

THE ROLE OF EMPOWERMENT IN EFFECTIVE SUPERVISORY SCHOOL
MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY

by

MATLHODI ELLEN MOTLHAKOE

Submitted in part fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: DR F J PRETORIUS

NOVEMBER 2003

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the research on empowerment as the key to successful supervisory school management and effective schooling is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, John Ntjuma Lesike, Mmashe Eva Lesike and my husband Johannes Kenneth Motlhakoe who always encouraged me to enhance my studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study would not have been accomplished without the generous contribution and co-operation of many of individuals and organizations. The author of this study therefore wishes to express her sincere appreciation to:

1. Dr F.J Pretorius, my supervisor from the University of South Africa for his expert guidance through out this study. His constructive criticism motivated me to complete the study.
2. The principals in Rustenburg District who gave me permission to interview some of educators in their schools.
3. Mr S.K Rakgomo, the principal of Tshukudu High School for the use of his school facilities during research. In addition, the researcher would like to thank all principals who participated in the focus group interview for the valuable contributions.
4. Miss Lerato Mafoko, who did the typing for my study with patience and tolerance.
5. Mr John Mabeko for editing part of work and for being so understanding and patient.
6. Mr G.M Mahuma for his support and for being my editor when I needed one.

7. Educators from Tshukudu High School for their support and encouragement.
8. Mr Isaac Phiri for his support, encouragement and providing me with all the relevant information during the research project.
9. Mr Aron Boitumelo Pholose for helping me by delivering my post to my supervisor, his support and continuous encouragement.
10. My younger brother Ikaneng, my sisters Lydia, Lucy, Kefilwe and Poppy for their support and encouragement.
11. Lastly, My husband Johannes Kenneth. Your love, support, encouragement, sacrifices and understanding are immeasurable. I would not make it without you.

Thanks to all who made it possible for me to make it this far.

ABSTRACT

The research project explores the effect of empowerment to schools. All stakeholders should be empowered for improvement of quality education and school effectiveness. Two groups of schools were identified, that is, low performing and high performing schools. The aim of this research is to investigate why some schools performed better than others. The purpose of research is to prove that effective schooling can take place through empowerment and that school management can be successful where there is high commitment.

The qualitative research method was employed. It refers to research that elicits participant's account and meaning, experience or perceptions. It also produces descriptive data in the participant's own written or spoken words.

To gather empirical data, the following research methods were employed; literature study and focus group interview. The following categories emerged: -

- Discipline
- Lack of commitment and motivation in the learning environment
- Management leadership styles applied in schools
- Lack of support

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

- 1.1 INTRODUCTION
- 1.2 MOTIVATION OF THE RESEARCH
- 1.3 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM
- 1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
- 1.5 DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH
- 1.6 RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN
- 1.7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS
 - 1.7.1 Management
 - 1.7.2 School Management
 - 1.7.3 Effective schooling
 - 1.7.4 Empowerment
- 1.8 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH

CHAPTER 2

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

- 2.1 INTRODUCTION
- 2.2 EMPOWERMENT AND HOW IT FEATURES IN SCHOOLS
 - 2.2.1 Educators' empowerment
 - 2.2.2 How educators are empowered
 - 2.2.2.1 In-service training
 - 2.2.2.2 Workshops
 - 2.2.2.3 Self-study
 - 2.2.3 EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS
- 2.3 LEARNERS' EMPOWERMENT
 - 2.3.1 Technology
 - 2.3.2 Defining discipline
 - 2.3.2.1 You need a disciplined community in order to have a disciplined society
 - 2.3.2.2 Children need discipline, it's for their own benefit
 - 2.3.2.3 Effective teaching cannot take place without good discipline
 - 2.3.2.4 Children need discipline in order to cultivate a disciplined mind.
 - 2.3.3 LEARNING STYLES
 - 2.3.4 ACHIEVEMENT STUDIES
 - 2.3.5 WAYS OF EMPOWERING LEARNERS
- 2.4 PARENTS' EMPOWERMENT
 - 2.4.1 Learner-centred management
 - 2.4.2 Parental involvement
 - 2.4.3 How parents are empowered
- 2.5 SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES' EMPOWERMENT
 - 2.5.1 Enhancement of capacity of School Governing Body members
- 2.6 THE EFFECT OF EMPOWERMENT TO SCHOOLS
 - 2.6.1 Effective schools

- 2.6.1.1 Effective Departments
 - 2.6.1.1.1 Climate for change
 - 2.6.1.1.2 Clear and shared sense of vision
 - 2.6.1.1.3 The leading professional
 - 2.6.1.1.4 Management and organization
 - 2.6.1.1.5 Management and resources
 - 2.6.1.1.6 Monitoring and evaluation
 - 2.6.1.1.7 Organization of teaching and learning
 - 2.6.1.1.8 Assessment
- 2.6.1.2 Ineffective Departments
- 2.7 EFFECTIVE SCHOOLING
 - 2.7.1 Commitment and motivation in the learning environment
 - 2.7.1.1 Dissatisfaction of educators
 - 2.7.1.2 The teaching role of educators in the pursuit of quality in education
 - 2.7.1.3 Theories of commitment and motivation
 - 2.7.1.3.1 Theories of commitment
 - 2.7.1.3.2 Motivation theories
- 2.8 MANAGING EMPOWERMENT
- 2.9 CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 3

