplace?

##### Sub-questions

3. What is meant by a 'creative climate'?
4. What are the critical success factors for inducing and facilitating a creative climate at Thekwini FET College?

Qualitative data was collected from 13 participants including lecturers (non-managers) and senior lecturers (managers). Senior lecturers' names are highlighted in **figure 4.1**.

In this chapter responses are organised into themes informed by the research questions, KEYS and CCQ. Beginning with the introduction of the sample profile the chapter continues with the managers' perceptions of the climate for creativity and then follows with those of the non-managers. The researcher uses quotations from the raw data and original discourse. The intention is to enrich this chapter and the researcher believes that these are fitting examples of responses from managers and non-managers, specifically

with reference to the described theme. A variety of quotations have been selected to exhibit features of similarities and differences between interviewees; the validity of opinions or beliefs; and the range of best practices. Finally, this chapter provides an analysis of documents and observational findings on stimulants and obstacles to the climate for creativity at Thekwini FET College. The next chapter includes the analysis and discussion.

The following key is provided for easy access to the list of respondents:

**Table 4.1 Key to Anonymity of Respondents**

		Campus Codes	NAMES
A	2	000	<b>Mrs Naples Yellow</b>
A	2	000	Mrs Lemon Yellow
B	3	000	<b>Mr Permanent Geranium</b>
B	3	000	Mr Scarlet Lake
B	3	000	Mr Crimson Alizarin
C	4	000	<b>Mrs French Ultramarine</b>
C	4	000	Mrs Permanent Blue
C	4	000	Miss Cobalt Blue
D	5	000	<b>Mrs Light Red</b>
D	5	000	Miss Venetian Red
D	5	000	Mr Indian Red
E	6	000	Mrs Ivory Black
E	6	000	Ms Lamp Black

### **Sample Profile**

The profile of the sample used for interviews was examined in terms of age, work-experience and designation at work. Of the total of 13 respondents, nine were female and four were male. Most were within the 32-54-year age group and more than 88 % of all the respondents were above the age of 40. Given the relatively mature age of the sample size, the level of work-experience is, accordingly, high. This is also confirmed by the fact that more than half of the respondents have served the organisation for more than 10 years.

## **4.2 FINDINGS**

The findings are reported by themes. The following themes are combined from Amabile (1996), **KEYS SCALES** and from Lauer (1994), **CREATIVE CLIMATE QUESTIONNAIRE (CCQ)** and are described in detail in Chapter Two under “PRESS”. Each theme is briefly restated and followed by the participants’ responses.

Both KEYS and CCQ seek dynamic, parallel dimensional interactions in this study and were employed as a thematic framework throughout. The themes are in the same order as the questions appearing in the interview and observation schedules:

- (a) Assessing Environmental Stimulants to Creativity;
- (b) Assessing Environmental Obstacles to Creativity.

### **ASSESSING ENVIRONMENTAL STIMULANTS TO CREATIVITY**

In this section the environmental stimulants to creativity could have had a positive and negative effect in the workplace.

#### **THEME ONE: Organisational Encouragement and Idea Support**

This theme describes the organisation as being supportive in encouraging employees to try out new ideas and to solve problems.

Managers and non-managers were approached for response to a number of questions to assess the extent to which employees are given support for new ideas and encouragement by the organisation.

#### **Managers**

Evidence from interviews demonstrated that all four managers always discuss issues in an open forum with their staff. Data showed that managers encouraged staff-members to come up with their own ideas and valued individual contributions. Staff-members were

encouraged to brainstorm to generate possible solutions to resolve problems and there was a strong drive by managers in an attempt to build a sense of trust with their staff.

As managers I think the first thing you need to do is to avoid the over-use of authority you find that you give them the opportunity to come up with ideas to generate new ideas. Also you need to lead democratically and not autocratically. Proper communication channels need to be set up and also staff need the support and encouragement ('Permanent Geranium', lines 30-34, theme 1, code B3000).

If I see a staff-member with potential, somebody demonstrating the ability to think laterally, outside the box, .ermm... I encourage them and facilitate opportunities for them to be exposed to other individuals who could perhaps be mentors to themselves in terms of enhancing particular areas that could improve their skills and talent, books that they could read and seminars etc ('Naples Yellow', lines 28-32, theme 1, code A2000).

All four managers pointed out that their staff are given opportunities to put forward their ideas and opinions in the workplace. One manager from the Cato Manor Campus who recently moved to the Centec Campus believes that staff sharing ideas and co-operating with one another is the magic formula that has really worked for her at the Cato Manor Campus.

I think in the Food and Hospitality department staff need to realise, which we have realised long time ago, is we need to work together in unity, a give and take, one step after another one step and it helps, no matter what is it for, an emergency, whether its because someone's sick or they have to go off for something, that is how we work. So it's always encouraged – you know we are always there for each person and we work together for everything, whether it was even the assessor programme or the moderators course, we worked together. So no one was isolated at all. We're always keeping each other informed even from senior management there, not only just us lecturers Level 1 and 2, above us so we always had. We socialized in the 10-minute tea break but they were talking to us and that's where it started ('Light Red', lines 91-101, theme 1, code D5000).

Findings in document analysis and observations revealed that while this was generally implied by other managers, Mrs Naples Yellow indicated that there were also certain parameters to opportunities given to non-managers.

Yes, there are certain decisions within their scope of their profile and position and function on this campus and those decisions, yes they should and must take because they take ownership and accountability for the responsibility that is associated with the position. But there are decisions that fall outside the scope of the particular position that they hold and

those positions /decisions need to be made as a consensus with their line manager depending on for example the monetary value or the magnitude of the impact of that decision I sometimes get involved (' Naples Yellow', lines 33-40, theme 1, code A2000).

### **Non-Managers**

Evidence demonstrated that all nine participants responded that they did not get the desired support from the organisation.

No, I don't think at this point in time that we do have any recognition for who we are at the institution (...) You've uplifted yourself to uplift your environment and you get no recognition for that at all here whether its verbally or written – there's no motivation because it's by somebody saying a little word like 'thank you' or 'well done' motivates an individual which creates immediate satisfaction ('Cobalt Blue', lines 5-15, theme1, code C4000).

Not at all! Because food is a creative subject and they just, um concerned about money. They don't see that its creative, it's that – that's why I put the radio on. I've been reprimanded and I've said but you spend about seven, eight hours with the students, they need to learn to be creative you know. They just want discipline and more, you know, they're more worried about what the students look like, you know, have neat, white uniforms than what they produce in the classroom ('Venetian Red', lines 17-23, theme 1, code D5000).

Um there's no recognition for good work; there's reprimands if it's poor ('Venetian Red', lines 13, theme 1, code D5000).

Unfortunately not. It's all up to me to decide what to use, where it use it, get to a library, do some research but I don't get that from management at all. I feel they don't actually show an interest in the work that I do as long as I do it ('Lamp Black', lines 11-14, theme 1, code E6000).

The respondents expressed, "No", "Not at all", "Unfortunately not" to questions posed to them at the interviews. These respondents felt that recognition of staff members, implementation of new ideas in the classroom was unspoken.

Mrs Ivory Black cited management for not providing constructive judgment on the implementation of new ideas.

I don't think management stifles creativity but I also, on the other hand, don't think management has allowed for us to go forward for us to say 'well, this is

what I have in mind'. The doors are not open for that because there are no opportunities to say 'I have a new approach' and you know with the OBE it's taken for granted that everybody is using a creative approach. How we are doing it in the classroom? Nobody has any idea. As individual lectures right now, when I go to the Sharks I use very much my own methods to accommodate the problem learner, if I have a problem learner and I use very much my own innovative ideas to meet the student's disabilities in certain fields of understanding the course material and so forth. So a lot of it has to come from my improvisation and I think each year it changes depending on the type of student you're having. Remember now we have a group of multi-cultural students sitting in the same class and the language problem does cause a great learning barrier so the creativity within us is there, it's taking place, we're being very innovative in the classroom but nobody's really looking at that right now ('Ivory Black', lines 23-38, theme 1, code E6000).

### **Summary of Theme One**

In summary, although this theme included support and recognition for creative work, the findings show contradictory evidence. Data showed that managers and the nine non-managers expressed contrary responses about the organisation's lack of encouragement and support. Evidence from data collected, informed the researcher that the non-managers desired recognition and support for creative work executed in the classroom. However the absence of the organisation's reward and recognition for creative work was evident from the responses given. An interesting finding stemmed from this theme which resulted in the emergence of yet another theme, namely, "Coping Mechanisms." The researcher found that these participants were able to adapt to their circumstances and develop mechanisms to implement new ideas in the classroom. Through daily learning's they encouraged themselves, to creatively solve potential problems within the climate of this organisation. This theme will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

### **THEME TWO: Supervisory Encouragement and Trust/Openness**

This theme describes the supervisor as a 'good work model', who establishes a strong level of trust and openness among the staff.

To examine the extent to which employees are given supervisory encouragement and trust/openness in the workplace, managers and non-managers were addressed with a number of questions and responses.

## **Managers**

The data demonstrated responses from the four managers during interviews. Two out of the four managers indicated that they were satisfied with the level of support they received from senior management. Mrs Naples Yellow indicated that she was given opportunities by her line manager to solve problems creatively within her department. Mr Permanent Geranium agreed that support for him was communicated through circulars and notices from senior management.

I think the encouragement of the elements that you question actually comes from a particular manager that you report to, meaning that your line manager actually has an approach that encourages and actively practices innovative, out-of-the box thinking, continuous improvement of practices and benchmarks err... current processes and looks actively for opportunities. That culture kind of infiltrates the entire structure, organisational structure and can be reflected in the day-to-day operations ('Naples Yellow', lines 5-11, theme 2, code A2000).

The communication process from senior management in my division is acceptable. All circulars, notices pertaining to academic management and administrative issues are timeously brought to my attention ('Permanent Geranium', lines 1-3, theme 2, code B3000).

Mrs Light Red and Mrs French Ultramarine felt that any encouragement they received was of middling quality. The main issue here was the fact that senior management was not knowledgeable about their subject areas and therefore did not provide a supportive climate for any ideas or suggestions proposed.

Um ... well, the information I get is very limited and I say that in my department, I think I'm the most senior because the senior people to me are not hairdressers or beauty therapists so in terms of what is going on in the department it is only what I who knows what is going on. Their knowledge is very limited (...). Well, if there is any, its very limited because we're bound by red tape, things like that, so ... um ... in our department we take forward our ideas and try it out – if it doesn't work, it doesn't work but I mean, we're not restricted in hair care and stuff, hair care and beauty. Well I would say in our department management does encourage it - does encourage it but is limited because of red tape from the senior people ('French Ultramarine', lines 1-14, theme 2, code C4000).

I think it's mediocre. Any information I get I find out for myself – you have to ask over and over again (...), I must say, from this semester I'm quite used to stuff – you know, I've been here from January and I'm not getting the co-operation that I actually need ('Light Red', lines 1-22, theme 2, code D5000).

## **Non-Managers**

Although given opportunities to be creative in the classroom, all participants believe that their line managers adopt a “non-interference” approach. The major problem is that line managers do not take an interest in their staff-members’ performance in the classroom. Evidence from data demonstrates that the nine non-managers are not given the desired encouragement from their supervisors.

Since we had a supervisor we haven’t been encouraged to be creative in terms of our work because we were told that at Cato Manor things were done this way and it worked effectively and therefore we will do it this way now so..err.. there wasn’t a lot of, you know what’s the word space or interaction to be creative or try different things or make suggestions (‘Indian Red’, lines 41-47, theme 2, code D5000).

But I am given the room to innovate in the classroom but not recognised though. There is no compliments or thank you whatever! (‘Scarlet Lake’, lines 11-12, theme 2, code B3000).

Uh, for one is a non-interference approach. I’m given a lot of leeway. Uuu, I think uuu, I would very brave enough and take the liberty and say I think they do have their confidence in me but at the same time I would still like my supervisor to come forward and say well, if it works with that person and it works there, let’s try this with you. What are your problem areas? (‘Ivory Black’, lines 46-50, theme 2, code E6000).

No not really, not really we still continue with the old methods and so on err there’s not much that comes from management (‘Scarlet lake’, lines 9-10, theme 2, code B3000).

For various reasons, in Question 2.5, all nine respondents showed a desire for their supervisors to provide frequent praise and appreciation for their performance in the department. To establish trust and encouragement, all nine respondents expect communication channels to be open at all times.

I tell you what it is, again I said, you don’t want to always have an award but the little words that I’ve learned just being an apprentice as a hairdresser, the little things that you say are “thank you” and “well done” and you say that to a minor and you say that to an adult and it has the same repercussions on them as an individual. What it does for somebody, just those positive words, but if you tell somebody “you can’t do it” they create a negativity about themselves but to say “I can” and “I try” and “I will be” and “I will be better as an individual, myself I



can” and individual motivation would be 90% of what you want as an individual but, from people around you, the fact that you’ve been recognises is something. You don’t need a medal – you don’t need a certificate but you need to feel good. If you feel good, you give off good (‘Cobalt Blue’, lines 112-123, theme 2, code C4000).

One member of staff has developed her own support mechanisms in the classroom.

If you’re a stereotype person and you just take things because that’s the way its done and you, for instance just take the syllabus and say “that’s what I need to cover”. I don’t believe you can ... you’re not a creative person. You can still stick to the syllabus but I think there are other ways of doing things and I think if you have ability, you can have more enthusiasm in your lecturing (‘Lemon Yellow’, lines 85-90, theme2, code A2000).

### **Summary of Theme Two**

According to the findings only 50 percent of the managers receive encouragement from their senior managers. The other 50 percent have responded that senior management is not knowledgeable about their subject areas and therefore does not support suggestions in an attentive and kind way. Responses between managers and non-managers are contradictory. On one hand, all managers believe that they encourage their staff to come up with their own ideas and value individual contributions. On the other hand, all non-managers believe that although given opportunities to be creative in the classroom, their line managers adopt a “non-interference” approach. Non-managers expressed the need for their managers to be complementary for good work done. Participants claim that supervisors do not explicitly show confidence or value individual contributions in the classroom, yet, responses from all four managers display trust and openness in their staff through proper channels of communication.

As trust and openness was regarded by many as the cornerstone for effective communication and information sharing, participants voiced the need to feel valued and confidently to feel good and give off good. An interesting finding emerging from this theme, was the “Coping Mechanism” theme. The researcher found that the participant was able to adapt to her circumstances and developed novel ways to facilitate creativity in the classroom. This theme will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

### **THEME THREE: Work-group Supports and Dynamism/Liveliness:**

This theme describes a work-group that is supported by free and open communication.

Interaction between members of the work-group is dynamic, diverse and lively.

To assess the extent to which employees are given opportunities for work-group supports and dynamism/liveliness, a number of questions addressed these issues with managers and non-managers.

#### **Managers**

Evidence has demonstrated that all four managers believe that enabling their staff to work in groups is essential in the workplace. These managers supported staff to work with each other and help each other.

Definitely, definitely because they bring dimensions that an individual may not have thought of now that is introduced that can actually conceptualise it and interpret it and evaluate the impact of that particular item that they may not have necessarily considered had they done the project or task ('Naples Yellow', lines 75-78, theme 3, code A2000).

no two individuals think alike and ... er ... their ideas put together I'm sure is going to benefit everyone ('French Ultramarine', lines 54-55, theme 3, code C4000).

Definitely. Definitely. And you know, if you don't think of something, you will omit one piece of one idea, somebody else will step in – I always, as pertains to hospitality, to work together in a community and this answers that questions. Definitely, we have to do this ('Light Red', lines 154-157, theme 3, code D5000).

Yes, there are various different ideas that can be generated from these groups and the best ideas can be chosen for the smooth operation of the division ('Permanent Geranium', lines 75-78, theme 2, code B3000).

Mrs Naples Yellow shared a best practice in creating a diverse work group.

The way the world is actually working right now there is a focus on interdependencies as opposed to independence. Independence is valued but I think it a shared opinion that..err.., interdependence amongst team members, Cross functional or within a team actually reaps more benefits than just an individual working on quietly by himself or herself. So definitely I do not allow

staff to work in groups but I encourage it because it just brings different dimensions and ideas and just perceptions to a problem that almost enhances their entire study altogether and in terms of opportunities for them to interact with each other as much I encourage the group work with each other I must say the limited timeframe you know based on you know workload pressures etc. makes it difficult but I definitely encourage it almost allocate tasks to groups as opposed to the individual, groups with leaders ('Naples Yellow', lines 51-62, theme 3, code A2000).

All four participants encourage brainstorming techniques amongst their staff, to stimulate creativity for group decision-making. These brainstorming sessions are done in different settings e.g. Mrs French Ultramarine uses informal settings like the staff-room during lunch breaks for staff to brainstorm ideas.

Yes, we do get differences of opinion. Its not really a meeting as such – we ... if we're having lunch we just sit in the staff room and we throw out ideas and someone may object to what is being said and then we work around that, so yes, we work as a team ('French Ultramarine', lines 50-53, theme 3, code C4000).

### **Non-Managers**

Evidence from data demonstrates that two out of nine lecturers have opportunities to interact with other employees and help each other. This is done mainly at an informal level in the staff-room during lunch.

Yes we do, we discuss a lot in the staff room we work quite well together. We get some good ideas. We tend to work better as a team  
At the lower levels, We won't include the upper levels. But at the lower levels here is a very good team spirit and there's always ideas coming forward, improvements when one goes for a meeting and bring in new ideas. But from upper levels, I don't know ('Permanent Blue', lines 29-33, theme 3, code C4000).

Definitely, we engage in teamwork. We engage in teamwork and we share our ideas and we teach one other ('Scarlet lake', lines 40-41, theme 3, code B3000).

Data shows that six lecturers believe that their time-tables had made no provision for work-group supports.

No! I think that is not something that is exploited here and I must hasten to say that I think it's because we don't have enough free time. Um ... you know, the day is short enough without interrupting classes so whilst I think it is a good

thing, it is restricting in flexibility – you know, in a company you can have meetings as frequently as you like but not in ... you know, we've got to stick to the timetable. I think that's a hindering factor then ('Lemon Yellow', lines 106-111, theme 3, code D5000).

We have opportunities with others but we don't have the time to really bounce off. We're teaching for seven hours a day, you know the day's pressure, a full six hours, um, and we were informed that we were not to use teaching time for any of these things, so I find the only other way to do it is after hours and so far that hasn't happened at Thekwini and concerning the Sharks it hasn't happened at all ('Ivory Black', lines 83-88, theme 3, code E6000).

However, it was interesting to find in the observational data that one lecturer creates her own opportunities to get into groups and discuss matters.

If I have these opportunities it's because I create them or I get the other colleagues – we get together and discuss things, but its not really organised for us, although there are staff meetings and stuff, but they are basically done according to an agenda and that's it, so its up to us to do that kind of thing ('Lamp Black', lines 42-46, theme 3, code E6000).

It appears that the nine non-managers believe that work-groups enhance creativity. By working in groups, the three participants were able to bounce off ideas to stimulate their thinking and generate new lines of thought. Data demonstrates that the participants expressed the notion that individuals have their own ideas about what creativity is and by sharing ideas and information they are able to bring new dimensions to a project or task.

Obviously, because its about perception and the only time you realise what your perception is when you when you compare it to someone else's. If I think I am a very open-minded person but somebody else might not think so...err I will only realise that if we communicate, if we talk, if we bounce ideas with each other so I might be thinking that I am doing something right and somebody said to me but when you do this and this and this and this and this happens so these are the constant flow of information and the information and knowledge gives you wisdom... and insight ('Indian Red', lines 117-124, theme 3, code D5000).

Data shows that all nine respondents are satisfied with the team spirit in their respective departments. Observational data indicates that there is a good climate of camaraderie and enthusiasm.

I think there is a good spirit. I think that the people we have and work here seem to have a lot in common. Um ... we're able to laugh and joke together and I think that's quite an important part of all our lives ... um ... if we can laugh at each other and ourselves, which we do, that goes a long way and we do have that on this campus. Definitely ('Lemon Yellow', lines 119-123, theme3, code A2000).

### **Summary: Theme Three**

In summary although the description of this theme indicated the need for a diversely-skilled work-group, the findings show that managers expressed the need to support work-groups in their respective departments. Be that as it may, the findings show contrary evidence by non-managers. Although only two participants agree that they are given opportunities by their managers, the other six participants indicate that the only barrier to lively work-groups are time-constraints. Only one participant creates her own opportunities to get into groups and bounce off ideas. This highlights the coping mechanism theme that will be discussed in the next chapter. It is interesting to note that although managers support work-groups, they do not make provision for formal work-groups in the timetable. Evidence from the findings show that most of the free and open communication, between staff, takes place at an informal level, outside the constraints of the timetable. It was in these informal settings, the researcher found good team spirit amongst participants and positive motivation, the ingredients to stimulate informal learning.

### **THEME FOUR: Freedom**

This theme describes freedom as independent behaviour of staff, in taking initiatives of various kinds and actively making decisions concerning one's work.

To assess the extent to which employees are given freedom by the organisation, a number of questions and responses addressed these issues with managers and non-managers.

## **Managers**

The data demonstrates that four managers are in favour of recognising their staff as individuals. Members of staff are stimulated as individuals, to think differently and implement change or new dimensions to their performance. This is very much in line with the theme description. Evidence from data shows that all managers are keen to indicate that they generate ideas for their staff from best practices, articles, workshops, seminars, discussion with industry and policies. Usually, these ideas are discussed in an open forum in order to give staff as much insight as possible to the origin of the idea and its benefits to their performance.

Ideas come from many places ,all of the ones listed by yourself ..er..best practices , articles etc. so how do I introduce that ? Open forum try and give people much insight into where it is coming , why it will benefit and what has been the experience of people currently, currently practicing it and I encourage my staff to try everything at least once and not throw an idea away until we tried and tested it (' Naples Yellow', lines 79-84, theme 4, code A2000).

Human beings are unique , no two people are alike and you find that each one has their own personality , characteristics even if they are identical twins ('Permanent Geranium', lines 52-54, theme 4, code B3000).

In question 4.4, it is necessary to balance staff-freedom and the need for structure. All four managers believe that their staff should be given freedom in the classroom to generate ideas but that they had to work within the parameters of the organisational structure. Managers feel that there is no compromise between procedures and authority in a hierarchical structure. For the smooth operation of the department/division, operations need to be approved through a structure.

Er .. ya management have to be to be firm but sympathetic, ..alright.. we cannot sacrifice learning and teaching in the classroom. Staff need to abide by policies and procedures for orderly management. Freedom in the classroom are given to staff in terms of discipline , teaching techniques which are considered by management. Staff must be given the freedom to generate ideas but must also at the same time abide by rules and regulations ('Permanent Geranium', lines 54-60, theme 4, code B3000).

In this theme, evidence shows that all four managers believe that creativity requires freedom of choice. Although confined to a bureaucratic structure, members of staff are

allowed to think outside their job functions and present their ideas openly to their managers. However, if they need any ideas to be approved and implemented then this has to go through the various structures of the division/organisation.

I think that creativity would be stifled if you felt the whole time that that you had to seek approval for every step or every new brain-wave that you have. Because it almost comes to mind, 'Oh my God,' the effort of actually getting that through the hierarchical structure is so formidable and daunting and more importantly frustrating that you thought, 'why bother lets just do it the old tired old way, ' so it does, it does require a certain degree of freedom of choice and I think it freedom of choice is choice to think as laterally as you think without being stifled by management. Management must come in from the position of being the voice of what is realistically achievable but without being the one stifling it, almost to the point of saying, 'this is brilliant let us either implement it in a phased fashion so it allows opportunity for the change to be accommodated or almost err...piecemeal you know or either choose the elements that would be most effective.' Ja, definitely! (' Naples Yellow', lines 119-131, theme 4, code A2000).

### **Non-Managers**

Not surprisingly, evidence from data shows that only five participants feel that their skills and abilities are only recognised in the classroom and are given the freedom to be creative only in that domain.

Um ... yes, I would like to believe so. One needs to ... the way I go about it is I say to myself "I have this knowledge and education is what I am expected to do in my job, to pass on knowledge, to upgrade people and to do it in a manner that is easier for them to understand and I feel I do have that freedom in the classroom and I exploit it ('Lemon Yellow', lines 134-138, theme 4, code A2000).

Yes, definitively I am given that...that room for freedom in my job. Yes we are given the opportunities to ...err express our freedom in the classroom, to be creative ('Scarlet lake', lines 55-57, theme 4, code B3000).

Although these members of staff are given the opportunity for autonomy in the classroom, Miss Cobalt Blue thinks that there are many prescriptions attached to independent thought.

Independence unfortunately is seen as a taboo, where people feel that you are an independent thinker or doer ... um ... feels sorry for himself as an individual. Um ... you know, there's times when you probably take an independent decision

you expect your ideas would be accepted by others but at times there's the reaction you'll get where if you are allowed to be independent, you do not need me as a support and if I don't give or if I take away your independence, you will need me. The freedom of thoughts, the freedom of decision-making is not independent ('Cobalt Blue', lines 189-196, theme 4, code C4000).

Four participants feel that they are given no opportunities for autonomy and to use personal initiative. They have indicated that they are bound by the requirements of the syllabus and this is a factor restricting their freedom in the classroom.

Just the fact that, that we are stuck in the same thing you have to this is what I doing, it needs to get done and within a certain period of time and obviously you have to have results at the end of this semester, term or year and..err.. I think that because we are teaching groups of students, I think a lot of individuality is, lost there as well in terms of how you teach and in terms of how the students respond. I think in terms of work situation it's the same. If you are a manager and you are managing four, five departments a lot of individuality is lost and I think because there's not enough communication between management, the different departments and the people ('Indian Red', lines 143-151, theme 4, code D5000).

I don't know because with all the red tape you can't make individual decisions. It has to be decisions that's the same, you know, like everyone has to sing from the same hymn book so you can't make calls because if you do one thing, I mean I've been wrapped over the knuckles for switching a radio on in my classroom but I find my students work better and just because the other people don't like it, you know, I've had to reduce my radio listening time ('Indian Red', lines 105-111, theme 4, code D5000).

No, we need to go by the rules, you know and we are prescribed to certain aspects of the job (...) I think basically we are regarded as a number in this institution. There is no personal initiative, definitely not ('Crimson Alizarin', lines 55-59, theme 4, code B3000).

However, evidence points out that the four participants are able to find opportunities to exercise their freedom creatively drawing on life experiences and making teaching more significant to the lives of students.

In my teaching job in the classroom, yes, but not further than that. But that's because I give myself that opportunity ('Lamp Black', lines 69-70, theme 4, code E6000).

Findings from the data demonstrate that the key to the four participants working within the bureaucratic-frame, is developing an imaginative mind using their skills and abilities.



Interestingly, being self-motivated is also instrumental in staff nurturing their individualism in the classroom.

I'm not a stickler by regulations but at the same time I can understand the bureaucratic regulations and it doesn't offend me. Red tape doesn't affect me to a great extent because I manage to; I'm a great improviser again coming from my skills. I can improvise around a problem area and work so I'm not very frustrated. The other thing about my teaching is that, why I don't get frustrated is because of the creativity on the one side and the other side is if bureaucracy's going to hold you back then there are ways and means of beating the system because otherwise you're going to be a frustrated teacher which has a ripple effect on your teaching methods which then has a ripple effect on your students picking it up so you're not an enthusiastic person and you're having young, impressionable, ja, young men and women with you so, ja, I don't have a problem too much ('Ivory Black', lines 119-132, theme 4, code E6000).

#### **Summary of Theme Four**

Managers feel that there is no compromise between procedures and authority in a hierarchical structure. An interesting finding was that freedom was only given to the five members of staff, within the prescription of the organisational structure. Although the five non-managers were recognised as individuals, within a bureaucratic-structure, they had to think and implement change only in the classroom. Consensus reached among the five non-managers is, that to practice freedom in a bureaucratic environment, is difficult. They are bound by a syllabus and structure. However, the researcher found that despite being bound by a syllabus and structure, the five non-managers expressed coping mechanisms of intuition, imagination and self-motivation to nurture their skills and abilities in the work-place.

#### **THEME FIVE: Sufficient Resources and Idea Time**

This theme describes resources as: time to generate ideas, equipment, materials, facilities and information that are easily accessible to staff.

To investigate the extent to which employees gain access to sufficient resources and idea time by the organisation, a number of questions and responses addressed these issues with managers and non-managers.

## **Managers**

An area where there is strong agreement is that managers support the idea that access to adequate resources is necessary for creative environments. Data indicates that the four managers support the idea that adequate resources and time are necessary to enhance creative environments.

Yes, definitely, if there is a limit on the resources its most likely to limit people, there's no room to move , no room to give people the opportunities that they need and ...err.. Creating the right environment... ermm... needs investment, you need to invest in the environment to reap the benefits (' Naples Yellow', lines 140-143, theme 5, code A2000).

Yes, very much so. Without the resources being there, you can't really be that creative. Maybe on paper maybe certain things we do have but without the resources and material we really struggle to be creative ('Light Red', lines 208-210, theme5, code D5000).

Evidence from data also indicates that these managers are compelled to work within a budget.

First of all resources are actually acquired by management to assist teaching and learning in the classroom. Right these are requested by the staff . You find that the correct equipment acquired so that staff can carry out their activities...right the most important aspects when it comes to acquiring these resources is the budget. ('Permanent Geranium', lines 61-67, theme 5, code B3000).

According to data collected, staff teaching practical subjects often improvised when faced with financial cutbacks. Mrs Light Red talked about bringing things from home. This was in line with having time to think of possibilities and generate fresh suggestions to find appropriate resources.

Actually, it ties you down, you know. Its very difficult, try, especially with food, it's very, very difficult but I'm trying but its going to take me a while We just make do ... I bring stuff from home to, you know, (...) Wherever I need to improvise, I bring it from home ('Light Red', lines 208-214, theme 5, code D5000).

## Non-Managers

The data demonstrates that seven lecturers do not have resources easily accessible to them.

No, and in this particular instance I think again it's the environment that we're in ... um ... as opposed to a company ... um ... you're in charge of your department's budget, you can request these things, motivate reasons and there's more money available for spending. I think in this kind of environment you are restricted and one has to appreciate that ... um ... so I think there are things that need to be brought into the classroom that we could use that obviously cost money and I think if I were to ask for something, it would have to be something that could be used by other lecturers otherwise then everyone must get the same thing. So I think there is a problem in this type of environment where we are restricted with funds ('Lemon Yellow', lines 185-195, theme 5, code A2000).

No, not at all! We don't have all the necessary modern technology that one would like to have and make learning easier and much more pleasurable for the students but then again the complaint is funds and so we just learn to go by it and accept that. ('Ivory Black', lines 143-146, theme 5, code E6000).

Only two lecturers agree that they have access to resources.

Yes, I have the necessary tools and resources to do my job well ('Scarlet lake', lines 81-82, theme 5, code B3000).

Evidence shows that Mrs Lemon Yellow expressed the shortage or lack of resources in her department. Data shows that Mrs Yellow has to think creatively on employing alternative teaching aids and techniques.

Um ... its been difficult for me to do that because when I want to use like an overhead projector or something like that, we only have a few and the other lecturers are using them so I make a lot of use of role-plays and things like that .. er .. where I like to get the students involved where I can't put it up on the board or anything like that then I rather like personalise it with them and say "okay, you come up here, you take the whiteboard marker out of my hand, you write this thing on the board and in that way try and get them involved is one way that I try with limited resources ('Lemon Yellow', lines 196-203, theme 5, code A2000).

Findings show that Miss Blue, brings resources from home to facilitate her lessons in the classroom.

And whatever we don't have, I have of my own, then I bring it through, I show, use, demonstrate and then I take it away. If I need to, I demonstrate it all by

itself ... There are new things that come on the market and things like that when it comes to part of the teaching programme, especially when it comes to creativity. And things like that, there's lots of tools that are out there so whatever I'm able to purchase and use on my own, I do bring them to demonstrate or I bring in the reps and I say - These are the tools that are necessary, now demonstrate to us - so one way, the students are aware of it, that there is an availability and they also know how to budget themselves to purchase. So, yes, we can get around - we try and make an effort to get around it ('Cobalt Blue', lines 251-261, theme 5, code C4000).

Data also shows that the nine participants believe that idea time is essential to enhancing a creative climate. Yet all participants agree that they have little or no time to be creative because of planned routines.

The time, because you don't have time to be creative. Students, you know, some people want them to be quiet and be little robots and then you've got to try and teach them to be creative. You have to teach them different things and you don't have time and management just wants them to pass; they don't care about creative students or good food; as long as they pass their exams at the end ('Venetian Red', lines 155-161, theme 5, code D5000).

### **Summary of Theme Five**

The researcher found that resources are not only important for functional support but influence staff perceptions that their activities or idea-time is worthy of organisational support. All managers support the idea that access to adequate resources is necessary in the workplace. Responses from seven non-managers were contradictory to the responses of their managers. These participants do not get access to resources. Data also indicates that the four managers have to control resources within a budget. Only two non-managers have access to resources. Mrs Light Red and Ms Cobalt Blue share similar experiences of bringing resources from home. Both members of staff improvise when faced with financial constraints in the classroom. Evidence also shows that Mrs Lemon Yellow experiences a shortage or lack of resources in her department. Data shows that Mrs Yellow had to think creatively on employing alternative teaching aids and techniques. This is in line with having time to think of ideas and generate coping mechanisms to find appropriate resources.

The theme of coping mechanisms is once again re-inforced in the findings of this theme. Although the theme described people for having adequate time to think about ideas,

findings reveal that staff are subjected to time-pressure and planned routines, with little or no time to think of new ideas.

### **THEME SIX: Challenge**

This theme describes members of the organisation working hard on challenging tasks. These people experience joy and meaningfulness in their job.

A number of questions and responses were addressed to managers and non-managers to assess the extent to which employees are given challenging work by the organisation.

#### **Managers**

In order to create a challenging environment, all four managers set challenging tasks for their staff by giving them the opportunity to set personal and professional goals for themselves.

Well, staff are given the opportunity to set a personal and professional goals for themselves. You find that during this process strengths and weaknesses are identified and support is given to staff members...right staff are also advised to improve the results are given the freedom to generate new ideas ('Permanent Geranium', lines 72-75, theme 6, code B3000).

During this process, managers are able to identify strengths and weaknesses and provide the necessary support to their staff.

Um ... look, all our tasks are challenging so ... um ... as I said before, there is no one task that is assigned to any one person. We are a team. We work together. If there is any particular task to be assigned, I open it to all. "Will you" or "Do you have the time to do whatever" and if somebody says "no", we will obviously have a volunteer. If we don't have a volunteer then I will say to someone "You are good at this here, don't you want to take a go at it?" So we have a very good relationship ('French Ultramarine', lines 119-126, theme 6, code C4000).

#### **Non-Managers**

Evidence demonstrates that the nine non-managers are content with the personal accomplishment which comes with their jobs. Findings reveal that the participants experience joy and meaningfulness in their job when their students' results are good.

If I manage to teach 25 students to practically cook and so that they can actually feed someone a decent plate of food and they get to pass all their theory subjects,

they get an actual diploma and they can go on to get a job, that to me is fulfillment... that's all I get from it ('Indian Red', lines 191-194, theme 6, code E6000).

Data shows that challenges set in when the students performed badly. One participant mentioned that she was challenged by the different cultural backgrounds of her students.

Working with young adults. For me it's a challenge – I've never taught white students at this level before. I've come from an Indian background teaching in a school. The cultural exchanges create a great interest in my students. They have a new-found respect for Indian and more so women and I have a great respect for them and their background and where they come from and I think together we've really reached this place of very healthy understanding and I think the respect there comes from also that they can get this young, not young, small, diminutive Indian woman to be so enormous in their class and get the kind of discipline I want from them and get the kind of respect from them that they've even told me that. And for me I found that was a great challenge, you know, because when I end up every semester with them I leave a pretty good knowledge of the students ('Ivory Black', lines 248-262, theme 6, code E6000).

Evidence from the data also shows that the nine participants are skilled or qualified in more than one field and feel that although their skills are matched to their job, their interests are directed elsewhere.

It's matched to my skills but not my interests. Um, my passion is absolutely Entrepreneurship and I'm ... I'm getting frustrated with the kitchen and I feel like the kitchen skivvy. That's the only problem I've got with that ('Venetian Red', lines 141-144, theme 6, code D5000).

However, findings reveal that staff are self motivated and generally enjoy working with students.

First of all I fully appreciate and am very grateful that I have a job ... um ... and I think that, you know, a lot of us take that for granted that you wake up in the morning and your job will always be there and I don't like to look at life like that. I like to say, "I'm grateful today that I was able to come here, do something and hopefully have achieved what I came here to do. Ja, I'm a great goal setter of myself and an achiever and I don't care what anyone else says, so long as my standards – I set my own standards – and I measure myself according to them. You know, I think I motivate myself, I don't need others to pat me on the back or anything, I know what my standards are and quite often second-best is not good enough for me, I like to be out at the front ('Lemon Yellow', lines 211-221, theme 6, code A2000).

### **Summary: Theme Six**

In summary, the description of this theme matched the findings. Data shows that staff invest much energy in working hard on challenging tasks. The findings reveal that challenges set by managers are not the same challenges faced by the non-managers.

Managers are pre-occupied with setting personal and professional goals for their staff and staff are preoccupied with the performance of their students. An interesting finding here is that the nine participants are skilled or qualified in more than one field and feel that although their skills are matched to their jobs, their interests are directed elsewhere. This is contrary to the views of managers and the process of setting personal and professional goals for their staff. Nevertheless, findings reveal that staff are self motivated and generally enjoy working with students from different cultural backgrounds. Findings also show that all nine participants are aware of their own challenges that give them a competitive edge to solve potential problems in the classroom.

### **THEME SEVEN: Playfulness/Humour**

This theme describes the organisation with a relaxed climate of playfulness and laughter.

To assess the extent to which employees are given a relaxed climate by the organisation, a number of questions and responses addressed these issues with managers and non-managers.

#### **Managers**

Evidence demonstrates that all four managers are in favour of a relaxed environment and encourage a good working relationship with their staff.

I don't have to express anything forcefully. Um ... as far as manager is concerned, I don't regard myself as a manager. I am a part of the team on the same level because I do everything they have to do as well so I disregard the term "manager" when I'm with my colleagues. We are a team with no heads ('French Ultramarine', lines 131-135, theme 7, code C4000).

The data shows that to encourage humour and spontaneity all managers are also in favour of informal socialisation. Here managers expected staff to be more relaxed and more vocal about certain work-place issues.

I found that when its comes to a social gathering people are more free ... to talk ...more free to suggest... more free to generate ideas and definitely it does help in creative thoughts ('Permanent Geranium', lines 113-115, theme 7, code B3000).

### **Non-Managers**

Evidence demonstrates that all nine non-managers believe that informal settings stimulate creative practices.

I think there is a good spirit. I think that the people we have and work here seem to have a lot in common. Um ... we're able to laugh and joke together and I think that's quite an important part of all our lives ... um ... if we can laugh at each other and ourselves, which we do, that goes a long way and we do have that on this campus. Definitely! ('Lemon Yellow', lines 119-123, theme3, code A2000).

Findings reveal that staff feel more comfortable in such settings and are not restricted to rules of a formal gathering. A popular point made by five members of staff was the fact that staff are not self-conscious about other people's behaviours, attitudes or feelings to their views expressed in these informal discussions.

I tend to be sort of quiet in a formal situation I wouldn't want to divulge too much but under a social situation informally I tend to you know give off my best and sort of lots of ideas sort of tend to bounce up ('Crimson Alizarin', lines 124-126, theme 7, code B3000).

When I was Head of Department I used to have my staff meetings with my staff sometimes, not every time, after school maybe I'd bring a bottle of wine and a bowl of peanuts, a bowl of chips and discuss perhaps the poetry section of their prescribed works. Very interesting stuff would come up there. Of course minutes get taken, everybody's relaxed and happy ('Lamp Black', lines 208-213, theme 7, code E6000).