THE RESEARCH DESIGN OF THE QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION

- 3.1 INTRODUCTION
- 3.2 METHOD OF RESEARCH
 - 3.2.1 Qualitative research and why was it chosen
 - 3.2.2 Importance of qualitative research study
- 3.3 WHAT IS FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW
- 3.4 WHY FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW AS A RESEARCH

TECHNIQUE

3.5 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

3.5.1 The advantages of Focus Group Interview

3.5.2 The disadvantages of Focus Group Interview

3.6 THE PROCESS OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWING

3.6.1 PLANNING THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

3.6.1.1 Identify selection criteria and select and recruit the participants

3.6.1.2 The size of a focus groups

3.6.1.3 Ensuring that people will attend

3.6.1.4 Selecting the interview location

3.6.1.5 Designing the interview guide

3.7 CONDUCTING THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

3.7.1 Purposeful small talk

3.7.2 Physical arrangement of the group

3.7.3 Handling unwanted participants

3.7.4 The beginning of the focus group interview

3.7.5 Techniques employed by the moderator

3.7.6 Managing problems during group interview

3.7.7 Group dynamics

3.7.8 Moderator roles and interview styles

3.7.9 Concluding the focus group interview

3.8 INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

3.9 CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 4

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS AND ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDING

- 4.1 INTRODUCTION
- 4.2 GROUP ONE (HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS)
 - 4.2.1 THE PRINCIPAL GROUP
 - 4.2.1.1 How do you view interaction between educators and learners?
 - 4.2.1.2 To what extend is the School Governing Body involved in your school?
 - 4.2.1.3 How do you develop your staff?
 - 4.2.2 THE EDUCATOR GROUP
 - 4.2.2.1 How do you relate to your principal?
 - 4.2.2.2 What do you think are the principal's strengths and weaknesses?
 - 4.2.2.3 What leadership styles do you think your principal demonstrates?
 - 4.2.2.4 Are relevant records kept in your school for educators and learners?
 - 4.2.2.5 How is the perception and attitudes of other educators within the staff?
 - 4.2.2.6 Does your principal involve you (staff) in decision-making?
 - 4.2.2.7 According to the analysis of grade 12 results, the school has continuously obtained high pass rate. How do you manage this?
 - 4.2.2.8 What are the attitudes of parents/learners towards discipline of the school?
 - 4.2.2.9 Do you find the involvement of your Deputy-Principal supportive?
- 4.3 GROUP TWO (LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS)
 - 4.3.1 THE PRINCIPAL GROUP
 - 4.3.1.1 How do you view interaction between educators and learners?
 - 4.3.1.2 To what extend is the School Governing Body involve in your school?
 - 4.3.1.3 Is there commitment between educators and learners?
 - 4.3.1.4 What do you think are the causes of low pass rate?
 - 4.3.1.5 How do you empower your educators?
 - 4.3.2 THE EDUCATOR GROUP
 - 4.3.2.1 How do you relate to your principal?
 - 4.3.2.2 What do you think are the principal's strengths and weaknesses?

- 4.3.2.3 What leadership styles do you think your principal demonstrates?
- 4.3.2.4 Are relevant records kept in your school for educators and learners?
- 4.3.2.5 How is the perception and attitudes of other educators within the staff?
- 4.3.2.6 According to the analysis of grade 12 results, the school has continuously obtained low pass rate. What do you think are the causes?
- 4.3.2.7 What are the attitudes of parents/learners towards discipline of the school?
- 4.3.2.8 How do you empower your learners?
- 4.3.2.9 Does your principal involve you (staff) in decision-making?

- 4.4 DISCUSSION OUTLINE

- 4.4.1 The Principal Group (High Performing Schools)
- 4.4.2 The Educator Group
- 4.4.3 The Principal Group (Low Performing Schools)
- 4.4.4 The Educator Group

- 4.5 ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

- 4.5.1 Discipline
- 4.5.2 Lack of commitment and motivation in the learning environment
- 4.5.3 Management styles applied in schools
- 4.5.4 Lack of support

- 4.6 CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

- 5.1 INTRODUCTION

- 5.2 THE IMPORTANT FINDINGS

- 5.2.1 Discipline
- 5.2.2 Lack of commitment and motivation in the learning environment
- 5.2.3 Management leadership styles applied in schools.
- 5.2.4 Lack of support

- 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.3.1 Motivation

- 5.3.2 Empowerment
- 5.3.3 Workload
- 5.3.4 Commitment

5.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

5.5 CONCLUSION

BIBLIOGRAPHY

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Having taught in a high school for nine years, it was noted with concern the differences in grade 12 pass rate among schools in Rustenburg District, especially in these three years, that is 1999, 2000, 2001 respectively. The schools in this region can be divided into three main groups based on the relative stability of pass rates: -

- i. Schools that obtained high pass rates for the period 1999-2001
- ii. Schools whose results fluctuated.
- iii. Schools that obtained low pass rates for the same period (Departmental circular: Analysis of 2001 Grade 12 Examination Results dated 09-01-2002)

All the schools used for this research have almost identical facilities-school layout, size (number of classroom), library and laboratory.