I think when people meet informally, they are taken out of their comfort zones and sometimes people need to get out of those comfort zones to be creative and a change of environment totally and more relaxed, just gives people a different approach to things. Um ... informally as well I think if you can have, just as an example, a meal together with somebody else, while you're eating and talking, its just a whole new way of dealing with issues and ... um ... I think then it breaks down the barrier of a formal environment – you sitting neatly with a notepad in front of you and a pen and you're making sure that you capture everything and write it down and I think an informal manner is more open; you don't have to record things. Um ... ja, I think people feel far more fear and its not that somebody from this side of the table or that side – you sit where you want to, who you want to sit next to. I think in a more formal environment, it's always the person whose in charge of the meeting sits at the end of the table and straight away there's that "I'm in charge" environment so yes, definitely! ('Lemon Yellow', lines 325-339, theme 7, code A2000).

### **Summary of Theme Seven**

In summary, the theme described a relaxed atmosphere with jokes and laughter and the researcher found that all 13 participants i.e. managers and non-managers believe that a fun-filled environment is conducive to creativity. These participants expressed the need for the organisation to provide the space and opportunities for staff to play with new ideas in a relaxed, non-threatening environment and where making mistakes is seen as a learning experience. Emerging as a theme from these findings is informal learning. Managers and non-managers are of the opinion that staff are more comfortable in relaxed environments where they are not restricted to the rules of a formal gathering. An interesting finding is that non-managers, who generally do not speak at formal meetings, are able to verbalise their implicit thoughts/views. Hence they are not self-conscious about other people's behaviours, attitudes or feelings to their views expressed in these informal discussions.

### **THEME EIGHT: Debates**

This theme is described as the occurrence of conflicts due to differing opinions, viewpoints, ideas knowledge and experiences.

To assess the extent to which employees are given opportunities to debate by the organisation, a number of questions and responses addressed these issues with managers and non-managers.

## **Managers**

Evidence from findings indicates that one manager noticed that debates among older staff are missing. Data indicates that Mrs Naples Yellow realised that older staff were quite complacent in their jobs and were reluctant to challenge the norm. Findings revealed that older staff rigidly follow hierarchical authority. The researcher found that by using new recruits and their fresh ideas to challenge the existing practices of the older staff, Mrs Yellow was able to revolutionise as opposed to evolutionise practices in her department.

The high productivity and creativity seems to come with fresh blood that we bring into the organisation ('Naples Yellow', lines 177-, theme 8, code A2000).

Evidence from data collected shows that all four managers agree that new ideas, differing experiences and knowledge are predominantly shared during informal socialisation.

Yes, we do get differences of opinion. It's not really a meeting as such – we ... if we're having lunch we just sit in the staff-room and we throw out ideas and someone may object to what is being said and then we work around that, so yes,... Well, in a sense yes, because ... um ... no two individuals think alike and ... er ... their ideas put together I'm sure is going to benefit everyone ('French Ultramarine', lines 50-55, theme 8, code C4000).

## **Non-Managers**

Data shows evidence that in terms of putting forward viewpoints and ideas, important points were made by the nine participants on the question of whether staff were creative in informal settings as opposed to formal environments. Findings reveal that all nine participants favour informal settings to debate ideas.

When we are brain-storming and when we are letting out all our frustrations we get such pearls coming out of everybody's mouths but, uh, sit in a formal meeting and you're worrying about who's going to say what and they're concerned about who's not going to appreciate what they're offering, you know. People become self-conscious. So informally is the greatest creativity even though it may not be put into practice ('Ivory Black', lines 263-269, theme 8, code E6000).

Another finding, reveals that the pervading belief among many non-managers, is that if barriers were to be removed, then a creative climate would be nurtured by motivated staff.

You can't teach an old dog new tricks because unfortunately the mind is set like that and its gone to an old mind ... um ... it's a old mindset that needs to be changed and ... um ... unfortunately we see this – I've had the opportunity to teach from a primary school, up to high school and now tertiary level and you've got to believe in people as individuals which, when I sit back and I think "Wow, it was an amazing experience" I know now when I have to deal with adults ... um ... these character traits have already developed and what might be seen to one as freedom, might seem to one as authority. Right, these are things that I had to learn to accept from them and I cannot change them because now this comes from an environment that they've been brought up with in their own social environment. There's a whole mindset in the individual that you need to change and I think it would take a lot of time in drawing out from our line managers and our supervisors – its to sit back and you ask yourself "I've done this positive but what can I do to make it better". Not only in this is negative. Sit back and look at yourself as an individual and ask "How can I make that workforce because it has a reflection on me? ('Cobalt Blue', lines 372-388, theme 8, code C4000).

### **Summary: Theme Eight**

In summary, the theme description of debates matched the views of the respondents. Findings from the data reveal that it is only at informal gatherings that people are able to provide differing viewpoints, clash between viewpoints and knowledge about the organisation. This dimension of debate is identifiable through campus settings, meetings in progress and informal gatherings. Findings show that significant learning experiences in various informal situations unfold in this theme.

### **ASSESSING ENVIRONMENTAL OBSTACLES TO CREATIVITY**

In this section the environmental obstacles to creativity could have had a positive and negative effect in the workplace.

### **THEME NINE: Organisational Impediments /Conflicts**

This theme describes an organizational culture that impedes creativity through a lack of encouragement of new ideas, preventing staff from taking risks and when there are many internal political problems in the organization.

To assess the extent to which employees experience conflicts and impediments to creativity by the organisation, a number of questions and responses addressed these issues with managers and non-managers.

### **Managers**

The data demonstrates evidence that all four managers agree to assure that rules and procedures are followed. Although one manager indicates that rules and procedures are implemented on a trust basis, others are in favour of approaching their staff firmly yet sympathetically. They enjoy the role of manager and express their opinions forcefully only when it is necessary.

If I have a mature individual on my team whose objectives and work ethic and practices etc, etc are aligned to what I want to achieve with my department I do what you just said quite pleased you know, I don't go out there you know and enforce my opinions etc but often if the timeframe is limited and I need to achieve a particular objective and there is a lack of alignment of the team member then I am not shy to express my opinions forcefully and enjoy the role of manager almost to the extent that I control that particular opportunity to get out of it what I want to achieve. I am not shy to do that at the end of the day that is why I am in the position ('Naples Yellow', lines 153-161, theme 9, code A2000).

No, I'm afraid they're not constantly watched. Um ... we have a very good working relationship with each other. It works on trust ('French Ultramarine', lines 129-130, theme 9, code C4000).

I try to be forceful but in a nice way. Sometimes when you're nice its good but it has its disadvantages as well. You find you don't have the respect. I've got a good command; I can get it across. But some people can be childish about this ('Light Red', lines 257-260, theme 9, code D5000).

### **Non-Managers**

Although lecturers acknowledge the need for a creative climate and to creatively approach their daily tasks, they report that it is difficult to adapt in their work environments. Many of the impediments the nine lecturers describe center around the manner in which their line managers treated them at work. Managers are in favour of being averse to risk and emphasise the status quo of the organisation. Another apparent

finding in the interviews is that staff are unable to change the alleged treatment meted out against them.

There are certain things that irritate me, ja. I've always wanted to, because we're supposed to be a post-matric institution, work on flexi-time, you know, make sure you get your work done but not be forced to sit in the staff room, cause I have to sit in the staff-room from that time to that time doing nothing, waiting for people, you know, for something to happen when you could actually be more creative somewhere else developing yourself. Then also when it comes to external marking, this particular institution has this rule that you can only start marking at 1 o'clock every day during exam time which there are days for instance when you are not invigilating when you don't have other college duties where you'd like to start early in the morning. Ja, so there are certain rules which are pathetic and you get the idea that management don't understand where you come from, they don't appreciate that you're doing extra work to enhance your experience, to help your students in the next semester. They always try to tramp you down and make life very difficult for you ('Lamp Black', lines 103-107, theme 9, code E6000).

Management. Management in terms of ...er...structure, management in terms of I think people that are ..er.. not really supposed to be managers that , they , that they are in a position that actually not managing but they 're just there and you have subordinates, like people lower down whose trying to manage a situation and but overplaying the hand because they have got have too much. They just got too much power and they are damaging up the whole system down below ('Indian Red', lines 242-247, theme 9, code D5000).

I like what I do. Right now I don't like where I am and I think everything that I've said before, this will sum up as to why I don't like where I am. I think there's a lot we can do as individuals, not anyone ... not everyone can be a teacher or a lecturer for that matter or a manager but being who you are as an individual – being allowed that creativity, being given the simple things that will motivate you to go back and motivate in your classroom is something that can develop a strong workforce and give off better who you are ('Cobalt Blue', lines 318-325, theme 9, code C4000).

In the analysis of documents inhibiting factors emerged such as: an ambiguous vision and mission statement and the values of the College, apparent evidence of bully tactics used in management meetings, widespread "them and us" attitudes prevalent in minutes of meetings, rigid and stringent financial control. This creates plenty of frustration among staff at all levels.

### **Summary of Theme Nine**

In summary, due to internal political problems and rigid control of resource, participants identified the need to enhance a creative climate. However, during interviews participants talked largely about organisational impediments and conflicts that prevented the institution from reaping the benefits of a creative climate. Although all non-managers acknowledged they would like to approach their daily tasks creatively, they reported it was difficult to adapt in their work environments. Many of the impediments the nine participants described centered around the manner in which their line manager treated them at work.

Responses from managers were contrary to the responses of non-managers. All four participants enjoy the role of manager and express their opinions forcefully to their staff, only when it is necessary. However, this creates a climate of conflict with the non-managers who claim that their managers overemphasize the status quo in the organisation. Further findings reveal responses from staff members who complain about the general bureaucracy of too much paperwork that takes their time away from doing what they enjoy and are employed to do. Analysis of documents affirm that staff frustrations are not confined to only non-managerial staff members but also to managers.

### **THEME TEN: Workload Pressure**

To assess the extent to which employees experience workload pressure by the organisation, a number of questions and responses addressed these issues with managers and non-managers.

Extreme time pressures, unrealistic expectations for productivity, and distractions from creative work. Sample item: "I have too much to do in too little time Amabile (1996).

### **Managers**

Evidence from data reveals that in order to combat workload pressure, all four managers are in favour of good planning strategies so that execution of tasks would be made easier. This is evident in the analysis of documents eg. minutes of meetings. Findings show that

one manager indicates that positive encouragement is necessary to assist staff to meet their deadlines.

I think the most important aspect here is that work must be .....given to them well in advance so that it can be completed in time and the deadlines are met ('Permanent Geranium', lines 89-90, theme 10, code B3000).

I encourage planning because that's the key to everything, plan, plan, plan, execution becomes that much easier if you plan if you put thought to the whole planning process execution is almost ... to cope with work pressures I say plan ahead , plan and ensure that the feedback loops are in place and you have ..err key milestones on the activities you have set (' Naples Yellow', lines 162-166, theme 10, code A2000).

### **Non-Managers**

The data demonstrates that in the case of the non-managers, seven enjoy working under pressure and have discovered that they are more creative in such conditions. Findings show the other three cope with their deadlines by proper time management.

Working under pressure can only enhance creativity because you've got the adrenalin pumping, you know, and deadlines do get you to work at the last minute. Its strange how when you know you've got three weeks to do this and you, I think its human nature, come the night before the deadline it all comes in together and, you know, you can fold it up very neatly. Ja. I can work under pressure ('Ivory Black', lines 187-192, theme 10, code E6000).

Okay, I'm a great believe in time management. Um ... I like to prioritise my day ... um ... and plan ahead. If something unexpected comes about then I need to say "Where does that fit into the schedule?" and I like to have control of time ('Lemon Yellow', lines 231-234, theme 10, code A2000).

### **Summary of Theme Ten**

In summary, the theme description confirmed the findings in this study. All managers are in support of proper planning so that execution of tasks by non-managers becomes much easier. Despite being stressed from heavy workloads, findings show those seven non-managers enjoy deadline pressure because it stimulates their creativity. However, the two non-managers who believed that planning one's schedule was important were not in favour of working under pressure.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study have shown that there is a positive and significant relationship between creativity and climate. Creativity is more strongly associated with informal learning than organised learning. Interesting findings in themes one, two, four and five led to the emergence of a new theme i.e. "Coping Mechanisms". The researcher found that non-managers were able to adapt to their circumstances and developed mechanisms to implement new ideas in the classroom. They encouraged themselves to creatively solve potential problems, within the climate of this organisation. In theme three, evidence from the findings showed that most of the free and open communication, between staff, took place at an informal level, outside the constraints of the timetable. It was in these informal settings, the researcher found good team spirit amongst participants and positive motivation, the ingredients to stimulate informal learning. In theme four the researcher found that despite being bound by a syllabus and structure, the four non-managers expressed coping mechanisms of imagination and self-motivation to nurture their skills and abilities in the work-place. In theme six managers were pre-occupied with setting personal and professional goals for their staff and staff were preoccupied with the performance of their students. Emerging from theme seven were the findings of informal socialisation. Managers and non-managers are of the opinion that staff are more comfortable in relaxed environments and not restricted to rules of a formal gathering.

Findings in theme eight revealed that it was only at informal gatherings that people were able to provide differing viewpoints, clash between viewpoints and knowledge about the organisation. In theme nine many of the impediments the nine participants described centred around the manner in which their line managers treated them at work. Responses from managers in theme ten were contrary to the responses of non-managers. All managers were in support of proper planning so that the execution of tasks by non-managers becomes much easier.

The next chapter presents a discussion by analysing the data obtained from the findings and will demonstrate the reliability and validity of the data analysis



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this chapter is to present an analysis of data and to provide interpretations of key issues emerging from the findings by relating them to the literature review and theoretical framework.

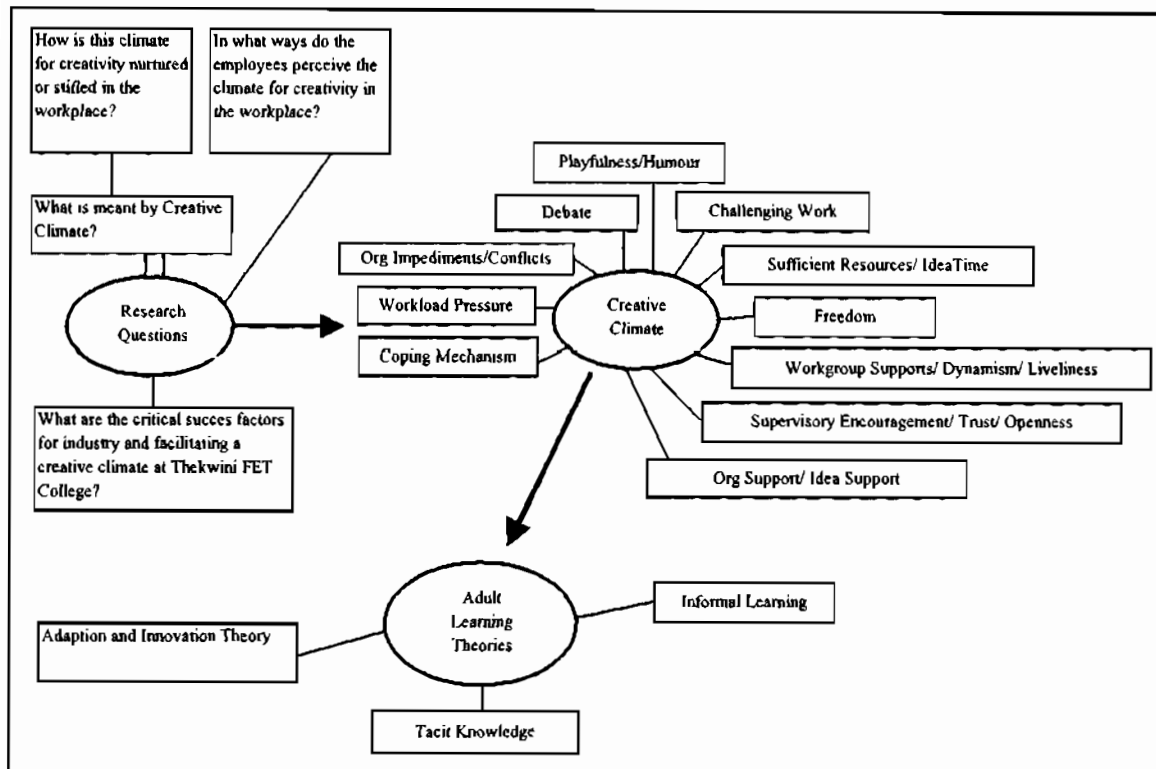
This chapter is structured by discussing and analysing how the 10 creative climate dimensions manifest themselves in the FET setting of Thekwini College. Findings reveal that two of the 10 climate dimensions nurture creativity, challenging work; playfulness and humour.

The eight dimensions that did not emerge as nurturing creativity were: Organisational encouragement and support/ Idea support; Supervisory encouragement/ Trust/Openness; Freedom; Sufficient Resources/ Idea Time; Work group supports/ Dynamism/Liveliness; Debates; Organisational Impediments / Conflicts; and Workload Pressure.

Two new themes emerged from the findings:

- (1) Coping Mechanisms; and
- (2) Informal Learning.

**Figure 5.1 Analysing and Discussing Data for this study**



The main findings of this study will be discussed according to the research questions. Question One questioned ways in which employees perceive the climate for creativity in the workplace. Question Two examined how the climate for creativity was nurtured or stifled in the workplace. Both these questions were explored using the creative climate dimensions of KEYS and CCQ. Selected categories from KEYS ( Organisational Support, Supervisory Encouragement, Workgroup Supports, Sufficient Resources, Challenging Work, Freedom, Challenging Work, Organisational Impediments and Workload Pressure) were used to interview participants and themes from CCQ ( Challenge, Freedom, Dynamism/ Liveliness, Trust, Openness, Idea Time, Playfulness/Humour, Conflicts, Idea Support and Debates) were used to observe the behaviour of participants. Perceptions of employee experiences have been described with a view to analysing and discussing their current situation, individual's opinions and practices. The findings and discussions of each theme are supplemented by the theoretical data of adult learning theories.

Question Three, questioned the concept of creative climate, and Question Four, sought to identify critical success factors that induced and facilitated a creative climate. In light of the discussions and the conclusions inferred, recommendations for best practices are suggested in Chapter six. The themes, research questions and theories are diagrammatically represented in Figure 5.1.

## **5.2 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Theme One: Organisational Support/Idea Support**

This theme describes the organisation as being supportive in encouraging employees to try out new ideas and to solve problems.

The main findings indicate that all non-managers did not receive the desired encouragement and support from the college. Yet data showed that managers encouraged staff-members to come up with their own ideas and valued individual contributions. It appears that the organisational support given by managers, imposed a special set of conditions on encouraging a creative climate for their staff. As characteristics of a bureaucratic structure, the college culture encouraged vertical communication links; rules that describe the duties of staff (job descriptions); and a set of standard operating procedures (generated from policies). Cuatrecasas (1995) states that this is the way most companies are organised in order "to get things done, and fast." There is no time wasted by allowing people to experiment, to have fun, and to do things extemporaneously. Hence the climate of this organisation describes the atmosphere of the interpersonal functioning of people within a given structure. Grivas (1996) indicates that by understanding the climate of an organisation, one may begin to see the dynamic, inter-actional role climate has in relation to behaviour of those within the organisation. Observational evidence has shown that through daily learnings non-managers encouraged themselves, to creatively solve potential problems within the climate of this organisation. The researcher believes that hierarchies amplify these tendencies, affecting the way staff think, which, in turn, affects the way in which they behave. According to Spears and Wilson (2002), neuroscientists have discovered that people's feelings are significant to

their learning process. Therefore “emotions” are critical to learning and cannot be separated from learning. Emotions create meaning and help people to make decisions.

Therefore factors in organisational support such as bureaucracy, procedures, rules, policies, monotonous work and physical environment elicit reactions in the individuals involved. Ekvall (1991) indicates that it is these reactions in the form of behaviour, feelings, and attitudes that constitute the climate in the realistic sense. But we also have to count the people themselves as part of the organisational situation. Phenomenologically speaking, it is the individual’s apperceptions of these conditions, factors and events in the organisation that constitute the climate. It is their way of assigning meaning to procedures, policies, and events that come to constitute the climate support.