The purpose of this research is to look at possible causes of continuous low pass rate in schools in low performing schools. Because almost all non-human factors are the same for perpetual high performing schools and low performing schools, the cause of low pass rate should be sought for among human factors such as educators and learners. The main cause of the differences between the high-performing schools and the low-performing schools might be the difference in the management styles.

The author intends to compare the management styles of the school managers in the low performing schools and the high performing schools - particularly the extent of delegation (empowerment) by the school managers to educators and learners.

The author will prove that the educators in schools with high pass rates have greater involvement in school management, hence higher commitment, for instance, the extent of delegation to educators will influence how educators view their work and that educators' perceptions and practices would in turn affect learners' learning.

1.2 MOTIVATION OF THE RESEARCH

As indicated earlier that there are two groups of schools, viz: - high-performing schools and low-performing schools, the main purpose of doing this research is to investigate why some schools perform better than others; is this caused by poor school management or less commitment from educators? If educators in low-performing schools do not do their work to the best of their ability, the problem could lie with the management. This means that there could be a lack of control in these schools, and/or school managers do not exercise proper leadership. Good leadership and proper control lead to good performance from both educators and learners.

The school management can only be successful through empowerment, meaning that all stakeholders in education must be empowered. Educators should undergo workshops (in-service-training) to acquire certain skills and knowledge in order to do what is expected of them (White Paper 1,1995:30). If there is less commitment from educators, then the learners will automatically produce poor results because no one will push them with their school's work.

The research will contribute and help school managers, educators and learners and other stakeholders to see the differences in schools when coming to learners' performance and the improvement in management. The researcher will indicate, after a successful or thorough investigations, the causes or factors contributing to low achievement among learners, and each and every one (educators) will assess his/her weakness and remedy them according to the content of the research. They will be keen to develop themselves, for instance, if educators can realize that they are not on the right track, after reading this research, they will follow the right way of educating learners so as to produce good results and at the end these learners will be able to apply their skills.

The researcher intends to look in-depth whether it is true that schools become effective through empowerment and also that supervisory school management can be successful through empowerment. The topic indicates that empowerment is the key to both successful supervisory school management and effective schooling.

1.3 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The specific problem can be formulated as: what effect does empowerment have on successful supervisory school management and effective schooling. Therefore the different management styles applied in high-performing schools and low-performing schools will be investigated and how the improved management in low-performing schools will contribute to the learners' performance. In the light of the problem statement, the following questions regarding the topic may be raised to find some pertinent answers. They are: -

- ◆ Do school managers of the two school groups use comparable management styles?
- ◆ What are the role of educators and learners in the school management?
- ◆ What are the attitudes of educators/learners towards school discipline?
- ◆ Is there a difference in classroom interaction among educators and learners that may cause the difference in learning outcomes?
- ◆ Do educators in the two school groups have the same commitment levels?

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this research is to prove that effective schooling can take place through empowerment and also that school management can be successful where there is high commitment from the school managers, educators and learners. In order to achieve this aim, the following objectives of the research are set, namely: -

- ◆ To determine the nature and essence of empowerment in all schools
- ◆ To determine the perception of school management about their position in schools
- ◆ To determine how empowerment can be the key to successful supervisory school management and effective schooling.

1.5 DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

This research will be restricted to schools in the Rustenburg district in the North West Province. The focus will be on the schools that continuously obtained low pass rate and the management styles applied in two groups of schools, that is high- performing schools and low-performing schools.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

A research design is the general plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer research questions. The purpose of the research design is to provide the most valid, accurate answers possible to research questions.

A focused literature study will be utilized and will enable a comparison of results to occur, and it (literature study) will be supplemented by a qualitative approach to research which is a multi-perspective approach to social orientation, aimed at describing, making sense of interpreting or reconstructing this intergration in terms of the meaning that a subject is attached to it (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 26).

The researcher will conduct the focus group interview in the qualitative paradigm. Interviewing can be defined as planned discussion or verbal interaction on the basis of personal discussion (usually between two people) with a particular aim. Huebsch (1983: 162) elaborates on this as follows: the stimulus reaction factors of the interview involve the aims, motives, attitudes and perspectives of both interviewer and interviewee. Both verbal and non-verbal communication factors are involved.

For Verderber and Verderber (1992: 348) interviewing is also a form of interaction based primarily on the asking and answering of questions. Unlike most of interpersonal communication, interviewing can be planned ahead. Reason for choosing focus group interview are that, it is easier for the interviewer to get detailed information because the participants are allowed to unfold their opinions or perceptions without limitations or interruptions, and that it is interactive and notes are made of both verbal (use of words) and non-verbal (gestures). De Vos (1998: 2) provides that a focus group interview is thus

conducted in such a way that the open conversation of a specific topic in which each participant may make comments, ask questions of other participants, or respond to comments by others.