### **Conclusion of Theme One**

Responses between managers and non-managers were contradictory. Managers believed that they encouraged staff to generate new ideas and supported individual contributions. However, non-managers expressed the desire for rewards and recognition from the organisation. Instead, the organisation encouraged and supported the staff through vertical communication links; rules that describe the duties of staff (job descriptions); and a set of standard operating procedures (generated from policies). These organisational factors elicited reactions from staff and through daily learning’s non-managers encouraged themselves, to creatively solve potential problems within the climate of this organisation. Literature points out that people’s feelings are significant to their learning process and “emotions” are critical to learning. The key point under this theme is that organisational encouragement fosters learning in the form of people’s behaviour, feelings, and attitudes.

### **Theme Two: Supervisory Encouragement /Trust/Openness**

This theme describes the supervisor as a ‘good work model’, who establishes a strong level of trust and openness among the staff.

The findings in Chapter Four are inconclusive. Fifty percent of managers receive support and recognition from senior management. These managers in turn do not provide a supportive

climate for their staff. The absence of supervisory encouragement created frustration among all non-managers. The main frustration was that although non-managers agreed that they were given opportunities to be creative only in the classroom, their line manager adopted a “non-interference” approach. According to Cuatrecasas (1995), managers are taught to control and manipulate people, to get them to do what they (and the corporation) want them to do. Predictably enough, behaviours become formalised, operations rigid, relationships autocratic, and vision shortsighted. Therefore non-managers seemingly felt devalued.

As a result of this disjuncture between managers and non-managers, findings in this theme support the theoretical studies on tacit knowledge. Non-managers learned to adapt and interact with their environment through tacit learning. Hodkinson (2004) states that these implicit or hidden dimensions of knowledge and skills are key elements of ‘mastery’, which experienced workers draw upon in everyday activities and expand in tackling new or unexpected situations. Learning is acquired through experience, socialisation and practices that lead to tacit knowledge - “that which we know but cannot tell” (Polanyi 1967 cited in Smith 1999). In this way, staff developed their own mechanisms to facilitate a creative climate without the direct encouragement of their supervisor.

As part of managerial practice, participants expressed the need for effective communication and encouragement that was essential for staff to feel trusted and valued. On the contrary, Mr Permanent Geranium, Ms Light Red and Ms Naples Yellow claimed that they attempted to create trust and openness with their staff and did the following things, similar to the description of the theme: value individual contributions, promoted open communication, allowed time for sharing in group work and treated all equally. Bruce (n.d.) states that supervisory encouragement can come from the team leader, who can model creative behaviour. A team leader that perseveres through difficult problems and encourages collaboration and communication with the team will be re-enforcing the three components of the creative process (expertise, thinking skills and intrinsic motivation). These procedures and core beliefs give team leaders the mandate to dismantle cliques and expose ‘politicking’ in order to keep team members from feeling that their work is threatened by the agendas of others and to keep them sharing information through trust and openness.

Spears & Wilson (2002) reveal that there is powerful evidence that emotions play a far greater role in thought, decision making and individual life-long success than is commonly acknowledged. The most effective learning is when the emotions are positively engaged and where positive self-esteem is encouraged. Co-operative learning, a sense of belonging, having meaningful goals and targets, and achieving success all contribute to learning. Hence, brain-based learning is effective when faced with challenges in the workplace, where acknowledgement and praise outweigh criticism and punishment.

### **Conclusion of Theme Two**

Responses between managers and non-managers are contradictory. On one hand, all managers believe that they encourage their staff to come up with their own ideas and value individual contributions. On the other hand, all non-managers believe that although given opportunities to be creative only in the classroom, their line managers adopt a “non-interference” approach. All non-managers expressed the need for their supervisors to be complementary to their job performance. As a result of this dissension between managers and non-managers, findings in this theme support the theoretical studies on tacit and brain-based learning. In this way, staff developed their own coping mechanisms to facilitate a creative climate without the direct encouragement of their supervisor. Literature on brain-based learning reveal that emotions play a far greater role in thought and decision making. By encouraging trust and openness, management promoted effective learning, positively engaged in employee’s emotions and encouraged positive self-esteem.

### **Theme Three: Workgroup Supports /Dynamism/Liveliness**

This theme describes a work-group that is supported by free and open communication. Interaction between members of the work-group is dynamic, diverse and lively.

Although managers expressed the need to support work-groups, findings show that work groups were not evident in all the campuses, rather informal gatherings and groups occurred spontaneously for free and open communication. It was interesting to note that non-managers created their own opportunities to get into groups as stated by Ms Lamp Black.

Billet (1993) indicates that although learning is a matter of personal and unique interpretation, it takes place within the social context. In addition, learning must be useful to the learner; intrinsic motivation emerges from the desire to understand, to construct meaning.

Both managers and non-managers acknowledged the importance of generating new ways of thinking through working in groups. Managers tried to foster and support informal groups through brain-storming techniques to 'jump start' the idea process. Responses from six lecturers indicated that there was no dedicated time set aside for groups working together on the timetable. Two lecturers indicated that they were given opportunities to work in groups during the lunch break. These informal groups stimulated their creative thoughts by using brain-storming as the main creative technique. Brain-storming in groups generated different ideas and perceptions of each individual in the group. This became a purposeful group process of creative problem-solving. Constructivism within the workplace-learning context positions managers and non-managers as people who do not learn in isolation from the rest of their lives: these people learn in relationship to what else they know, what they believe, their prejudices and their fears. On reflection, research on the manner in which people learn in the workplace becomes clear that this point is actually a corollary of the idea that learning is active and social. Learning cannot be separated from people's lives. The social view of constructivism, exemplified by Vygotsky, posits that knowledge is co-constructed through social and cultural contexts, rendering reality non-objective. Knowledge socially constructed as reality is created during physical and social activity (Gibson & McKay 2000).

A strong emphasis especially in campus C4000 and A2000, was the social aspect of group participation that was valuable for staff camaraderie and enthusiasm. The staff-room as an informal setting was often used to get staff stimulated to generate ideas. There was a good spirit of laughter in this environment. The social environment can affect intrinsic motivation. Highly innovative individuals are driven by inner curiosity, a need to know. It is intrinsic motivation that drives them. It is not work because they love what they are doing (Hughes 1998).

### **Conclusion of Theme Three**

Work-group supports were not evident at this work-place. Rather informal gatherings and groups occurred spontaneously for free and open communication. Although managers were in support of staff working in groups to enhance creativity, they made no provision on the time-table for formal work-groups. Two participants found opportunities to work in groups. This was mainly held in an informal setting such as during lunch breaks where there was plenty of positive energy. Staff-members were able to bounce ideas off one another thereby stimulating their thinking and generating new lines of thought. To encourage creativity, diverse thinking was embraced through brain-storming techniques. Importantly, informal groups allowed for free and open communication between the participants with the occurrence of constant alternations of thinking. The researcher found that positive motivation led to good team spirit amongst participants, the ingredients to enhance a dynamic and lively group. Literature supports the findings that learning occurs more effectively in groups and within the social context, to construct meaning.

### **Theme Four: Freedom**

This theme describes freedom as independent behaviour of staff, in taking initiatives of various kinds and actively making decisions concerning one's work.

In this theme, all managers believed that creativity required freedom of choice. Responses from 40 percent non-managers indicated that the syllabus and structures in the organisation restricted their freedom. Sixty percent of the staff was able to use coping mechanisms to exercise their freedom in the classroom. Although employees were not encouraged freedom to use their hunches and gut feelings to take actions on certain issues in the workplace, their 'feelings' about a situation and 'gut reaction' was openly practiced in the classroom. The freedom for staff to think intuitively only occurred because it could not be pinned down, nor directly observed or measured by management (Goldberg 2002).

Tesolin (2005) points out that having a more intuitive workforce can add high value for the employer by anticipating solutions at early stages of a problem, improving client satisfaction,



and even increasing workforce retention. McCoy (2000) points out that in using both sides of the brain, logic and intuition become integrated to provide a more balanced approach. People who are in touch with their intuitive skills are better listeners and are better able to see the big picture.

While 60 percent of the participants empowered themselves with freedom, forty percent waited to be given freedom. Two cognitive thinking styles emerged, amongst employees, in their approach to exercising freedom in the workplace. These employees can be located along a continuum ranging from highly adaptive to highly innovative. Kirton (1994) referred this to as 'creative style'. Grivas (1996) states that Kirton's theory states that regardless of how much ability, skill, or talent a person has, each one has a natural tendency to solve problems with a certain style. Mr Permanent Geranium adopted an adaptive approach to freedom and showed a preference for operating within the defined structures and systems of the college. Mr Geranium exercised his freedom within existing patterns and procedures. Cuatrecasas (1995) suggests that, the popular 'benchmarking' asks people to copy what others are doing, not to come up with their own unique ways of doing things. "Management by objectives" predetermines the expected behaviour or outcomes, thus sterilising the future (taking the spontaneity and the beauty out of it), and sets a punitive tone for accomplishing "job duties".

In contrast, Mrs Naples Yellow adopted a more innovative approach by operating within less structure and rules. She exercised her freedom outside existing patterns and procedures by giving her staff the freedom to think laterally and not be stifled by management. Kirton (1994) indicates that, do not often recognise that there is a structure, system, or paradigm to work within, so they often create solutions, which bring about radical change. Interestingly, being self-motivated as well was instrumental in staff nurturing their individualism in the workplace.

Although creative styles are diverse in approach, Kirton asserts that organisations need the benefit of both creative styles. However, he also discerns that ideas originating from adaptive sources were more likely to gain management support; as they would tend to stay

within existing patterns of how things were done. Whereas ideas originating from 'innovative' sources would have less chance of being supported as they would, almost certainly, breakaway from existing corporate patterns (Lincoln 2005).

#### **Conclusion of Theme Four**

From the discussions it can be concluded that to practice freedom within a bureaucratic structure is challenging. Forty percent of the non-managers indicated that the syllabus and organisational structure restricted their freedom in the classroom whilst 60 percent of the staff was able to use coping mechanisms in the classroom. The researcher found that 60 percent of these participants expressed a way to use personal freedom in nurturing workplace creativity. Since intuition is not discussed and acknowledged by management, employees used their hunches and gut feelings to take actions on certain issues in the workplace, their 'feelings' about a situation and 'gut reaction' was openly practiced in the classroom. The freedom for staff to think intuitively only occurred because it could not be pinned down, nor directly observed or measured by management.

An interesting analysis was that two cognitive thinking styles emerged, amongst employees, in their approach to exercising freedom in the workplace. These employees can be located along a continuum ranging from highly adaptive to highly innovative. Employees adopted an adaptive approach to freedom and showed a preference for operating within the defined structures and systems and other employees exercised their freedom outside existing patterns and procedures of the organisation.

#### **Theme Five: Sufficient Resources /Idea Time**

This theme describes resources as: time to generate ideas, equipment, materials, facilities and information that are easily accessible to staff.

All four managers were in agreement that sufficient resources enhance a creative climate. Ekvall (1991) states that, the organisation has resources of different kinds - people, money and machines etc - which are used in its processes and operations. Climate exerts a strong influence on these processes. But the effects in turn influence both resources and climate.

The findings reveal that it is expected of all managers to control resources within a budget allocation. In contrast to the responses from managers, 70 percent of non-managers claimed that they had limited access to resources and therefore had to think of possibilities for classroom practice. Indications showed that they improvised when necessary. Isaksen (1993) indicates that the physical environment or setting can influence the degree to which divergent thought processes are used.

With limited resources and managers controlling resources within a strict budget, the creative process was encouraged and intimately linked to creative thinking. Lauer (1994) points out that creativity connects the mind with problem-finding abilities, mental mobility, with a personal aesthetic, inner motivation and risk-taking. Mrs Light Red and Ms Cobalt Blue share similar experiences of bringing resources from home in order to facilitate teaching.

In the literature review and theoretical framework, Moorhead & Griffin's four-stage creative process was most likely employed during idea-time by Mrs Lemon Yellow. Preparation involves gaining the necessary skills and knowledge and trying to find the right answers by addressing the problem from different perspectives for example, Mrs Lemon Yellow does not have access to an overhead projector and weighs her options. The next step is the incubation period of less intense conscious concentration. Here, the creative person allows the knowledge and ideas which emanated from the previous stage to mature and develop. For example, Mrs Lemon Yellow allows time for her ideas to develop. Ideas are pooled by a group of people through brain-storming techniques and other analytical procedures. In this stage mind-maps are created to classify ideas and place them into categories.

In the third step, insight is a breakthrough of new understanding of the problem in which the creative person synchronizes thoughts and ideas maturing during the incubation stage. For example, Mrs Lemon Yellow has planned her lesson without the use of the overhead projector and has considered the many variables affecting her lesson. This is the expansive phase where the question context is considered, and account is taken of the people, resources, policy, climate, etc that will support the idea, and those factors that are likely to hinder its implementation (Henry 1991). The final step of the creative process is verification or

implementation that determines the validity or truthfulness of the insight. Here Mrs Lemon Yellow implements the lesson with achievable outputs.

The researcher found that Moorhead & Griffin four-stage creative process is useful in this context and Amabile (2001) concurs that, creativity often takes time. It can be slow-going to explore new concepts, put together unique solutions, and wander through the maze. Managers who do not allow time for exploration or do not schedule incubation periods are unwittingly standing in the way of the creative process.

### **Conclusion of Theme Five**

It can be concluded that although the managers believed that resources are required to enhance a creative climate, they were bound by a budget allocation. Responses were therefore contradictory between managers and their staff. Seventy percent of staff in the workplace had limited access to resources. As a result they had to think of possibilities for classroom practice. Indications showed that they improvised when necessary. These staff did find different ways to be creative in their classroom practice. Furthermore, observations confirmed that when staff was given limited money in their budget, they were often propelled to be creative in finding supplementary resources (staff bringing resources from home) and developing new ideas especially for classroom practice. Within this context the researcher found that the theoretical framework of Moorhead & Griffin was useful in this context. With limited resources, staff needed time to think of possibilities by going through the four stages of preparation, incubation, inspiration and verification to propagate new ideas and improvise for limited resources.

### **Theme Six: Challenging Work**

This theme describes members of the organisation working hard on challenging tasks. Analysis of the findings indicate that challenges set by managers are not the same challenges faced by the non-managers. Managers are pre-occupied with setting personal and professional goals for their staff and staff was preoccupied with the performance of their students. All non-managers believe that motivation and meaningfulness in their job occurs mainly when their students produced good results. Therefore, Amabile (2001) draws

attention to creativity as not being methodical; it relies much more on intrinsic motivation; on people being enthusiastic, inspired and knowledgeable. According to the intrinsic motivation principle of creativity, people will be most creative when they are motivated primarily by the interest, enjoyment, satisfaction, and challenge of work itself. Staff responded to challenging work by relying on their own strengths, and turning to relationships outside the workplace for support. Warner (n.d.) sheds light on truly creative people, who are intensely career-oriented and devote enormous amounts of energy to their work. They pay particular attention to the intrinsic satisfaction in their work and look for interesting, stimulating and challenging creative projects.

An interesting finding here is that the nine participants are skilled or qualified in more than one field and feel that although their skills are matched to their jobs, their interests are directed elsewhere. Research shows that adults come to any learning experience with a wide range of previous experience, knowledge, skills, interests and competence. Adults will learn, retain and use what they observe to be pertinent to their personal and professional needs. In this way their experiences are culturally framed and shaped. The implication is that in any situation in which adults' experience is ignored or devalued, they perceive this as not rejecting their experience but rejecting them as persons (Knowles 1990).

### **Conclusion of Theme Six**

Although, non-managers skills were not matched to their jobs, all four managers claimed to set challenging tasks for their staff. This was achieved by setting personal and professional goals for the staff. On the contrary, classroom practices confirmed that all non-managers felt most challenged when they worked with their students. Amabile clarified the theory on the intrinsic motivation principle of creativity, that people will be most creative when they are motivated primarily by the interest, enjoyment, satisfaction, and challenge of work itself. In this case, staff devoted enormous amounts of energy on classroom practices in order to improve student performance. Non-managers focused their attention on intrinsic satisfaction in their jobs and looked for fulfilling and challenging creative tasks that would enhance the success rate of their students. One non-manager set her own standards and relied on her own strengths. Thus, employee challenge was very much intrinsically motivated.

### **Theme Seven: Playfulness/Humour**

This theme describes the organisation with a relaxed climate of playfulness and laughter.

Theme Seven was identifiable in campus settings, meetings in progress and informal gatherings. Staff displayed actions to foster playfulness and humour in their departments which were similar to the definition of this theme: there was laughter, allowance for jokes, and most staff displayed a sense of humour. Cuatrecasas (1995) provides evidence that creativity usually emanates from a sense of curiosity or from an inner drive for asking questions and solving problems differently. To do this, people must have the freedom to express individuality of thought or action. They must be able to engage in 'playing' with ideas and abstractions, often with imagery and fantasy. People must feel that the problem-solving process is fun and provides them with unique sense of identity and self-satisfaction.

Scientific studies of creativity and innovation have shown that laughing first (and second and last) is the best way to solve any problem (Robin 2004). The results of the interview show a strong and significant positive relationship between informal learning as well as socialisation. Neuroscientists have discovered that people's feelings are significant to their learning process. If people are not experiencing any stress and feel enthusiastic about a task, then learning will take place. Therefore 'emotions' are critical to learning and cannot be separated from learning. Emotions create meaning and help people to make decisions that are value-based. Spears & Wilson (2002) reveal that there is powerful evidence that emotions play a far greater role in thought, decision-making and individual life-long success than is commonly acknowledged. The most effective learning is that in which the emotions are positively engaged and which emphasises self esteem, co-operative learning, a sense of belonging, having meaningful goals and targets, and achieving success.

Data emerging from informal socialisation related to informal learning that was unstructured and had occurred spontaneously. Marsick & Volpe (1999) define informal learning as learning that is predominantly unstructured. It is experimental and, due to its nature, unable

to be fully preprogrammed. Informal learning takes place spontaneously within the context of real work and does not lead to predetermined outcomes.

Employees were not vociferous at formal meetings but were more vocal at informal gatherings. They were not self-conscious about their peers' behaviours, attitudes and feelings about their views expressed in these gatherings. Researchers have pointed out that informal learning is an antecedent over formal learning and most of what is learned inside and outside of the workplace occurs during informal practice. Further, learning from this experience is a fundamental concept of adult learning. Informal learning will be further discussed as Theme Twelve in this chapter.

### **Conclusion of Theme Seven**

Staff actions to foster playfulness and humour in the work-place were similar to the theme definition: relaxed atmosphere where jokes were allowed and humour encouraged. The results also indicate that informal socialisation had a stronger positive effect on creativity than organised socialisation. Staff members in most campuses seemed to feel more comfortable in social gatherings as opposed to being governed by their work-place rules and regulations. Non-managers were not intimidated by other people's behaviours, attitudes or feelings to their own views expressed in these informal discussions.

This study has demonstrated that informal socialisation has a much more powerfully positive impact on creativity than organised socialisation. Hence, informal socialisation (i.e learning) is an antecedent over formal socialisation (i.e learning) and most of what is learned inside and outside of the workplace occurs during informal practice. Therefore, the employees' life experience is regarded as a rich resource for his/her learning and has several outcomes for learning within the context of this theme.

### **Theme Eight: Debates**

This theme is described as the occurrence of conflicts due to differing opinions, viewpoints, ideas knowledge and experiences.