Purposeful sampling will be used to select the participants. The survey will be in the form of questionnaires and the data will be analyzed. (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:174). As a remote device for obtaining data, these can provide for the impersonal collection of information from educators, learners, etc. The questionnaire is sufficiently short to require only 10 – 15 minutes for completion and does not impose upon educators' time. The questionnaire will ask questions on the discipline, management style of school manager and attitudes of educators/ learners towards discipline.

1.7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

In order to facilitate the understanding of this work, concepts used in the title of this research project and in the statement of the problem need clarification. Definitions of these concepts are: -

1.7.1 MANAGEMENT

Management is getting things done by, with and through people. This shows that the manager is active and also emphasizes the human element without specifying the details of the management function.

Van der Westhuizen (1991: 39) defines management as the process of planning, organizing, activating and controlling and organization's operation in order to achieve a co-ordination of human and material resources essential in the effective and efficient attainment of objectives.

Hampton (1977:9) defines management as the work involved in combining and directing the use of resources to achieve particular purposes. This definition states clearly the ultimate objective of all managerial actions, namely, to achieve particular purpose. To achieve these particular purposes the manager must combine and direct the use of resources.

Kroontz and O'Donnell (1994: 1) defined management as the accomplishment of desired objectives by establishing an environment favourable to performance by people operating in organized groups.

According to McFarland (1974: 6) management is defined for conceptual, theoretical and analytical purposes as that process by which managers create, direct, maintain and co-operate purposive organizations through systematic, co-ordinated, co-operative human effort.

Trewatha and Newport (1976:22) defined management as the process of planning, organizing, activating, and controlling an organization's operations in order to achieve a co-ordination of human and material resources essential in the effective and efficient attainment of objectives.

From the definitions above, the following deductions can be made: Management is a process consisting of specific components, namely, planning, organizing, leading and controlling. Management is an active process and directs all resources, and through management guidance is giving to subordinates.

1.7.2 SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

The term School Management can be defined as a process consisting of specific components, through which active guidance is given to subordinates and resources are directed to accomplish specific objective (Parames, 1975:11).

1.7.3 EFFECTIVE SCHOOLING

To be effective is to do the right things correctly. School effectiveness is generally concerned with the outcomes such as examination results, staying-on rates of pupil attitude. According to Bush and West-Burnham (1994:67) leadership is consistently recognized as a vital factor in school effectiveness.

Van der Westhuizen (1996:73) identified ten features most commonly characterize effective and successful schools, they are: -

- ◆ Strong, positive leadership by the head and senior staff.
- ◆ Positive atmosphere generated by shared aims and values.
- ◆ High and consistent expectations of all learners.
- ◆ Clear continuing focus on teaching and learning.
- ◆ Well- developed procedures for assessing how learners are progressing.
- ◆ Responsibility for learning shared by the pupils themselves.
- ◆ Participation by pupils in the life of the school.
- ◆ Rewards and incentives to encourage pupils to succeed.
- ◆ Parent involvement in children's education and in support of the aim of the school.
- ◆ Extra-mural activities that broaden pupils' interest and experience, expand their opportunities to succeed and help to build strong relationships within the school.

1.7.4 EMPOWERMENT

Although empowerment can be seen from several perspectives and no single definition can do justice to its meaning, for the purpose of this investigation. Smith & Scott (1990:5) defined empowerment as an effective means of improving schools and is an indispensable requirement if schools strive for excellence.

According to Irwin (1996: 4), empowerment means believing in yourself and your own ability to act. Empowerment is to improve the conditions of one's own life and the conditions of other lives, especially those lives limited by discrimination and social injustice.

Fennimore (1995:216-217) maintains that empowerment implies constant change in self and others in the process of creating student-centered education in a democratic society. She also mentioned that empowerment is a form of energy that can help all who work in schools to be more productive. It (empowerment) is a determined willingness to embrace responsibility and commitment to equitable and excellent opportunities for all children.

Empowerment, therefore can be regarded as the improvement of a person's ability to act, by supporting or uplifting the entire knowledge that one has. Empowerment can also be regarded as an energizer because it gives a person the energy to strive for excellence. In other words, empowerment is to give the person a power to work in order to be productive.

1.8 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH

The research will be arranged as follows to try to achieve the objectives of research: -

Chapter one provides a comprehensive orientation and background to the research by explaining what the researcher intends to research or investigate. All relevant headings are stated.

Chapter two deals with literature review where the researcher explains to the reader the theoretical underpinnings of the study. It is critical to study because it makes explicit the impact of the theory for every stage of the study, from the initial problem and selection of the population through data collection and analysis to interpretation. It also provides a description of investigators' own biases.

The literature review in this research deals with how does empowerment feature in schools? Does it have any effect, and also when is supervisory school management successful. The researcher will also indicate whether schools can be effective through empowerment because the topic says empowerment is the key to effective schooling.

Chapter three will present research design of the empirical study. The empirical investigation will use focus-group survey. The researcher will compile questions for the interviewers.

Chapter four will deal with the outcomes of the focus-group interviews/surveys. The finding of the research problem will be tabulated, analyzed and interpreted.

Chapter five links the interpretation of findings of chapters two, three and four. Important findings from the literature and empirical findings will also be outlined. It deals with the recommendations of the research and provides conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one it was indicated that empowerment is the key to successful supervisory school management and effective schooling. This means that for supervisory school management to be successful, educators, learners, parents and members of school governing bodies should be empowered. These people can only do their work effectively if they are empowered. Effective schooling can also take place through empowerment. In the following paragraphs, a brief overview will be given to explain the nature of empowerment and its importance in schools.

2.2 EMPOWERMENT AND HOW IT FEATURES IN SCHOOLS

In chapter one, different meanings of the concept empowerment by different authors were given. In addition to that, Poplin (1992:10) maintains that empowerment approach is praiseworthy because it encourages principals, educators and other stakeholders to become part of the decision-making process by participating in the formulation and implementation of decisions, which affect them. Organizational problems are best solved by a team made up of people closest to the problem (Mankoe & Maynes, 1994:26). Therefore it is important that stakeholders be empowered, as empowerment is an essential requirement for effective school management and the management of change.

For empowerment to be successful, staff should be capable of and keen on sharing responsibilities. Maeroff (1988: 474) says that empowerment covers three areas, that is: knowledge, status and access to decision-making. Therefore, the aforementioned areas will be discussed as follows: -

- ◆ Knowledge is power and an increase in knowledge is an obvious step to empowering staff. It is therefore important for educators to have opportunities to acquire new knowledge.
- ◆ Maeroff (1988. 474) refers to status as the ability for educators to look upon themselves, and others with dignity and respect, and to exercise their craft with quiet confidence. To achieve such status, educators need to know that they are important and that their experiences and expertise are valued and trusted by other stakeholders and the community at large.
- ◆ Access implies access to knowledge, power, structure and decision-making process. Partly or incorrectly informed staff cannot act as responsible professional people.

Maeroff (1988: 474) indicated that if staff that is involved in school decision-making does not receive adequate and continuous training, school management would be reduced to a muddling-through activity. For effective schooling to take place and supervisory school management to be successful, the following must be empowered:

2.2.1 EDUCATORS' EMPOWERMENT

For management to be effective and successful, educators should be empowered. De Vos (1998: 407) described empowerment as the process of increasing personal, interpersonal and political power, enabling individuals or collectives to improve their life situation. Empowerment increases the energy, motivation, coping problem-solving skills, decision-making power, self-esteem, self-sufficiency and self-determination of community members.

Callender (1997: 112) indicates that educators are the coaches, facilitators, instructors, mentors, collaborators and listeners both in the classroom and in the larger school community. To perform their work effectively, these educators must have knowledge or power. Power-with is the form of power that is embedded in relationships and is characterized by collaborating, sharing and mutuality. Each person in the relationship is empowered through relations of mutual respect. The power is jointly developed because people are developing their capacities by working together. Irwin (1996:11) used the term power-to / power-with, to indicate that the power used in the classroom and community activities must involve sharing, mutual respect and collaboration, if it is to be empowering to all who participate in the activity. Irwin went on saying that the empowered person must have a balance among three types of will, that is:

- ◆ Good will: an awareness of ethical consideration, a consideration of needs of others, sense of love and compassion,

- ◆ Skillful will: the ability to obtain the desired results with the least expenditure of energy: practical knowledge and the ability to use it,

- ◆ Strong will: the strength to use the will when necessary. This is only one aspect and, when dissociated from the others, it can be, and often is, ineffectual or harmful to oneself or other people.

Empowered educators as defined by Irwin (1996:13) are persons who believe in themselves and their capacity to act. These educators understand systems of domination and work to transform oppressive practices in society. They respect the dignity and humanness of others and manifest their power as the power to actualize their own unique humanity. Educators are strong, practical and compassionate as they work individually and with others to support the self-realization of all persons in their classroom, schools and communities.

Maeroff (1988:481) argues that educators should also empower themselves in order to achieve their goals. Empowering themselves as educators is the first step towards empowering the learners, and this probably requires three recursive stages: -

- ◆ One must come to understand the systems of domination that operate in the lives of educators and learners in schools.
- ◆ One must decide what he/she really value, his/her deepest beliefs about the dignity and work of each person and how these can be reflected in our educational persons.
- ◆ One must find ways to manifest his/her vision and support himself/herself in these efforts by creating empowering communities.

Irwin (1996:14) indicates that the process of empowerment requires teachers to be willing to change, and they cannot change by thinking and analyzing alone.

They must enlist the help of their feelings, senses and imagination as well, because teacher empowerment is about truly redistributing power and requires the retraining and building of self-esteem of teachers with the context of supportive, conscious of the community services based on the experience of power to and power with.

Irwin went on saying that the profound changes such as senses, feelings and imaginations couldn't occur without the commitment and energy of thousands of educators and communities working together. In the previous chapter, the researcher indicated that there are schools that continuously obtained a low pass rate and that this can only be improved if educators commit themselves fully in their work. The educators must have knowledge and energy to change their teaching styles and the learners' learning styles. To take the responsibility to work for the change will improve learning culture, and to do this, educators will all need to empower themselves in order to empower learners.