This dimension was difficult to separate from conflict because debates cause a clash of viewpoints in order to stimulate new lines of thinking. Conflicts may arise due to personal clashes outside the issue debated. Ekvall's definition of debate was related to staff behaviours especially in informal gatherings that allowed for many opinions to be heard, breaking away from set patterns and rules, inhibitions were suppressed and divergent views were expressed. Often staff here would illustrate their arguments effectively outside the authoritarian patterns of the organisation. Handzic & Chaimungkalanont (2004) says that one place where creativity flourishes is in informal learning practices in spite of the constraints of the organisation's linear structure. Informal learning is an indispensable, but very often invisible, part of the organisation with the capacity to play an active role in workforce development. It is understood that significant learning experiences in various informal situations, for example, informal conversations, increasingly unfold outside the hierarchical structure of the organisation. However, it can also be argued that informal learning is not the only setting in which creativity flourishes. Socialisation is assumed to enable tacit knowledge to be transferred between individuals through shared experience, space and time. More importantly, socialisation drives creation and growth of personal tacit knowledge bases.

Because of the subjective nature of informal socialisation, debates cannot be controlled by management in the way that the formal organisation can.

### **Conclusion of Theme Eight**

One place where creativity flourishes is from unstructured groups during informal socialisation, in spite of the constraints of the organisation's linear structure. During informal socialisation, debates occurred among staff-members. Members of staff agreed that it was during informal socialisation and practices that they were able to be free to voice their opinions and counter-argue other members' opinions. In this way informal learning took place enabling them to learn lessons through debates; listen to other people's viewpoints; and gain new lines of thinking and knowledge. Another important implication here was that subliminal accumulation of knowledge, that was unstructured, occurred during informal learning through shared experiences and opposing views.



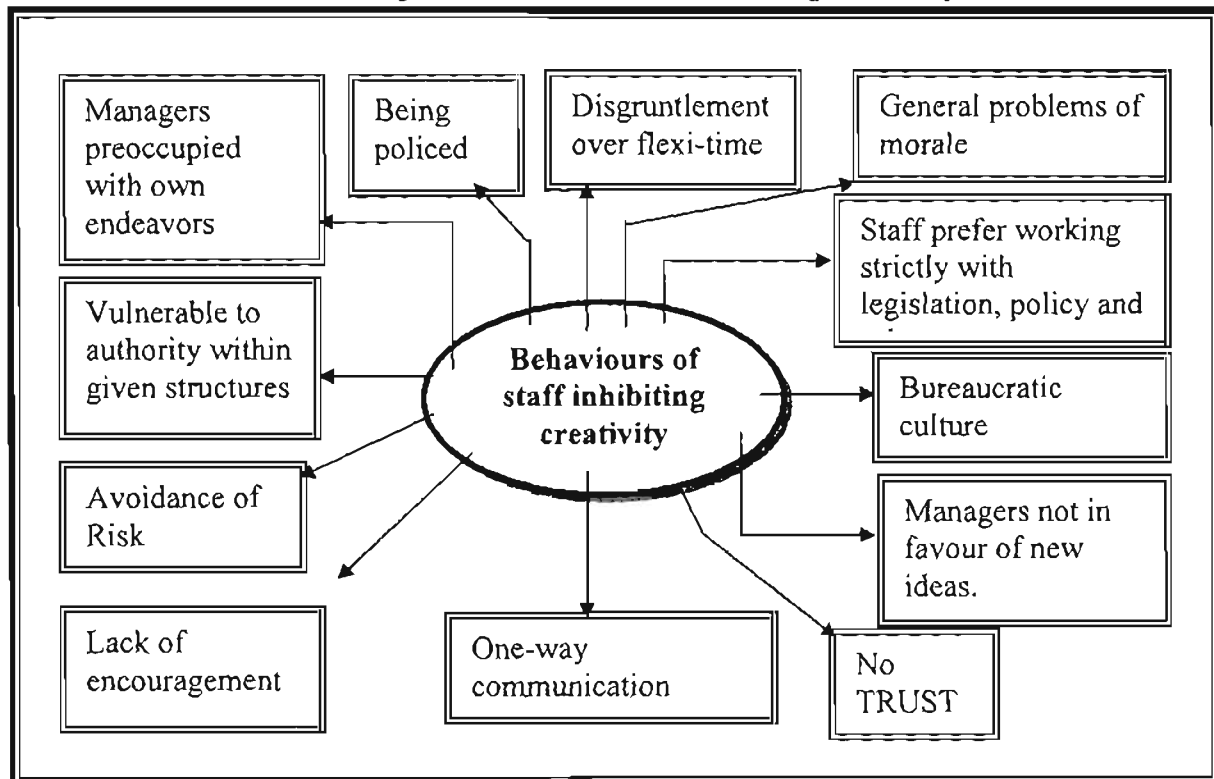
## Theme Nine and Ten: Organisational Impediments, Conflicts and Workload

### Pressure

Since the researcher had discovered many similarities and increasing overlaps in the findings of themes nine and ten, both themes were subsequently merged in this chapter to avoid duplication and confusion.

The anecdotal evidence is summarised through a diagram in **fig.5.2** and suggests that the institution encounters conflicts between staff and management so as to remove barriers of a creative climate.

**Figure 5.2: Behaviours inhibiting creativity**



Although participants acknowledged the need for a creative climate and to creatively approach their daily tasks, they reported it was difficult to adapt to their work climate. Many factors considered to be inhibitors of creativity operate by restricting people's freedom to work in the way that best suits them: authoritarian leadership; routinised low discretion jobs; hierarchical structures and bureaucratic cultures (Dingli n.d.).

It was impressive to note that a strong attribute in some staff was the ability to handle conflict, recognise that a problem existed and attempt to change the situation.

It was clear from the findings of this study that many of the impediments respondents described revolved around the huge amount of bureaucratic tasks that non-managers should perform which interfered with their creative activities.

The general bureaucracy of too much paperwork created workload pressure. Amabile (2001) indicates that organisations routinely kill creativity with fake deadlines or impossibly tight ones. The former create distrust and the latter cause burnout. In either case, people feel over-controlled and unfulfilled – which invariably damages motivation. Furthermore in order to comply with the rules of the organisation people often thought they were most creative when they were working under severe deadline pressure. People were the least creative when they were fighting the clock. A limited time-frame did not allow them to absorb the problem and think of new ideas (Arabe 2005). Time-pressure stifles creativity because people can't deeply engage with the problem. People need time to soak in a problem and let the ideas bubble up (Amabile 1996).

According to Sakes et.al (1993) the interviewees did not realise that they contributed to the production and maintenance of an organisational structure and ideology that inhibited their own creativity. Most of them perceived 'the organisation' as a powerful entity, which moved in wondrous ways, independently of its members, to impose on, constrain, or coerce them. Existentially, they saw themselves only as objects at the mercy of reified entity – 'The Company'.

The only way to satisfy any needs at all was to adapt to the context, to conform, or to be loyal group members. All these strategies, however, were based on dependency and led to defensiveness of one's subordination to the organisation or blaming 'the organisation' for whatever went wrong. However, Kirton (1994) indicates that people can be located along a continuum ranging from highly adaptive to highly innovative. Adaptive sources were more

to gain management support as they applied their creativity within existing patterns and procedures whereas innovative sources had little or no support from management because they applied creativity outside existing parameters.

Although the participants seemingly understood the concept of creative climate and engaged in challenging work practices that nurtured creativity, some staff created a 'blame culture' to express their frustrations. They reported frustration in satisfying needs for identity, meaning, purpose, and belonging, together with a penetrating feeling of uncertainty and ambiguity (Wesenberg 1986 cited in Isaksen 1993).

Cuatrecasas (1995) supports the findings and indicates that corporations tend to be authoritarian institutions run by a few people with enormous power who are survivors and products of the 'system'. They are thus not likely to be sensitive to its weaknesses, but rather committed to its preservation. They will simply do the same, but more of it faster and better. Creativity-stifling systems are thus perpetuated. The researcher discovered that most participants suppressed their negative feelings in order to avoid conflicts and contributed to a breakdown in communication between staff and management.

Isaksen et al. (1993) puts it very clearly that individuals tend to avoid conflict so as to preserve harmony - postponing tough decisions about people so as not to hurt their feelings, or the organisations might value consensus so highly that decisions take too long to make. If people work in a negative environment and feel insecure, then learning will not take place.

The system as inhibitor according to Reitz (1981 cited in Isaksen 1993) described managerial practices and organisational policies which foster fear, anxiety, and defensiveness (all inhibiting creativity) such as: (a) an oppressive organisational climate, manifested by close, punitive supervision; (b) a stress on the consequences of failure rather than the rewards for success; (c) organisational instability; (d) excessive formalisation of rules, policies, relationships, and procedures; (e) a highly centralised organisational structure; and (f) little time for thinking and experimenting.

Analysis of documents and observations confirm that the work environment of Thekwini FET College is structured and staff solutions to problems are not acted on spontaneously due to bureaucratic organisational processes. These organisational processes according to Ekvall (1991) include problem-solving, decision-making, communications, co-ordination, controlling and psychological processes of learning, creating, motivation and commitment. It is postulated, according to Hughes (1998), that the new organisational behaviour has now aligned itself to fit mechanical models of placing responsibilities into functions and employees into roles with boundaries and a secure sense of control. Observations and document analysis show that all work is managed, administered and measured by line managers, enhancing standardised and routinised behaviour. Managers are especially prone to resist changes-their promotions and high statuses persuade them that they have more expertise than other people. They believe they will catch the blame if the current practices, strategies, and goals go wrong (Starbuck 1995).

Moreover the problem lies in the fact that staff are not engaged in a more fluid, meaningful and holistic practice. Staff have expressed the recognition of creativity operating within a system of cultural rules instead of performing standard tasks for efficient bureaucracy. Outcomes from analysis indicate that this can only be achieved by affording staff more trust, more support and better communication which is an integral part of organisational behaviour that may enhance a creative organisational culture.

### **Conclusion of Theme Nine**

Although managers claimed that they had set challenging tasks for their staff, staff at the organisation unknowingly and unintentionally subscribed to the creation and management of the organisational climate that they indicated was inhibiting or enhancing their creativity. In other words, staff contributed to the creation and persistence of an organisational model and principles that restricted their own creativity. The bureaucratic model of the organisation inhibited a creative climate by placing employees' job descriptions into functions of responsibilities and staff roles within parameters of desired workplace behaviours. It appears that staff are unable to deeply engage with any problems when they are pressured for time. Nevertheless, 70 percent of non-managers enjoyed deadline pressure. They claimed that the

pressure stimulated their creativity. All managers supported proper planning instead. For creativity to flourish, it requires an incubation period so that staff can immerse themselves in the problem and let ideas brew with time. Although the employees understood the concept of creative climate and engaged in challenging work practices that nurtured creativity within this bureaucratic model, some staff created a 'blame culture' to express their frustrations.

## **OTHER EMERGING THEMES**

The following two dimensions were present in interviews and observations and seemed to have a strong influence on this study. Both themes answer the second research question of, "How is this climate for creativity nurtured in the workplace?" The dimensions are as follows:

### **Theme Eleven: Coping Mechanisms**

In theme one, the lack of organisational support elicited reactions from staff and through daily learning's non-managers encouraged themselves, to creatively solve potential problems within the climate of this organisation. People's feelings are significant to their learning process and "emotions" are critical to learning. According to Spears and Wilson (2002), neuroscientists have discovered that people's feelings are significant to their learning process. Therefore "emotions" are critical to learning and cannot be separated from learning. Emotions create meaning and help people to make decisions. When employees are not experiencing any stress and feel enthusiastic about a task, then learning will take place. When employees work in a negative environment and feel insecure, then learning will not take place. Emotions create meaning and help employees to make decisions that are value-based.

In theme two, as a result of the disjuncture between managers and non-managers, staff learned to adapt and interact with their environment through tacit learning. Hodkinson (2004) states that these implicit or hidden dimensions of knowledge and skills are key elements of 'mastery', which experienced workers draw upon in everyday activities and expand in tackling new or unexpected situations. Learning is acquired through experience, socialisation

and practices that lead to tacit knowledge - "that which we know but cannot tell" (Polanyi 1967 cited in Smith 1999). In this way, staff developed their own mechanisms to facilitate a creative climate without the direct encouragement of their supervisor.

In theme three, since work-group supports were not evident on the work-place timetable, informal gatherings and groups occurred spontaneously, among lecturers for free and open communication. The researcher found that staff displayed positive motivation that led to good team spirit amongst participants, the ingredients to enhance a dynamic and lively group. Literature supports the findings that learning occurs more effectively in groups and within the social context, to construct meaning. The social view of constructivism, exemplified by Vygotsky, posits that knowledge is co-constructed through social and cultural contexts, rendering reality non-objective. Knowledge socially constructed as reality is created during physical and social activity (Gibson & McKay 2000).

In theme four, the researcher found that 60 percent of these participants expressed a way to use personal freedom in nurturing workplace creativity. Since intuition is not discussed and acknowledged by management, employees used their hunches and gut feelings to take actions on certain issues in the workplace, their 'feelings' about a situation and 'gut reaction' was openly practiced in the classroom. McCoy (2000) points out that in using both sides of the brain, logic and intuition become integrated to provide a more balanced approach. People who are in touch with their intuitive skills are better listeners and are better able to see the big picture. The freedom for staff to think intuitively only occurred because it could not be pinned down, nor directly observed or measured by management.

An interesting analysis was that two cognitive thinking styles emerged, amongst employees, in their approach to exercising freedom in the workplace. These employees can be located along a continuum ranging from highly adaptive to highly innovative. Employees adopted an adaptive approach to freedom and showed a preference for operating within the defined structures and systems and other employees exercised their freedom outside existing patterns and procedures of the organisation. Although creative styles are diverse in approach, Kirton asserts that organisations need the benefit of both creative styles. However, he also discerns

that ideas originating from 'adaptive' sources were more likely to gain management support; as they would tend to stay within existing patterns of how things were done. Whereas ideas originating from 'innovative' sources would have less chance of being supported as they would, almost certainly, breakaway from existing corporate patterns (Lincoln 2005).

In theme five, observations confirmed that when staff was given limited money in their budget, they were often propelled to be creative in finding supplementary resources (staff bringing resources from home) and developing new ideas especially for classroom practice. Lauer (1994) points out that creativity connects the mind with problem-finding abilities, mental mobility, with a personal aesthetic, inner motivation and risk-taking. Within this context the researcher found that the theoretical framework of Moorhead & Griffin was useful in this context. With limited resources, staff needed time to think of possibilities by going through the four stages of preparation, incubation, inspiration and verification to propagate new ideas and improvise for limited resources.

In theme seven, employees fostered playfulness and humour in the work-place to cope with the bureaucratic culture. The results also indicate that informal socialisation had a stronger positive effect on creativity than organised socialisation. Marsick & Volpe (1999) define informal learning as learning that is predominantly unstructured. It is experimental and, due to its nature, unable to be fully preprogrammed. Informal learning takes place spontaneously within the context of real work and does not lead to predetermined outcomes. Staff members in most campuses seemed to feel more comfortable in social gatherings as opposed to being governed by their work-place rules and regulations. Non-managers were not intimidated by other people's behaviours, attitudes or feelings to their own views expressed in these informal discussions.

In summary, employees nurtured and stimulated a climate for creativity by employing coping mechanisms in the workplace. These employees are a crucial resource in the workplace with a wealth of diverse attitudes, intuitive feelings, creative behaviours and experiences to foster valuable learning practices within the FET climate.

## **Theme Twelve: Informal Learning**

The key finding of this study was undoubtedly a highly significant relationship between creativity and informal learning. This study has attempted to add to the emerging literature in the field of informal learning by providing evidence that informal learning does take place in social settings. The central feature of informal learning in this study is the work-place. Here learning is seen as formal and that which occurs socially is informal.

In the formal workplace staff members align their lines of thought to the hegemonic knowledge construct but in social settings they are able to express implicit lines of thought, exchange experiences and contest dominant lines of thinking. Hughes (1998) indicates that social environment can affect intrinsic motivation. Highly innovative individuals are driven by inner curiosity, a need to know. It is intrinsic motivation that drives them. It is not work because they love what they are doing.

In Theme Seven, the results of the interview show a strong and significant positive relationship between informal as well as organised forms of socialisation and creativity. Data gathered here relates to informal learning that occurred spontaneously. The results also indicate that informal socialisation had a stronger positive effect on creativity than organised socialisation.

In Theme Eight, Ekvall's definition of debate was related to staff behaviours especially in informal gatherings that allowed for many opinions to be heard. Breaking away from set patterns and rules, inhibitions were suppressed and divergent views were expressed. Often staff here would illustrate their arguments effectively outside the authoritarian patterns of the organisation.

By relating **Figure 2.3** in Chapter Two to this theme, the researcher noticed that employees learned spontaneously from everyday encounters while working and living in a given context (Marsick & Watkins 2001). Learning took place without any formal facilitation or structure in Themes Three, Seven and Eight.



The informal situation is often one in which people like to practice new skills, since they feel that they are less likely to meet with ridicule. (Jarvis, 1987). Since staff only meet informally during lunch breaks in the staff-room, which is represented by the outer circle in **figure 2.3**, meaningful experience took place, showing a strong and significant positive relationship between informal learning and informal socialisation. Debates during informal social gatherings include learning that begins with some kind of trigger, that is, an internal or external stimulus that signals dissatisfaction with current ways of thinking or being (Marsick & Watkin 2001). Employees here frame new experiences in their social discourse with fellow colleagues and Marsick and Watkin (2001) state that they compare the new situation with prior experience, identify similarities or differences, and use their interpretation to make sense of the new challenge. Through socialisation, informal learning enables tacit knowledge to be transferred between individuals through shared experience, space and time. By seeing other people's perspectives and ideas, alternative solutions are examined for new interpretation and to implement desired solution.

According to Marsick and Watkin (2001), the step of judging consequences then enables a person to draw on lessons learned and use these lessons in planning future actions. Hence through social interaction, informal learning leads to new understandings that employees would use for new situations.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

In Theme One of organisational and idea support, organisational support was evident through the vertical communication links of decision-making, policies and procedures and job descriptions. Literature points out that people's feelings were significant to their learning process and "emotions" were critical to learning. The key point under this theme is that organisational encouragement fosters learning in the form of people's behaviour, feelings, and attitudes. In Theme Two, supervisory encouragement and trust/openness, the key issue was that non-managers expressed the need for their supervisors to be complimentary on their job performance but their supervisor adopted a "non-interference" approach. Therefore,

participants expressed the need for open channels of communication in order to build trust and improve their relationships with their managers. In Theme Three, work-group supports and dynamism/liveliness, data indicated that work-group supports were not evident at this work-place. Rather informal gatherings and informal groups occurred spontaneously, during lunch breaks, for free and open communication. Although managers were in support that staff work in groups to enhance creativity, they made no provision on the timetable for staff to work in formal groups. Staff members were encouraged to draw from experiences, test possible solutions, use intuition or imagination and synthesise other group member's ideas. Literature supports the findings that learning occurs more effectively in groups and within the social context, to construct meaning.

In Theme Four, freedom, the researcher found that 60 percent of the participants expressed a way to use personal freedom in nurturing workplace creativity. They used coping mechanisms of adaption and innovation to exercise their freedom in the classroom. Although employees were not encouraged the freedom to use their hunches and gut feelings to take actions on certain issues in the workplace, their 'feelings' about a situation and 'gut reaction' was openly practiced in the classroom. In Theme Five, sufficient resources and idea-time, managers believed that access to resources enhances a creative climate but they were bound by a budget allocation. Responses were therefore contradictory between managers and their staff. Seventy percent of staff in the bureaucratic climate had limited access to resources. With limited resources, staff needed time to think of possibilities by going through the four stages of preparation, incubation, inspiration and verification to propagate new ideas and improvise for limited resources.

In Theme Six, challenging work, all four managers set challenging tasks in their respective departments. This was achieved by setting personal and professional goals for their staff. However, classroom practices confirmed that all non-managers felt most challenged when they worked with their students. Non-managers focused their attention on intrinsic satisfaction in their job and looked for fulfilling and challenging creative tasks that would enhance the success rate of their students. In Theme Seven, playfulness/humour, it was interesting to note that staff seemed to feel more comfortable in social gatherings as opposed

to being governed by their workplace hierarchical setting. Staff displayed actions to foster playfulness and humour in their departments and were similar to the definition of Theme Seven: there was laughter, allowance for jokes, and most staff displayed a sense of humour.