Educators, parents, administrators, law makers and concerned citizens can do their part to transform an authoritarian educational system that has outlined its usefulness into a truly democratic one capable of preparing students for their roles in a changing world (Irwin, 1996: 302). Educators need to make sure that they are taking responsibility for their actions without blaming themselves or others when things do not work out as expected. For an example, when learners did not produce good results at the end of the year, educators are blamed, and educators blame the learners. Irwin (1996: 29) argues that educators need to develop a sense of trust in themselves and other people, a positive attitude about events, and an ability to flow with change

2.2.2 HOW EDUCATORS ARE EMPOWERED?

Educators can be empowered in the following different ways:

2.2.2.1 INSERVICE TRAINING

Educators can be empowered through in-service training. According to Maeroff (1988:415), in-service training can make indispensable contribution to the empowerment of educators. He adds a warning, however that a thorough overhaul is needed if in service is to fulfill its potential for prying open door to empowerment. Maeroff (1988:416) went on saying that in-service training creates an opportunity to break down the isolation between staff members, to build new networks, to develop educators' self-confidence, to expand their subject knowledge and educational knowledge, and to involve them in projects, which will give them access to decision-making (Maeroff, 1998:416).

In the White Paper on Education and Training (1995: 30), the ministry believes that the most direct way of raising the quality of learning and teaching is through a comprehensive reform and re-direction of in-service training for educators. The faculties of education in universities and technikons, the more creative colleges of education and some subject organizations of educators, have been responsible for an array of innovative in-service training programs, many of which involve professional development and educator empowerment within school settings and co-operative work among educators from different schools.

The educator who has been effectively equipped by virtue of his basic training and who also ensures that he keeps abreast in all related fields, serves the pupils entrusted to his care to the maximum extent. Continued training provides the teachers with the bonus of deepened insight and spiritual growth. The most

important purpose of all of in-service training is to bring about the improvement and development of the entire teaching corps of a particular school system (White Paper 1, 1995:31).

2.2.2.2 WORKSHOPS

Educators must undergo workshops and give feedback to other educators about the workshop for the learners to be productive, but they can only be productive if implementation of feedback has been done. Management today is not hierarchical; it is flattened - meaning that every educator in school is the manager. If the school manager is not at school, the school should run smoothly by educators. The managing of school will be successful because of educator empowerment that is why the researcher indicates that empowerment is the key to successful supervisory school management.

2.2.2.3 SELF- STUDY

Another way of educators to be empowered is by means of self study which results in subjects growth or professional growth and may eventually make valuable and fruitful contribution to educators' efficacy in the classroom (Van der Westhuizen, 1991:274). Educators are encouraged to upgrade themselves by studying at universities and other institutions, and by doing this they are empowering themselves or developing themselves because they acquired knowledge and skills and also improve their qualifications and chances of promotion. When educators read more books and implement what they have been taught they will be able to produce quality education and learners will promote the school by producing good results (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 275).

In White Paper 1 (1995:20) the indication is that the improvement of the quality of education and training service is essential. In many of schools and colleges serving the majority of the population there has been a precipitous decline in the quality of educational performance, which must be reversed. Quality education is required across the board and is linked to the capacity and commitment of the educator, the appropriateness of the curriculum, and the way standards are set and assessed (White Paper 1, 1995:21).

Regarding the above-mentioned, the effect of empowerment to educators can be pointed out which, resulted in educators to become effective in schools hence, effective educators:

2.2.3 EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS

Educators will be effectively involved in their work after being empowered, and they will be effective educators. Callender 1997:20) identified the characteristics of effective educators, namely:

- ◆ Effective educators ensure that classroom content is linked to student experiences and students are encouraged to bring community experiences into the classroom. They are also concerned with the development of children - not just their cognitive growth but also their social and emotional growth and the educators' practices reflect this commitment.
- ◆ Effective educators accept responsibility for nurturing in their learners the skills necessary for success in school, and values such as persistent and responsibility, which serve as a foundation to current and future learning.

- ◆ They foster learner interests and are also aware of the structural inequalities in society.
- ◆ Effective educators encourage cultural patterns of collectivity, incorporating them into everyday classroom activities. Learners are not only encouraged to work together but also to support each other and to study collaboratively by forming study groups.
- ◆ Effective educators take responsibility for teaching the knowledge, skills and values that facilitates school's success, self-determination, healthy cultural identity and survival in a society that professes equal opportunity while practicing institutional racism.

McIntyre & Byrd (1996:94) argued that effective educators for tomorrow's schools must be more than context experts. They must understand the developmental stages and needs of their individual learners; work with a variety of adults both in the school and the community at large; command strategies for problem identification and solution.

Brown (1993:13) states that the attributes of an effective educator go beyond basic skills and include enhanced abilities to think critically and creatively; to reason carefully; to acquire systematically into any important matters; and to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and arguments; and to communicate effectively to a variety of audiences in a variety of forms.

These attributes are desirable for the future educators and for their learners. The educator development is the transition from being a learner of teaching to being an effective educator. Magers (1992:6) argued that a broad perspective of what it means to become an educator is needed. Becoming an educator:

Might ... be thought of as the continuous experience of an individual through which an image of self-as-educator is formed and refined, and during which knowledge, skills and values appropriate to the work of teaching, as it is to be practiced in a particular context, are acquired and used. .

Mager proposed three concepts for consideration in the development of an individual's image of 'self -as educator' as follows: -

- ◆ Educator competence is the body of knowledge, skills and values appropriate to the work of teaching.
- ◆ Educator performance is the expression of the new educator's competence through the enactment of the tasks of teaching in a particular context. It is the challenge of using what is known what skills have been acquired, and what values have been formed, in the particular classroom and school in which one is hired to teach.
- ◆ Educator effectiveness is the accomplishment of intended outcomes as a result of performance. Most typically, such outcomes are related to student learning and student behavior. Educator effectiveness is always context bound-expressed in a particular, real setting.

According to Mager (1992:7), these three concepts of educator competence, educators performance and educator effectiveness, can serve as guideposts in our efforts to help prospective educators to develop the knowledge, skills and values that will enable them to function effectively to foster student learning in their classroom.

2.3 LEARNERS' EMPOWERMENT

In order for the learners to produce quality outcomes, they must be empowered by both educators and other stakeholders such as parents and other persons who have an interest or stake in what takes place in the school district. Learners can only improve their performance if they are willing to change and learn independently.

Irwin (1996:13) defined the empowered learners as persons who believe in themselves and their capacity to act. The learners understand systems of domination and work to transform oppressive practices in society. These learners respect the dignity and humanities of others and manifest their power as the power to actualize their own unique humanity. Learners are strong, practical and compassionate as they work individually and with others.

Education is a process in which decisions about learning are shared among educators, learners, parents and interested community members. Education focuses on empowering knowledge that builds on the real lives of learners and facilitates deeper levels of caring and personal together with social awareness. Irwin argues that one area of the curriculum that can clearly be embodied or disembodied is literacy.

Casey (1997: 45) defined literacy as the ability to read and write. Learners can be empowered through reading and writing. The more learners read, the more they gain experience and they learn. Writing to learn is the term given to programs that integrate writing into the teaching of the constant areas. Learners are encouraged to use a variety of writing strategies, like journals, notes and creative response, to help them learn predetermined content material. Developing one's

ability to use writing to learn material is empowering, but it would be more empowering if learners were sometimes using the writing to learn material they wanted to learn for a meaningful purpose.

Presently, learners are encouraged to write about given topic or choose themes if they are given the opportunity to choose the theme at all, and by doing this, will help them practicing to learn language. Learners will also have the advantage that they often incorporate the use of portfolio assessment (Irwin, 1996:158). In portfolio assessment, a learner's growth is assessed overtime by collecting and examining real evidence of daily work. Learners are in many cases, involved in selecting the pieces that go to in their portfolio. They assess their own strengths and weaknesses as evidenced in the portfolio and setting their own goals based on this assessment. This leads to self-evaluation, which is the process most likely to lead to self-empowerment (Irwin, 1996. 94). Self-empowerment is when one is acquiring knowledge or skills for himself/herself, for example, when educators are upgrading themselves or studying privately through correspondence with universities or other institutions.

When learners keep on doing creative work, they will at last understand the language used and the subject content. Language awareness encourages children to explore language use, attitudes, values and norms (Casey, 1997:68).

2.3.1 TECHNOLOGY

Today learners are empowered through technology, which can improve the learning abilities. Casey (1997:64) argued that in the learning environment, that provide the tools, such as computers, children need to learn, all learners, regardless of their position on the educational spectrum-can achieve success.

Casey went on saying that computer technology is a powerful tool for discovery, learning and self-growth and is equally powerful in supporting the learning field for all learners, regardless of social, economic or academic background.

All learners, regardless of language or culture, can be supported and empowered by the use of technology during their early literacy development. Technology is important because it allows children to learn much easier and more effectively than earlier researchers ever believed they could. The question that can be asked is: What is technology and how can it be utilized?

Technology refers to the ways people use their inventions and discoveries to satisfy the needs and desires. They have had to work to satisfy their desire for leisure and comfort. Through the ages, people invented tools, machines, materials and techniques to make work easier. (The World book: Encyclopedia volume 19:1995:83)

Technology thus involves the use of tools, machines, materials, techniques and more sources of power to make work easier and more productive. Technology has enabled people to produce more goods and services with less labour. Computers are important because a computer (s):

- ◆ is a machine that performs calculations and processes information with astonishing speed.
- ◆ can take thousands of individual pieces of data and turn them into more usable information.
- ◆ have changed the peoples' work. They handle many tasks in business, education, manufactures and other fields.
- ◆ produce new information so quickly and accurately that they are changing people's view of the world. People can access large electronic databases remotely.