In Theme Eight, debates, debates occurred among staff members especially during informal socialisation. Many members of staff agreed that it was during informal socialisation and practices that they were able to be free to voice their opinions and counter-argue other members' opinions. In this way, informal learning took place. In Theme Nine and Ten, organisational impediments, conflicts and workload pressure, the new organisation, described as a Newtonian model, appears to inhibit a creative climate by placing employees' job descriptions into functions of responsibilities and staff roles within parameters of desired work-place behaviours. Although the participants seemingly understood the concept of creative climate and engaged in challenging work practices that nurtured creativity, some staff created a 'blame culture' to express their frustrations. In workload pressure, 70 percent of non-managers claimed that the deadline pressure stimulated their creativity. However, all managers agreed with Amabile (1996) that working against time stifles creativity and they preferred to support proper planning instead.

In Theme Eleven, coping mechanisms, the creative styles of adaption and innovation, tacit learning, informal learning, intuitive learning and brain-based learning was prominent. The main point under this theme was that learning is acquired through experience, socialisation and tacit practices. In Theme Twelve, informal learning, evidence had shown that informal learning takes place in social settings. The central feature of informal learning in this study is the work-place. Here learning is seen as formal and that which occurs socially is informal. In the formal work-place staff-members align their lines of thought to the hegemonic knowledge construct but in social settings they are able to express implicit lines of thought, exchange experiences and contest dominant lines of thinking.

In order to merge themes 1-12, the researcher anticipated from the beginning that examining the themes of the creative climate would not be an easy task. Although the organisation model of bureaucracy appears to inhibit creativity, the researcher noticed that creative people

working in government institutions are able to overcome adversities in a traditional, bureaucratic paradigm and are able to apply their creativity in any climate.

Based on the findings of this study the researcher regards this as a best practice in the bureaucratic workplace. Participants in this study appeared to use their learning styles to work in the system as innovators or creatively engaged in their jobs as adaptors. Therefore, the researcher's assumption that creativity does not add value to bureaucratic environments is not true, because findings support literature on coping mechanisms and informal learning. Participants showed preferred cognitive styles in which they related to rules of the bureaucratic organisation. The outcome of the analysis suggests that the ideal climate for adaptors would seek validation from management in a creative task. They would perceive freedom and risk-taking in their work climate. Literature describes adaptors that will only take risks if risk-taking is supported by the work climate. Hence adaptors enjoy working in a formal structure which provides ample opportunity for open communication.

Innovators in this organisation work differently and the elements of freedom and risk-taking are intuitively possessed. Literature describes innovators as having unstructured open communication and debates at local level. Hence the findings and discussion prove that people in the workplace understand the systems in which they subsist and are extraordinary sources of insight for continuous improvements.

Informal learning as a coping mechanism has shown that employees through informal socialisation, intuition, tacit learning or brain-based learning adopted an unaccountable mental model configured in their minds, solving the problem in their context, with all its uncertainties. According to participants, solving problems requires emotions and feelings linked to learning. It is assumed that there is a strong and significant positive relationship between informal socialisation of playfulness and humour as well as informal learning. Therefore, the researcher was able to show that new findings of informal, intuitive, tacit and brain-based learnings are increasingly seen as valuable resources in work-place learning.

To create a successful and supportive creative climate, literature shows that management need to not only transform their management systems but also value the people within the

work-place and make people central. Perceptions of staff express the desire that management should enhance their personal freedom – freedom to experiment and to make mistakes. Literature points out that people are the most important assets in a work-place and therefore freedom in their jobs allows them to increase their capabilities and expand their skills.

The next chapter of this study establishes a pool of positive behaviours and critical factors that are indicative of a creative workplace climate.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SYNOPSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

I embarked on this study with the assumption that adults operating in organisational structures of FET seem to lose that environment, and the creative action that goes with it. I started the research to make a deliberate effort to seek out and promote opportunities for creative action in my workplace. My initial attempt was to understand this concept of creativity. However research on this concept has not been easy though, because of the nature of creativity being an elusive and complex phenomenon. Underlying these reasons of the complexity and elusiveness was the diverse definitions of creativity given by many researchers. This was compounded by the numerous models and frameworks for creativity that lacked consensus in their application. Therefore to develop a framework for this study, I used the two instruments of KEYS and CCQ to assess the climate for creativity. It was through the application of the components of these instruments I was able to conceptualise the meaning of creativity and climate in the context of this study.

As I began to collect data from the thirteen participants in this study, I envisaged to systematically and methodically place my findings and discussion in compartmentalised boxes. To my surprise and to some extent madness, the manifestation of the cross-disciplinary meaning of the creative dimensions of CCQ and KEYS prevailed in the findings, analysis and discussion. Therefore I decided to combine themes with similar key findings and often would overlap themes by discussion of key theoretical approaches used in this study (brain-based learning, informal and incidental learning).

Based on the literature of these findings I remained impartial in this study and avoided being influenced by the assumption that while the extrinsic creativity was devalued by the organisation, the inner drive to nurture a creative climate manifested within the employees. Therefore the title, "Perceptions of a climate for creativity", expected to capture an unbiased view of the managers' and non-managers' experiences in their workplace.

In Chapter One, the need to yield a much richer understanding of the relationship between the creative climate of the FET organisation and its employees was emphasised. Chapter Two explored the importance of the conceptual framework of key theories and literature related to the climate for creativity. This study described the workplace climate or environment that was influenced by PRESS taken from Rhodes' model of 4Ps - the dynamic interaction between creative people, creative processes, creative products and creative environments was highlighted. In Chapter Three, the research design and methodology employed in this study was discussed. Chapter Four presented the data and findings from interviews, observations and analysis of documents. In Chapter Five, the findings were discussed and analysed using a thematic framework. This chapter is to elucidate conclusions from the previous chapters and offer recommendations, which are drawn from results and interpretations, discussed in Chapter Five.

The discussion on findings points out that creativity is becoming acknowledged as a success factor and cannot be committed to a schedule. The researcher illustrated the strengths of managers in nurturing creativity amongst their staff members. He examined the creative climate on the premise that staff members express their creativity according to individual differences and situational factors. These dissimilarities were related to various factors such as personality, interests, culture, experience and knowledge. Often creative staff found work intrinsically motivating; have a greater openness to new experiences; and view situations from multiple perspectives. These employees work in informal groups that are characterised by humour and informal socialisation in which they are able to integrate vertical and lateral thinking into creative thinking.

The researcher also explained that although many individuals are inherently creative, they are hampered by their own assumptions and a bureaucratic system that was designed for another scheme. The researcher, on the other hand, investigated why managers and non-managers often look for reasons not to use a new idea – “this is the way it has always been done”, “this is how I was taught to do it”. He built on the premise that staff believe that their managers perceive them as smarter if they demonstrate linear, analytical thinking within rigid formal

structures. Clearly, this management style leads employees to focus on coping mechanisms to engage in the creative process.

The researcher notes that although much research has been done on organisational climate, a noticeable void is evident when it comes to the FET sector climate. The aim of the study was to understand and describe the perceptions of managers and non-managers from the institution; to observe relationships; hear their views through the lens of their experiences; to describe and share any best practices that are indicative of a creative workplace climate. Valuable aspects of this research are the questions that guided the entire study and its impact on the relationship between theory and practice. The key questions were: (1) In what ways do employees perceive the climate for creativity in the workplace? (2) How is this climate for creativity nurtured or stifled in the workplace? The sub-questions were: (3) What is meant by a 'creative climate'? (4) What are the critical success factors for inducing and facilitating a creative climate at Thekwini FET College?

These questions were answered by means of three methods of data collection: observation; interviews and analysis of written documents. Based on the organisational descriptors found in Amabile's KEYS scale and Ekvall's CCQ, the same dimensions could be identified and described behaviourally in any of the FET sector workplace settings.

In summary, this study was aimed at describing the perceptions of employees (i.e. managers and non-managers) with respect to the climate for creativity at Thekwini FET College. This chapter recommends, shares established practices and reveals hidden practices that are effective in inducing and facilitating positive creative climates. The next section offers the recommendations.

## **6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations presented have emanated from the evidence and discussions undertaken by this study. Possible solutions have emerged which allow for a creative climate to be cultivated, supported and nurtured by Thekwini FET College. By removing creative



barriers as discussed in Chapter Five, the researcher identified critical success factors for inducing and facilitating a creative climate at the FET College. As a result, he believes that the qualitative data collected in this study answers all the research questions.

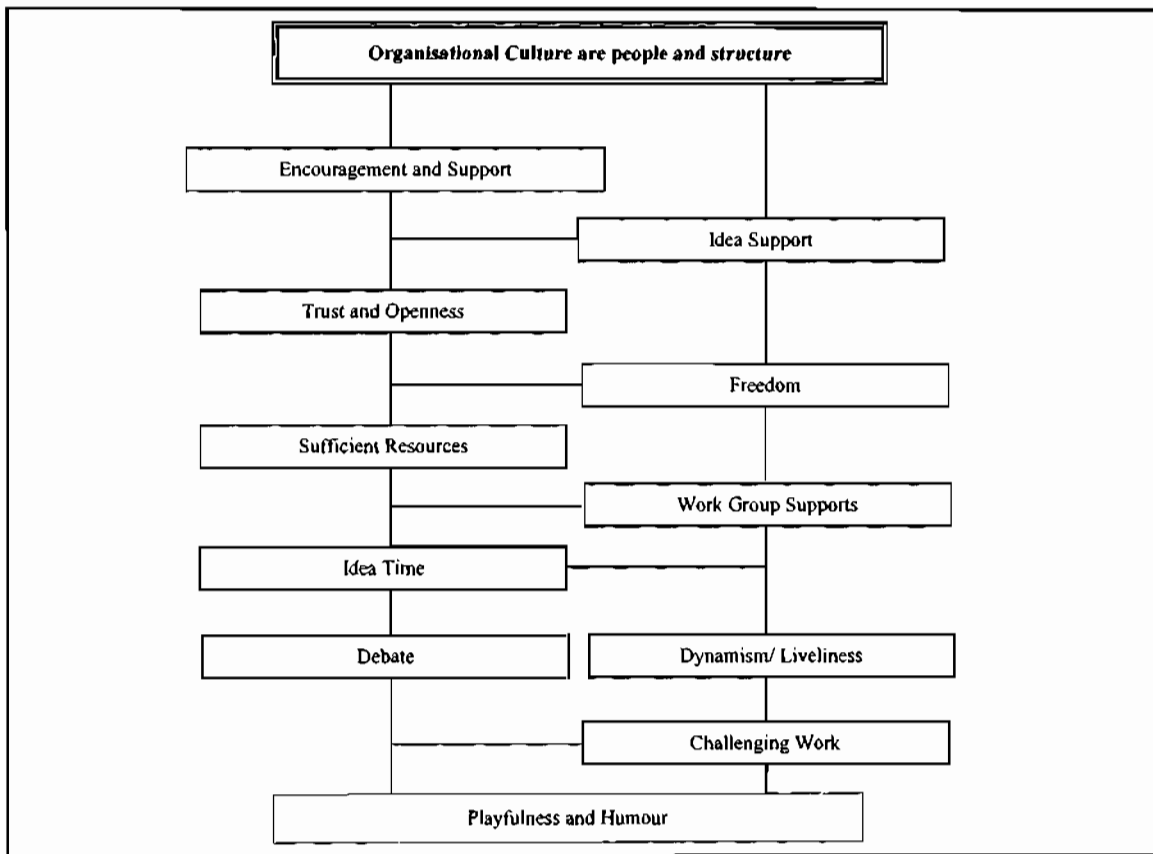
In response to Question Four of this study, critical success factors are divided into two categories, namely:

- a. Improve the organisational culture at Thekwini College; and
- b. Acknowledge the value of Socialisation.

**A. Improve the organisational culture at Thekwini College**

Creative researchers are of the opinion that since structure and processes are categorised as organisational and motivation and learning are categorised as individuals in the organisation, culture represents both organisation and individuals. Therefore, organisational culture comprises people and structure. Creative studies on “Rhodes Press” disclose that structure influences the culture of the organisation and this, in turn, affects the behaviour of the people and the climate of the organisation. For the purposes of clarity, Section A as illustrated in **Figure 6.1**, includes the organisational culture of encouragement and support, idea support, trust and openness, freedom, sufficient resources, idea time, workgroup supports, dynamism/liveliness, debates, challenging work and playfulness and humour.

**Figure 6.1 Improving the organisational culture**



The above **Figure 6.1** provides clarity for the following recommendations in this section. Each creative climate dimension influences and impacts on the organisational culture of Thekwini FET College. The discussion of the climate dimensions mutually influence each other and are therefore intimately related in the following recommendations.

The most important commodity in the information workplace is knowledge. Through organisational policies and procedures, organisations set the tone of the working environment, which in turn, directly affects the level of creativity and productivity forthcoming from their employees (Clarke 1996). At Thekwini FET College the creative climate can be central to the success in this knowledge organisation. Traditional bureaucratic

hierarchies are plausible impediments to a creative climate. Organisational creativity often takes the form of creatively transforming the organisation structure in ways that facilitate the activities of people looking for an opportunity to be creative (Gioia 1995).

Discussions from the findings, literature and theoretical framework have necessitated the following recommendations for Thekwini FET College. These will create a desired organisational climate for creativity and to ensure that structures and processes optimise the creative capacity of staff in the organisation.

The following recommendations emanated from the outcome of the analysis and discussion in the previous chapter. The researcher translated the themes into practical solutions for management to implement. Each recommendation is in bullet form.

▪ **Value Creative People in a high-challenge climate**

The researcher noticed that more than 50 percent of employees have served the organisation for more 10 years and are pervasively in need of personal meaning and significance in the organisation. Given this, the right way of investing in employees and a positive creative climate is to value the people within the workplace and make them central by re-enforcing practices and attitudes that demonstrate support, trust, openness and freedom for the individual. In this high-challenge climate employees in return will be motivated and display the characteristics to perform at an optimal level and thereby enjoy a high level of personal satisfaction and well-being.

Some of the key characteristics of valuing creative people are:

- support and encourage staff for creative work through rewards and recognition;
- not intimidated by authority and unsympathetic of bureaucracy;
- support learning in the form of people's behaviour, feelings and attitudes;
- seek challenges;
- engage in employee emotions and encourage positive self-esteem;
- trust and help each other.

- **Providing non-managers freedom and autonomy in decisions about work**

Thematic findings of idea-time and freedom indicate that managers need to balance staff freedom with the organisational structure. Members of staff should be given the freedom to follow projects/tasks from the initial idea to its completion without the restrictions of the syllabus; be allowed to think outside of their job functions; and present ideas openly to management. This could be achieved through well-defined mandates and open communication. In this way an atmosphere of mutual respect of ideas will be promulgated and premature criticism avoided.

Creative researchers believe that freedom for idea-time and idea-support, without penalty, is critical to the creative process. Freedom about process also allows people to approach problems in ways that make the most of their expertise and their creative-thinking skills of intuition and cognitive thinking styles. Based on the findings, the key success factor should be that management supports the creative styles of adaption or innovation in their staff as the organisation needs the benefit of both styles. This can be achieved through open communication for managers to facilitate free flow of information throughout the organisation so that employees can find out what is happening throughout the company and can share ideas across the company. This would result in active interaction in the hierarchical structures of accountability and authority and sharing of information and feedback.

To achieve flexible structures within the organisation, suggestions from the research participants include: the use of open forums; the use of hunches and gut feelings to take action on certain issues in the workplace, establishing the use of electronic mail; organising teams that share common skills and experiences; and ensuring all employees (despite their position in the hierarchy of the workforce) provide feedback or input to senior management. This could be achieved through talkback forms or a suggestion box. The researcher is aware that to flatten the bureaucratic structure of this organisation is impossible, but, the provision of an idea-structure can be set up to ensure that good ideas are shared with everyone, recognised and then implemented.

- **Providing challenging assignments to non-managers**

In keeping with the definition of the challenge dimension, staff-members are challenged to produce a creative and productive output. Not only should they experience joy and meaningfulness in the classroom but also in their personal development. Therefore, it is important for managers to have detailed information about the expertise of their staff and creative thinking skills to set explicit creative goals for tasks or projects. By matching the employee's skills and abilities with the right job/task performance anxiety will be minimised and creativity maximised. This succeeds when people are linked to jobs that play to their expertise and their skills in creative thinking, and not only ignite intrinsic motivation, but stretch employees' abilities (Amabile 1998).

Research studies on creativity confirm that employees become motivated to learn new techniques and gain new knowledge when offered interesting and challenging assignments. When provided with stimulating and interesting tasks, they are able to nurture growth and self-development. Staff-members are encouraged to work together in diverse teams, to build on key strengths and tackle weaknesses. By doing this, they are still stimulated to achieve their goals in a bureaucratic organisation.

- **Ensure that adequate resources are accessible to non-managers**

Analysis of dimensional findings, demonstrate that managers must encourage creativity and productivity by providing their staff access to adequate resources. Equipment, knowledge, facilities, money and time are necessary for the completion of tasks in an effective manner. Since 70 percent of employees cannot gain access to appropriate tools or technology such as the internet, they need sufficient time to incubate ideas and consider alternative approaches. Although pressure in the form of deadlines was thought by many respondents to encourage creativity, research by Amabile confirms that the consequences could lead to counter-productivity. Therefore, deadlines should be set during consultations between management and the employees with the latter being encouraged to plan and manage their time. Within the bureaucratic system of predictable regularity, provision should be made on the time-table for staff idea-time.

Idea-generation techniques, such as brain-storming in groups, should be suggested. As this technique does not require a budget and provides quick benefits, managers can invest in this resource and provide a supportive climate.

▪ **The organisation to encourage employees to take acceptable risks**

The outcome of the discussions point out that to further enhance the climate for creativity employees need to undertake a shared understanding of “acceptable risks”, which need to be explained within the given parameters of the workplace. More trust, more recognition and better communication are integral to supervisory encouragement and support. Through open channels of communication and a more contributory role a climate of trust and openness can be achieved across the board.

The workplace environment must demonstrate a strong orientation of fair, constructive judgment of ideas that is free from intimidation and rejection. In this way risk-taking and support will not be limited to a confined environment such as the classroom. Managers should make a real commitment, openly welcome creative responses and then champion them. They need to adopt a new approach and to develop individual personal relationships with their employees. If individual members of staff open up and invoke creative responses, they will need to trust those in higher authority. And this often depends on the staff’s collective perception of the manager (Dingli 2005).

Some best practices executed by participants were creative techniques of working with others in problem-solving sessions, brain-storming sessions, mind-mapping and taking time to reflect on some ways that could create a shared understanding between managers and non-managers while knowing what is acceptable and what is not. Readings on creative management advocate that staff must be afforded the encouragement and support to take risks and break away from the status quo. To enhance present practice, taking risks and failing must not be scourged upon by management.

- **Train managers to Operate in a Participative Style**

Studies on creative management ascribe creative staff with many characteristics that need to be managed by their immediate line manager who is the most important influence in the climate of the workplace. Since significant responses from participants were that their managers adopted a non-interference role in their day to day activities, the latter need to identify their weaknesses and positively engage with their staff. An important aspect in this creative climate is his/her style of management.

Analysis of findings show that the manager must demonstrate a more participative (or consultative) style of management so that he/she can share decision-making and authority with his/her staff. Creative efforts should be encouraged and an expectation for “mistakes” or “failures” should be cultivated. This is allied with the removal of stress to conform in a bureaucratic environment. It is essential, according to literature, that managers combine their technical skills/knowledge with people-oriented skills for the daily management of their departments. In this way key strengths of their individual staff-members will be identified and staff initiatives and trust/openness will not be stifled. Since freedom, challenges and autonomy in this study are identified as some critical factors in nurturing a creative climate, it is crucial, arising from discussions that staff should be allowed considerable latitude to employing creative techniques and build upon each other’s ideas in a dynamic and lively environment. Conflict may arise out of opposing views, but, rather than this being of a corrosive nature, tolerance should be the order of the day.

- **Creating a synergy through effective, timely communications between employees**

Literature in this study points out that sharing information in the work-place is considered to be the life-blood of the organisation. The use and interpretation of information forms the basis for ideas. Open communication about policies, procedures, work-place changes, decisions, debates over new issues/ideas, being given opportunities to express opinions and valued contributions to new challenges enhances organisational creativity.

In order to facilitate an atmosphere of openness and trust, dimensional findings inform that communication within the Thekwini FET College should not only be confined to the organisation's authority structure. Staff should engage in dialogue with anyone in the organisation, regardless of rank. This would promote open conversation, diverse views, respectful exchange of ideas, shared inquiry and reflection of ideas.

For managers to enhance creative thinking, strong open communication and information sharing warrants support of controversial ideas that may likely lead to conflict. Therefore, management should support tolerance for conflict within reason. Responses from participants agree that a more active approach be adopted in a more relaxed environment and a good working relationship be established rather than just the enforcement of rules. In this way a 'blame culture' which expresses staff frustrations will erode.

▪ **Using the new paradigm of values to nurture a creative climate**

It is quite clear that organisational support and supervisory encouragement must support creativity in the form of idea-support, debates, risk-taking, trust/openness, resources, freedom and workgroup supports. For this to strategically happen, **APPENDIX D** could be a starting point to make the organisation flexible enough to meet the challenge of core beliefs conducive to creativity. At the same time the cultural climate for creativity could be nurtured and cultivated if encouragement comes from managers who serve as models of creativity. It is proposed that management play a pivotal role in translating the tacit knowledge of its staff into explicit knowledge. This can be achieved through shared experiences in day-to-day social interactions between staff-members.

In summary, through organisational policies and procedures, Thekwini FET College can set the cultural tone of a working climate, which in turn, directly affects the level of creativity and productivity imminent from its employees. The best practices identified by Amabile and Ekvall climate dimensions, affect the creative climate positively and should be used by management of Thekwini FET College. These practices include:



### **Organisational encouragement and support**

- idea-support involving nurturing communication strategies and collaboration in sharing information with the intention of facilitating new ideas;
- suggestions instead of mitigations against the decision-making and knowledge-building processes through feelings, behaviour and attitudes.

### **Supervisory encouragement**

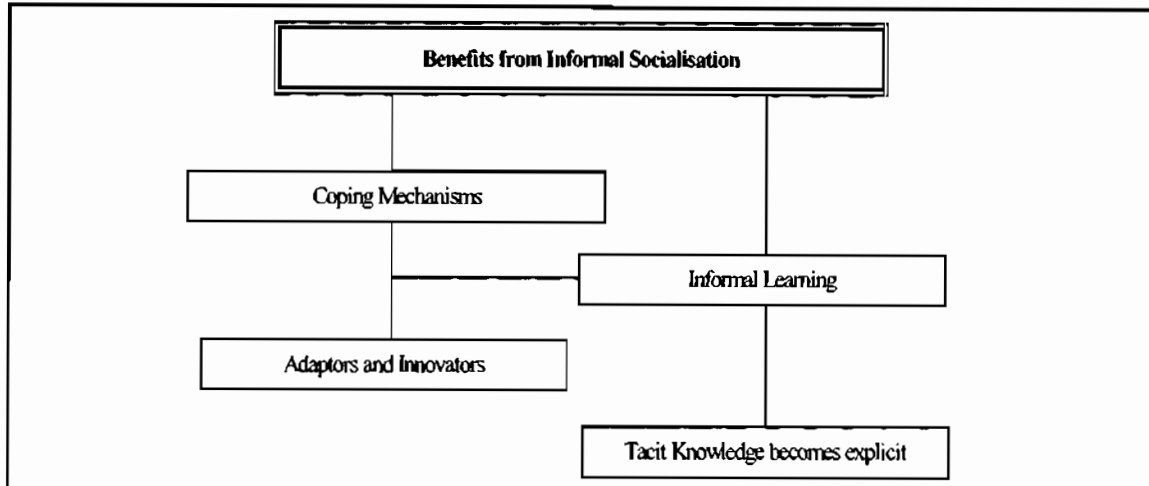
- trust/openness involves supporting and recognising creative output by individual and group contributions with a strong trust base.

### **Workgroup supports**

- dynamism/liveliness involves open communication and perspectives in a mutually supportive group. Liveliness of the groups should include the diversity of backgrounds of group members. Freedom involves giving staff the independence or autonomy to initiate decisions in the creative process.
- Sufficient resources/ idea time involves money and time that managers need to give for the successful delivery of completed projects.
- Challenge involves matching appropriate staff with appropriate projects/tasks. Playfulness and humour involves managers allowing staff to joke and laugh in the workplace. Debates involve encouraging staff to voice their opinions and put forward their viewpoints that might be contrary to the majority of views. The researcher proposes that conflict is good for the workplace if it can be handled constructively with disagreements.

## B. Acknowledging the benefits of socialisation

For the purposes of understandability, Section B as illustrated in **Figure 6.2**, includes the two new dimensions of coping mechanisms and informal learning that are within the influence of socialisation.



**Figure 6.2 Benefits from Informal Socialisation**

In this study, socialisation has proved that creating a positive, meaningful climate is good for everyone from managers to non-managers. Policies and practices, introduced by management contribute to the creation of informal groups for positive, meaningful learning to occur. To create a positive group dynamic, people are treated with respect and dignity and in return interact with honesty and integrity in a fun-filled environment.

This is achieved if the bureaucratic (formal) structure is complemented by informal learning structures that allow for cross pollination of learning across the organisation and encouraging employees to think creatively. To ensure that organisation members continue to acknowledge and develop social groups, the following recommendations are made:

- **Make provision in the timetable for socialisation**

This can be a useful channel for open communication between employees' (managers and non-managers). Employees at all levels are able to keep in touch with contemporary workplace issues, stimulate new lines of thinking by debating with colleagues and clash with

viewpoints and listen to many viewpoints. In this way they learn more about their work and understand workplace challenges. Through socialization, employees break away from set patterns and rules, inhibitions are suppressed and divergent views are expressed. Often staff here would illustrate their arguments effectively outside the authoritarian patterns of the organisation. Creativity flourishes in social groupings only if the organisation is supportive to its benefits.

▪ **Stimulate creative thoughts with laughter and humour**

People's feelings are significant to their learning process. If people are not experiencing any stress and feel enthusiastic about a task, then learning will take place. Therefore 'emotions' are critical to learning and cannot be separated from learning. The benefits of socialisation allows for laughter and humour to be stimulated with creative thoughts and motivation to look at a problem in different ways. Management need to be tolerant of vigorous debates and playful of ideas as this nurtures creativity. Mind-mapping and brainstorming sessions are to be encouraged by management as they are effective skills in the process of creativity. Both brain-storming and mind-mapping in groups or individuals allows for the creation of new ideas from organised clusters. These problem-solving activities should include playfulness and humour as they encourage learning as a social, to take place.

▪ **Integrate the social environment with those of the formal organisation**

Implications of the analysis postulates, that creativity requires an organisational climate that re-inforces practices and attitudes of trust, openness, freedom, idea time, sharing and interaction. To establish and maintain such a climate, management at all levels of the organisation should officially recognise and encourage such behaviour. Creative ideas strengthen the organisation by allowing more social gatherings among staff-members. Restrictive job descriptions which limit their performance should be avoided. To vanquish negativity the structure of Thekwini FET College should allow for the building of feelings of trust and respect among staff members so that they are comfortable expressing new ideas without intimidation. In this way the tacit knowledge of staff-members must be made explicit during social interactions and accepted by management.

For a creative climate to thrive in an organic institution there is a need for a culture of synergy, sharing and teamwork among staff. Barriers such as structures and functions might be worthwhile in some cases, but, by utilising climate management a positive and meaningful climate can be created by humanising the workplace.

### **6.3 CONCLUSION**

The climate of Thekwini FET College is important if creativity is to be developed. A critical enhancer to the creative process is for the workplace to cultivate a challenging, supportive and motivated climate. Creative employees may flourish in an environment of freedom and organisational support. To ensure that the FET employees continue to nurture creativity, there is a need for appropriate support in the systems and procedures of the organisation. Leadership or supervisory support for a creative climate in the form of challenging work, resources, freedom, and workgroup supports can help enhance and sustain creativity.

Although Thekwini FET College is a bureaucratic model of organisation it is possible to have a top-down approach to enhancing a creative climate in the organisation – this should be encouraged by senior management. The researcher concurs with Dingli (2005), that creativity can only survive in organisations where the climate is empathetic to the whole process. An organisation's climate is one of the most difficult areas to change. It invariably requires a commitment and involvement from top management. But it is futile to simply to issue a command from above. It calls for an imaginative and multi-faceted programme of work coupled with dedicated persistence from the top and from those responsible for the development of the organisation.

According to the literature and discussions, managers and non-managers will foster creativity when they feel motivated in the workplace. Amabile (1996) states that when people are engaged because of their own natural interest and satisfaction in their work, they will be challenged to be creative through their own intrinsic motivation. External pressures or rewards are never as effective as internal motivation. In order to tap into that resource, people must be matched to jobs that tap into underlying values that motivate and excite them.

Two other components are necessary within an individual for creative resourcefulness; expertise: a person must have the necessary technical, procedural and intellectual knowledge and creative-thinking skills: a person must be able to use their thinking in flexible and imaginative ways.

Discussions also disclose that management should demonstrate to its staff its genuine interest in sustaining a climate for creativity by providing adequate resources in terms of time, money, freedom and autonomy of staff. Research on creativity demonstrates that for managers to make the necessary changes they will need to understand how to foster the climate for creativity; how to support such a climate and be aware of what inhibits creativity. This may involve staff development at various levels of management.

Research also shows that training should include employees understanding the creative environment and the encouragement of creativity skills that can be applied to the job. Setting the climate for creativity is important for creative learning to take place that makes provision for risks and mistakes to happen. Creative researchers corroborate that often managers' own understandings and prejudices/myths about creativity need to be challenged. Outcomes of discussions offer clarity that staff is capable of learning to be creative about their work if they are given the necessary support and encouragement.

A further management role would be to provide challenges to their work environment. The challenging nature of potential problems explained in this study would motivate staff to push their creative boundaries. However, it must be noted that dimensional findings have proven that learning from mistakes must be a norm and part of the creative process to remove stress and must not be an indication of failure that might lead to demotivation.

Learning is significant when considering the effectiveness of a creative workplace climate. Through learning acquired during the process of creativity, enlightened best practices can be communicated throughout Thekwini FET College. The outcome will be the development of a sustainable creative system sharing practices at all levels of the organisation. Hence learning becomes a continuous and dynamic process.

## REFERENCES

- Amabile, T.M. & Gryskiewicz, S.S. 1987, 'Creativity in the R & D Laboratory', *Technical Report no.30*, Centre for Creative Leadership, Greensboro, NC.
- Amabile, T.M. 1996, *Creativity in Context*, Westview Press, Oxford.
- Amabile, T.M. 1997, *Motivating Creativity in Organizations: On doing what you love and loving what you do*, [online] Available: <file:///www.Creativity/Document.html> [2005, Jun.02]
- Amabile, T.M. 2001, 'How to Kill Creativity', in *Creative Management*, ed. J. Henry. SAGE Publications, London, pp. 4-10.
- Andreasen, N.C. 2004, *Dissecting the Urge to Create*, [online] Available: <file:///www.PloS Biology Dissecting the Urge to Create.html> [2005, Jan. 22]
- Arabe, K.C. 2005. *6 Misconceptions about Creativity*, [online] Available: <file:///www.Misconceptions%20about%20Creativity%20%20%20Industrial%20Market%20Trends.htm>. [2005, Jun. 02]
- Bandura, A. 1986. *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs.
- Billet, S. 1993, 'Whats in a setting? Learning in the Workplace.' *Australian Journal of Adult and Community Education*, vol.33, no.1, pp. 4-14.
- Bostrom, R.P. & Nagasundaram, M. 1998. *Research in Creativity and GSS*, [online] Available: <file:///www.Research in Creativity and GSS.html> [2002, Jan.22]
- Bray, W.J. 1999, *What is the Theory of 'Constructivism'?*, [online] Available: [http://www.madsci.org/posts/archives/apr\\_99/924629959.N.S.R.html](http://www.madsci.org/posts/archives/apr_99/924629959.N.S.R.html) [2005, Sept.9]
- Bronte, D.L. n.d. *Albert Einstein: Biography*, [online] Available: <file:///www.Albert%20Einstein%20Biography%20and%20%20Much%20More%20from%20Answers.com.html> [2005, Aug. 31]
- Brookfield, S.D. 1986, *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.
- Campbell, B.n.d. *Phenomenology as Research Method*, [online] Available: <file:///www.Phenomenology as Research.html> [2005, Aug.24]
- Chowdhury, S. 2002, *The Talent Era*, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River.
- Clarke, T.E. 1996. *Organizational Climate, Productivity and Creativity*, [online] Available: <file:///www.artcexec.html> [2005, Aug.31]

- Coombs, P.H. & Ahmed, M. 1974, *Attacking Rural Poverty. How non-formal education can help*, John Hopkins University Press, Battimore.
- Craft, A. 2001. *Creativity in Education*, [online] Available: file://www.An analysis of research and literature on Creativity in Education.html[2005, Aug. 25]
- Creswell, J.W. 1998, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among five traditions*, Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Crossan, M., Lane, H., & White, R.1999, 'An organization learning framework: From intuition to institution', *Academy of Management Review*, vol. 24, no.2, pp.522-537.
- Cuatrecasas, P.1995, 'Creativity held hostage', in *Creative Action in Organizations*, eds. C.M. Ford & D.A. Gioia. SAGE Publications, U.S.A, pp. 201-205.
- Cziksentmihalyi, M.1998, ' Society, culture and person: a systems view of creativity, in *The Nature of Creativity*, ed. R.J. Sternberg. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 325-339.
- Cziksentmihalyi, M. 2001, 'A systems Perspective on Creativity', in *Creative Management*, ed. J.Henry. SAGE Publications Ltd, London, pp. 11-24.
- Dingli, S.M. 2005, *Organisational Creativity and Innovation*, [online] Available: <http://www.64.233.1.6.1.104/search?q=cacheVTgvXYMKAZ4J:home.um.edu.mt/create/pp12172pack---> [2005, Aug.24]
- DoE (Department of Education), 1998. *Green Paper on FET: Preparing for the Twenty-First Century through Education, Training and Work*. Pretoria, 15 April.
- DoE (Department of Education), 2001. *A New Institutional Landscape for Public Further Education and Training Colleges: Reform of South Africa's Technical Colleges, September 2001*.Pretoria: Department of Education.
- DoE (Department of Education), 2001. *Curriculum Framework For Further Education and Training Schools and Colleges, September 2001*.Pretoria: Department of Education.
- Ekvall,G.1991, 'The organisational culture of idea management: A creative climate for the management of ideas', in *Managing Innovation*, eds. J. Henry & D. Walker. SAGE Publications Inc., Newbury Park, pp.73-79.
- Feist, G.J.1999, 'The influence of personality on artistic and scientific creativity', in *Handbook of Creativity*, ed. R. Sternberg. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 273-296.
- Ferguson, M. 1987, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, St. Martin's Press, New York.
- Ford, C.M. & Gioia, D.A. (eds.) 1995, *Creative Action in Organizations*, SAGE publications, London.

Foley, G. 2004, 'Introduction: The State of Adult Education and Learning', in *Dimensions of Adult Learning*, ed. G. Foley. Open University Press, England, pp.3-18.

Fryer, M. 2002, *Using Creativity to improve organisational performance*, [online] Available: <file://www.The%20creativity%20centre20-%20Using%20creativity%20to--> [2005, Jun.02]

Gay, G. 2002, *About Creativity*, [online] Available: <file://www.LDRC%20-%20About%20Creativity.htm> [2005, Feb.25]

Gay, L.R. & Airasian, P. 1996. *Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Application*, 6<sup>th</sup> edn., NJ Merrill, Upper Saddle River.

Gibson, S. & McKay, R. 2000, *What Constructivist Theory and Brain Research May Offer Social Studies*, [online] Available: [http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/css/Css\\_35\\_4/Arconstructionist\\_theory.html](http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/css/Css_35_4/Arconstructionist_theory.html) [2005, Nov. 23]

Gioia, D.A. 1995, 'Contrasts and Convergences in Creativity', in *Creative Action in Organizations*, eds. C.M Ford & D.A. Gioia. SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks.

Glor, E.D. 1998, *What do we know about enhancing creativity and innovation ? A review of literature*, [online] Available: <file://www.TIJ,%20Peer-Reviewed%20Article%20What%20Do%20We%20Know%20About%20Enhancing%20Creativity%20and%20.html> [2005, Oct.2006]

Goldberg, P. 2002, *The Intuitive Edge*, [online] Available: <file://www.The%20Intuitive%20Edge.html> [2005, Jul.26]

Golden, F. 2000, *Person of the Century: Albert Einstein*, [online] Available: [file://www.TIME%20100%20Person%20of%20the%20century%20\\_%20Albert%20Einstein.html](file://www.TIME%20100%20Person%20of%20the%20century%20_%20Albert%20Einstein.html) [2005, Aug. 31]

Greve, A. 2004, *Creativity in Social networks : Combining Knowledge in Innovations*, [online] Available: [file://www.May 24,2004 1 Creativity in social networks combining knowledge in Innovations\\_ Arent ---.html](file://www.May 24,2004 1 Creativity in social networks combining knowledge in Innovations_ Arent ---.html) [2005, Jan. 29]

Grivas, C.C. 1996, *An exploratory investigation of the relationship of cognitive style with perceptions of creative climate*, [online] Available: <http://www.buffalostate.edu/orgs/cbir/readingroom/theses/Hillipmp.pdf> [2005, Aug. 31]

Guiley, R.E. 2002, *Breakthrough Intuition*, [online] Available: <file://www.Breakthrough%20Intiution.html> [2005, Jul.26 ]

Hancock, B. 1998, *Trent Focus for Research and Development in Primary Health Care*, [online] Available: <file://www.An Introduction to Qualitative Research.html> [2002, Jan.30]

Handzic, M. & Chaimungkalanont, M. 2004, *Enhancing Organisational Creativity Through Socialization*, [online] Available: <file://www.Enhancing%20Organisational%20Creativity%20Through%20Socilisation.html> [2005, Jun.02]



- Henry, J. (ed.) 1991, *Creative Management*, SAGE Publications, London.
- Henry, J. 2001, *Creative Management*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., SAGE Publication, London.
- Himmelfarb, A.P. 1999, *Promoting Creativity*, [online]  
Available: [http://www.bizbasics.com/html/promoting\\_creativity.html](http://www.bizbasics.com/html/promoting_creativity.html). [2005, Aug.31]
- Hodkinson, P. et al. 2004, 'The significance of individual biography in workplace learning', *Studies in the Education of Adults*, vol. 36, no.1, pp. 6-24.
- Hughes, G.D. 1998, *Add Creativity to your decision processes*, [online]  
Available: <file://www.Creativity.html> [2005, Aug.31]
- Isaksen, S.G. & Kaufmann, G. 1990, 'Adaptors and Innovators: Different perceptions of the psychological climate for creativity', *Studia Psychologica*, vol.3, no.32, pp.129-141.
- Isaksen, S.G. et al. 1993, *Nurturing and Developing Creativity: The Emergence of a Discipline*, Ablex Publishing Corporation, New Jersey.
- Isaksen, S.G. & Lauer, K.J. 1998, '*The Relationship between Cognitive Style and Individual Psychological Climate: Reflections on a previous study*', [online]  
Available: [http://www.cpsb.com/resources/downloads/public/306-Style\\_Climate.pdf](http://www.cpsb.com/resources/downloads/public/306-Style_Climate.pdf)  
[2005, Sept. 29]
- Isaksen, S.G. et al. 2001, 'Perceptions of the best and worst climates for Creativity: Preliminary Validation Evidence for the Situational Outlook Questionnaire', *Creativity Research Journal*, vol. 13, no.2, pp.171-184.
- Jackson, W.H. 1996, A survey of an adult learner, [online] Available:  
<file://www.Comparison%20of%20Adult%20Learning%20Theories.html> [2004, Feb.13]
- Jacobs, D.H. 1995, 'Creating a Creativity Revolution', in *Creative Action in Organisations*, eds. C.M Ford & D.A. Gioia. SAGE Publications, Thousand Oaks.
- Jarvis, P. 1987, *Adult learning in the Social Context*, Croom Helm, London.
- Johnson, D. 1994. *Research Methods in Educational Management*. Longman, Britain.
- Johnson, D. 1999. 'A learning model for learning organizations', *Futurics*, vol.23, no.1, pp. 74-75.
- Kao, J. 1989, *Entrepreneurship, Creativity, & Organisation*, Prentice-Hall international, U.S.A.
- Kerka, S. 1997, 'Constructivism, Workplace learning, and Vocational Education', *ERIC Digest*, no.181, pp.1-5.
- Key, J.P. 1997, *Reliability and Validity*, [online] Available: <file://www.Reliability.html> [2002, Jan.01]

- Kirton, M.J.1994, *Adaptors and Innovators: Styles of creativity and problem solving*, (rev.ed.), Routledge, London.
- Knowles, M. 1990, *The Adult learner: A Neglected Species*, 4<sup>th</sup> edn., TX: Gulf, Houston.
- Kraak, A. 1999, The new policy framework in FET, [online]  
Available:[http://education.pwv.gov.za/DoE Sites/FET Folder/Reports\\_Publications/...](http://education.pwv.gov.za/DoE_Sites/FET_Folder/Reports_Publications/...) [2005, Nov.5]
- Lacey, A. & Luff, D. 2001, *Trent Focus for Research and Development in Primary Health Care*, [online] Available:  
<http://64.233.179.104/search?q=cache:Z6PyuHWj36WJ:www.trentfocus.org.uk/Resources/Qualitative%2520Data%2520Analysis.pdf--->. [2005, Sept.18]
- Landman, W.A. 1998, *Navoringsmethodologiese Grondbegrippe*, Serva, Pretoria.
- Lauer, K.J.1994, The assessment of creative climate: An investigation of the Ekvall creative climate questionnaire, [online] Available:  
<http://www.buffalostate.edu/orgs/cbir/readingroom/theses/Hillipmp.pdf> [2005, Sept.18]
- Leedy, P.D. & Ormrod , J.E. 2001, *Practical research planning and design*, 7<sup>th</sup> edn., Prentice Hall, New Jersey.
- Lincoln, B.2005.*Liberating the Creative Streak in your Organization*, [online] Available:  
<http://www.cul.co.uk/creative/liberating.htm>. [2005, Aug. 24]
- Marsick, V.J. & Volpe, M. (eds). 1999, *Informal learning on the job. Advances in Developing Human Resources*, VT Berrett-Koehler, Williston.
- Marsick, V.J. & Watkins, K.E. 2001, 'Informal and Incidental Learning', in *The New Update on Adult Learning Theory*, ed. S.B. Merriam. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, pp. 25-34.
- Martin. B.1990, *Uprooting War*, Freedom Press, London.
- Maxwell, J.A.1992, 'Understanding and Validity in Qualitative Research', Harvard Educational Review, vol.62, no.3, pp.279-300.
- McCoy, D.2000, *Intuitive decision-making open doors to your subconscious and your career*, [online] Available:<file:///A:\Intuition%20January%20Article.htm> [2005,Jul. 26]
- Merriam, S.B.1988, *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.
- Montuori, A.n.d., *Creativity, Complexity and Improvisation in Daily Life*, [online]  
Available:<file:///www./Creativity,ComplexityandImprovisationinDailyLife.html>  
[2005,Aug.31]
- Moorhead, G & Griffin, R.W. 2004, *Organizational Behavior*, 7th edn.,Houghton Mifflin Company, New York.

- Mouton, J.2001, *How to Succeed in your Master's and Doctoral Studies*, Van Schaik Publishers, Pretoria.
- Nonaka, I. & Takeuchi, H. 1995, *The Knowledge Creating Company*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- O'Neill, J.W., Beauvais, L.L.& Scholl, R.W. 2001, 'The use of Organizational Culture and Structure to Guide Strategic Behaviour: An Information Processing Perspective', *The Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management* , vol. 2(2), pp. 131-150.
- Pietrokovsky, F.n.d., *Your Sixth Sense Maybe Worth Many Cents in the Workplace*, [online] Available: file ://www.Your%20sixth%20sense%20maybe%20worth%20many%20cents%in%20the%20workplace.html [2005, Aug.26]
- Plsek, P.E. 1996, *Working Paper: Models for the Creative Process*, [online] Available:file://www.working%20paper%20Creativity%20Models.html [2005, Feb.25]
- Potier , B. 2005, *HBS's Teresa Amabile 'tracks in the wild'*, [online] Available:file://www.Harvard%20Gazette%20HBS's%20Teresa%20Amabile%20tracks%20creativity% 20in%20thewild'3.html [2005, Feb.25]
- Reece,G. 2002, *Critical Thinking and Transferability: A Review of Literature*, [online] Available:file://www.By%20Gwendolyn%20Reece%20April%209,%202002.html[2005, Mar.8]
- Robinson, A.G. & Stern, S.1997. 'Corporate Creativity: It's Not What You Expect', *Innovative Leader*, vol.6, no. 10, pp.301.
- Rubin, A. & Babbie, E. 1993, *Research Methods for Social Work*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, California.
- Salicru, S.2003, *Creativity and Transformation*, [online] Available:file://www.Creativity%20and%20Transformation.html [2005, Aug. 05]
- Spears, A. & Wilson, L.2002, *Brain-Based Learning Highlights*, [online] Available:file://www./Brain-Based Learning.html [2005, Nov.11]
- Spiel, C. & von Korff, 1998, Implicit theories of creativity: the conceptions of politicians, scientists, artists and school teachers, *Journal of High Ability Studies*, vol.9, no.1.
- Smith, K.1999, *Informal Learning*, [online] Available: file://www.\informal%20learning%20@%20the%informal%20education%20homepage.html [2005, Jul.26]
- Sony, 2005, [online] Available: http://www.sony.co.za/about/brand.asp [2005, Aug. 31]
- Starbuck , W.H.1995,' How organizations Channel creativity', in *Creative Action in Organizations*, eds. C.M. Ford & D.a. Gioia. SAGE Publications, USA, pp.106-144.

Strydom, H.2000, 'Ethical aspects of research in the caring professionals', in *Research at Grass Roots: A primer for the caring professions*, ed. A.S. De Vos, Pretoria, pp.23-36.

Svensson, L. & Ellstrom, P.E. 2000, *Pursuing and exploring Workplace Learning*, [online] Available: <http://w.../FORUM paper.pdf> +analysis +of +holistic +workplace + learning &hl = en &ie =UTF- [2004, Oct.14]

Tesolin, A.2005, *5 Ways to Invite Intuition to Training Sessions*, [online] Available: <file://www.Workplace%20Today%20-%20Strategie.html> [2005, Aug.26]

Van Heerden, E. 2005, *Life Skills*, Van Schaik Publishers, Pretoria.

Warner, C. n.d., *How to manage creative people*, [online] Available: <file://www.How%20To%20Manage%20Creative%20People.html> [2005, Jun.02]

APPENDIX A

**SCHEDULE OF QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWING MANAGERS**

You will be asked a series of questions that will be guided by Theresa Amabile's eight managerial practices, known as KEYS. The dimensions in this instrument that would be used in this study are *Challenge, Freedom, Resources, Work-Group features, Supervisory encouragement, Organizational support, Workload pressures and organizational impediments.*

**The Keys Scale**

KEYS are based on a survey designed by Dr Teresa Amabile to assess the obstacles and stimulants to creativity in the work environment.

**Organisational Stimulants:**

- **Organisational encouragement and support** - an organisational culture that encourages creativity through the fair, constructive judgement of ideas, reward and recognition for creative work, mechanisms for developing new ideas, and active flow of ideas, and a shared vision of what the organisation is trying to do.
- **Supervisory encouragement**- a supervisor, who serves as a good work model, sets goals appropriately, supports the work group, values individual contributions, and shows confidence in the work group.
- **Work group supports**- A diversely skilled work group in which people communicate well, are open to new ideas, constructively challenge each other's work, trust and help each other, and feel committed to the work they are doing.
- **Freedom**- Freedom in deciding what work to do or how to do it; a sense of control over one's work.
- **Sufficient Resources**- Access to appropriate resources, including funds, materials, facilities, and information.
- **Challenging Work**- A sense of having to work hard on challenging tasks and important projects,

**Organisational Obstacles:**

- **Organisational Impediments**- An organisational culture that impedes creativity through internal political problems, harsh criticism of new ideas, destructive internal competition, an avoidance of risk, and an overemphasis of the status quo.
- **Workload Pressure**-Extreme time pressures, unrealistic expectations for productivity, and distractions from creative work.

<b>Name</b>	
-------------	--

<b>Department</b>	
<b>Years of service</b>	
<b>Age</b>	
<b>Number of staff</b>	

**1. Organisational encouragement and support**

- 1.1 How satisfied are you with the information you receive from senior management on what is going on in your division/department? If yes, describe some of the positive practices.
- 1.2 Do you believe that management encourages creativity, innovation, and continuous improvement?
- 1.3 Do you have a creative management system in place with appropriate policies and procedures?

**2. Supervisory encouragement**

- 2.1 Explain how you go about getting your staff involved in making decisions affecting their work in your department?
- 2.2 How do you manage and support creative staff? Give some examples
- 2.3 Is your staff given the support and authority to make the decisions necessary for accomplishing assigned tasks? Explain how this is done.
- 2.4 List some best practices you use to motivate and encourage staff to think 'outside the box.'

**3. Work group supports**

- 3.1 Do you allow your staff to work in groups and do they have enough opportunity to interact with other employees?
- 3.2 Brainstorming can be a very effective method for stimulating creativity for group's decision-making. Describe a situation where you either used or could have used brainstorming to come up with a creative idea. How did brainstorming begin or how would you have begun the process?
- 3.3 Do you think that group work enhances creativity? Why?

**4. Freedom**

- 4.1 Where do your ideas come from (policy, senior management, staff or...)? How is this introduced to staff?
- 4.2 Do you feel that your staff are recognised as individuals? Explain how this is achieved
- 4.3 Do you agree or disagree that individual differences affect how people respond to their job? Explain
- 4.4 How do you balance the need for staff freedom in your department with the need for structure?

- 4.5 Does creativity require freedom of choice? What are your views?
- 5. Sufficient Resources.**
- 5.1 To what extent do you, as a manager, control resources, which the creative individual needs, whether in terms of technology, money, college reputation etc?
- 5.2 Do you believe adequate resources enhance creative environments?
- 6. Challenging Work**
- 6.1 Describe your efforts in identifying strengths and weaknesses in your staff. How do you set challenging tasks for your staff?
- 6.2 How do you manage creativity amongst your staff?
- 7. Organisational Impediments**
- 7.1 Are employees constantly watched to assure that rules and procedures are followed?
- 7.2 Do you express your opinions forcefully, enjoy the role of manager, and try to control the work environment as much as you can?
- 7.3 Do you agree or disagree that individual differences affect how people respond to their jobs?
- 8. Workload Pressure**
- 8.1 What mechanisms / management style do you use to encourage staff to meet their deadlines or cope with work pressures?
- 8.2 What is your attitude toward risk? Has that attitude ever influenced a decision you made? What are the implications of your attitude toward risk?
- 9. Describe two critical work incidents, one involving high creativity and the other involving low creativity in your department**
- 10. Would your department be better off if staff's creative energy could be re-focused in highly productive ways? How?**
- 11. How do you foster creativity in your department?**
- 12. As a manager how do you reconcile the staff creative need for participation and informal communication with the opposing management need for hierarchy and structured authority?**
- 13. Do you think that creativity in the workplace is important?**

## APPENDIX B

# SCHEDULE OF QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWING STAFF

You will be asked a series of questions that will be guided by Theresa Amabile's eight managerial practices, known as the KEYS instrument. The dimensions in this instrument that would be used in this study are *Challenge, Freedom, Resources, Work-Group features, Supervisory encouragement, Organizational support, Workload pressures and organizational impediments.*

### The Keys Scale

KEY is based on a survey designed by Dr Teresa Amabile to assess the obstacles and stimulants to creativity in the work environment.

#### Organisational Stimulants:

- **Organisational encouragement and support** - an organisational culture that encourages creativity through the fair, constructive judgement of ideas, reward and recognition for creative work, mechanisms for developing new ideas, and active flow of ideas, and a shared vision of what the organisation is trying to do.
- **Supervisory encouragement**- a supervisor, who serves as a good work model, sets goals appropriately, supports the work group, values individual contributions, and shows confidence in the work group.
- **Work group supports**- A diversely skilled work group in which people communicate well, are open to new ideas, constructively challenge each other's work, trust and help each other, and feel committed to the work they are doing.
- **Freedom**- Freedom in deciding what work to do or how to do it; a sense of control over one's work.
- **Sufficient Resources**- Access to appropriate resources, including funds, materials, facilities, and information.
- **Challenging Work**- A sense of having to work hard on challenging tasks and important projects,

#### Organisational Obstacles:

- **Organisational Impediments**- An organisational culture that impedes creativity through internal political problems, harsh criticism of new ideas, destructive internal competition, an avoidance of risk, and an overemphasis of the status quo.
- **Workload Pressure**-Extreme time pressures, unrealistic expectations for productivity, and distractions from creative work.

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Department</b>	



<b>Years of service</b>	
<b>Manager report to</b>	
<b>Job description</b>	

**1. Organisational encouragement and support**

- 1.1 Does the institution keep employees informed about matters affecting you or your job?
- 1.2 How satisfied are you that you receive appropriate recognition for your contributions? Explain
- 1.3 Do you believe that management encourages creativity, innovation, and continuous improvement?

**2. Supervisory encouragement**

- 2.1 Do you feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things?
- 2.2 Explain some of the opportunities given to you by your supervisor to approach problems laterally?
- 2.3 How much opportunities are you given to use your own unique abilities in performing your job?
- 2.4 How satisfied are you with your manager as a positive role model? Explain
- 2.5 How satisfied are you with the amount and frequency of praise and appreciation you receive from your supervisor? Explain

**3. Work group supports**

- 3.1 Do you have enough opportunities to interact with other employees (to bounce off ideas) and bond in teams?
- 3.2 How satisfied are you with the team spirit in your work environment?
- 3.3 Do you think that group work enhances creativity? Why?

**4. Freedom**

- 4.1 Does your job make good use of your skills and abilities?
- 4.2 Are you given the opportunity for autonomy (that is, independent thought and action) in your job?
- 4.3 Do you think that employees are recognised as individuals? Or does the job gives/denies you any chance to use personal initiative or judgement in carrying out the work?
- 4.4 How satisfied are you that your work gives you a feeling of personal accomplishment?

**5. Sufficient Resources.**

- 5.1 Are resources easily accessible in your department?
- 5.2 Do you have the necessary tools and resources to do your job well? If not what creative measures have you undertaken to accomplish your tasks?

**6. Challenging Work-**

- 6.1 Does your work give you a feeling of personal accomplishment?
- 6.2 Is your job task matched to your skills and interests?

**7. Organisational Impediments**

- 7.1 To what extent is your job governed by appropriate rules and procedures?
- 7.2 What facilitates or blocks creativity for you?
- 7.3 When you think of your job and work environment do you see more positive than negative aspects or more negative than positive aspects? Explain.

**8. Workload Pressure**

- 8.1 What mechanisms do you use to cope with deadlines or work pressures?
- 8.2 Does work pressure enhance or hinder creative thinking for you?

**9. What suggestions do you have for the improvement of the**

- a. department
- b. institution

**10. What could your manager do to enhance workplace creativity and increase job satisfaction?**

**11. Describe some critical work incidents where you had to work in the shadow system to covertly use creative practices in order to deal challenges.**

**12. What bothers you the most about working in this department?**

**13. What is the best thing about working for this department?**

**14. To what extent does doing the job itself provides you with information about your work performance? That is, does the actual work itself provide clues about how well you are doing aside from your managers feed back?**

**15. Do you think that staffs are more creative in informal settings than formal environments? Explain your answer with some anecdotes.**

**16. Are creative ideas rewarded?**

- 17. Do you think creativity in the workplace is important? Why?**
- 18. What other issues, related to creativity, not included in this questionnaire to be addressed in this interview?**

## APPENDIX C

### SCHEDULE OF CRITERIA TO BE USED DURING OBSERVATIONS

The following table known as the , “ Dimensions of Creative Climate Assessed by Situational Outlook Questionnaire” was extracted from – Isaksen , S.G. 1999, ‘ Situational Outlook Questionnaire: A Measure of the Climate for Creativity and Change’, *Psychological Reports*, no. 85, pp.668.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Sample item</b>
<b>Challenge/ Involvement</b>	The degree of emotional involvement, commitment, and motivation in the operations and goals.	<b>The work atmosphere here is filled with energy</b>
<b>Freedom</b>	The level of autonomy, discretion, and initiative in behavior exerted by individuals to acquire information, make decisions, etc.	<b>People here make choices of their own work.</b>
<b>Trust/Openness</b>	The degree of emotional safety, and openness found in relationships.	<b>People here do not steal each others’ ideas</b>
<b>Idea/Time</b>	The amount of time people can use ( and do) for elaborating new ideas	<b>Time is available to explore new ideas</b>
<b>Playfulness/Humor</b>	The display of spontaneity, ease, good natured joking, and laughter that is displayed	<b>People here exhibit a sense of humor</b>
<b>Conflict</b>	The presence of personal and emotional tensions or hostilities.	<b>There are power and territory struggles here.</b>
<b>Idea Support</b>	The degree to which new ideas and suggestions are attended to and treated in a kindly manner.	<b>People usually feel welcome when presenting new ideas here.</b>
<b>Debate</b>	The expressing and considering of many different view-points, ideas and experiences	<b>A wide variety of viewpoints are expressed here</b>

## APPENDIX D

### OLD AND NEW PARADIGM OF VALUES

The following table inspired by Ferguson (1987) describes the old and new paradigms of organisational culture perpetuating the new paradigm on shared values of the staff. Since discussion on thematic responses from participants confirmed the old paradigm of values, the intention is for Thekwini FET College to employ and manage the new paradigm of values in order to harvest a more creative environment for its employees.

<b>Assumptions of Old Paradigm of Economics</b>	<b>Assumptions of the New Paradigm of Values</b>
Promotes consumption at all costs, via planned obsolescence, advertising, pressure, creation of artificial “needs”.	Appropriate consumption. Conserving, keeping. Recycling, quality, craftsmanship, innovation, invention to serve authentic needs.
People to fit jobs. Rigidity. Conformity.	Jobs to fit people. Flexibility, creativity. Form and flow
Imposed goals, top-down decision-making, hierarchy, and bureaucracy.	Autonomy encouraged. Worker participation, democratization. Shared goals, consensus.
Fragmentation, compartmentalization in work and roles. Emphasis on specialized tasks. Sharply defined job descriptions.	Cross-fertilisation by specialists seeing wider relevance of their field
Identification with job, organization, profession.	Identity transcends job description.
Clockwork model of economy, based on Newtonian physics.	Recognition of uncertainty in economics
Aggression, competition, “business is business”.	Cooperation. Human values transcend “winning”.

Work and play separate. Work as means to an end.	Blurring of work and play. Work rewarding in its self.
Struggle for stability, station, and security.	Sense of change, becoming. Willingness to risk, entrepreneurial attitude.
Strictly economic motives, material values. Progress judged by product content.	Spiritual values transcend material gain; material sufficiency. Process as important as product, context of work as important as content- not just what you do but how you do it.
Polarized, labour versus management, consumer versus manufacturer.	Transcends polarities. Shared goals, values.
Rational, trusting only data.	Rational and intuitive. Data, logic augmented by hunches, feelings, insights, nonlinear patterns.
Emphasis on short-term solutions	Recognition that long-range efficiency must take into account harmonious work environment, employee health, customer relations.
Centralized operations	Decentralized operations whenever possible. Human scale.