Casey (1997:62) identified eight advantages of computers for learners. They are:

- ◆ Computers are motivating and fun. All people love challenges and love to make things happen.
- ◆ Computers with good software can be highly interactive as opposed to books, tapes, films, radio and television. With a computer, the user controls what happens.
- ◆ Computers are non- judgemental and they have infinite patience. You can work slowly or rapidly; it does not make faces or criticize. It never gets tired and crabby.
- ◆ Computers with hypermedia cannot only explain concepts in a more interesting, visual or animated manner, but can respond to inquiries in various ways, depending on how the user chooses to access materials.
- ◆ Computers can stimulate situations too complex, dangerous, or costly to do in the classroom. Chemical reactions, ecosystems, space travel, and such can safely be explored.
- ◆ Using hyper- studio and other authoring systems, children can create reports and research for their peers and it is in problem solving and in the creation of these materials that real-world learning occurs.
- ◆ Through telecommunication, computers bring the resources of the world into the classroom and allow learners in one classroom to communicate with others everywhere in the world.
- ◆ Computers foster the writing process by making editing and creating materials much easier.

Casey (1997:75) continued mentioning that computers are important in supporting learning because in future, learners will continue to develop their early comprehension skills, grasp new concepts, and attach meaning to writing and reading. Learners must have faith in their abilities and encourage their accomplishment if they are afforded with this valuable learning tool.

Irwin (1996:131) provides that, learners must learn to live in someone else's skill, understand the parallels of hurt, struggle and joy across class and culture lines, and work for change. For that to happen, learners need supportive educators.

When learners are continually engaged in school activities and meaningful relationships with adults, they are also developing skills in self-discipline that will empower them in the future. Fennimore (1996:26) argued that student-centered classroom management helps children become adults who are confident in their abilities and able to use them to construct a stronger society.

2.3.2 DEFINING DISCIPLINE

Research by Callender (1997:98) maintains that discipline refers to general beliefs concerning the observance of rules. When this term is used in relation to school, takes on a range of more specific meanings. For some, discipline is concerned with punishment and dogmatic regime, whilst other, discipline is associated with ideals and principled behaviour. Docking (1987:32) identifies four reasons why discipline is important to the school that discipline is:

- ◆ A requirement for the social and economic needs of the society
- ◆ Necessary for the psychological needs of the individual
- ◆ Essential for successful classroom management, and
- ◆ A prerequisite for educative learning.

Callender (1987:98-100) discussed these four reasons for discipline as follows:

2.3.2.1 You need a disciplined community in order to have a disciplined society

Discipline in the school is often seen to play an important role in ensuring that children learn to behave in ways that are to be advantage of the society as a whole. The ideal is to regularize children's conduct; moderate their egocentric desires and encourages them to respect authority.

2.3.2.2 Children need discipline, it's for their own benefit

This view suggests that personal needs of the child are as important as the needs of society. Discipline is necessary to promote happiness and emotional security in the child.

2.3.2.3 Effective teaching cannot take place without good discipline

According to this view, a classroom must be orderly if it is to promote effective teaching and learning. Discipline, in this sense, is closely equated with social control

2.3.2.4 Children need discipline in order to cultivate a disciplined mind

This educative view of discipline claims that disciplined learners acknowledge that the type of behaviour they are morally obliged to follow is based on beliefs that they think are right. The notion of discipline is clearly multi-faceted. Discipline may relate to training for society, the application of external

constraints, something that educators do before learning takes place, or the adoption of certain behaviour that the learners themselves think are right (Callender, 1987:100).

The following themes emerged from this research and will be discussed. They are: - learning styles and achievement studies of learners.

2.3.3 LEARNING STYLES

Effective learning necessitates support and reward in motivating learning and achievement. In effective classrooms, learners need to be given support and positive encouragement in order to learn optimally. Effective learning needs effective classroom management. Callender (1999:13) indicates that effective classroom management is a central to providing a classroom environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning.

Harris (1999:6) argues that to learn effectively learners need to be effective gatherers, organizers and expounders of knowledge. The main channels of gathering knowledge in schools are; listening, reading, asking questions and discussing. In acquiring knowledge, successful learners adopt a stance of active interaction with the educator and topic. They become engaged with the learning and actively seek ways of connecting together the various components of learning

Callender (1997:16) indicated that learning styles are contributory to the under-performance of majority learners.

Klein proposes two kinds of learners; levelers whose perception and judgement tend to be fixed and who are reluctant to change their views even when

presented with new evidence or changing conditions, and sharpeners who are attuned to change. In a similar vein, Kagan draws attention to the degree to which the learner reflects on the validity of alternative situations, while Ausubel distinguishes between satelizers who have an inherent sense of self-worth independent of what they accomplish, and non-satelizers who lack such self worth and feel it necessary to prove themselves through their accomplishments (Callender, 1997: 18).

Effective educators need to be aware of learners' different learning orientations and to be prepared to value the differences between learners. Harris (1999:9) argues that there are four learning styles and that all have a preference for learning in a particular style. He suggests that the way in which we learn from experience ranges from immersing ourselves in that experience in intuitive ways, which engage our senses and feelings (concrete experience) to a preference, which favours use of logical and analytical powers (abstract conceptualization). Having engaged in perception and the attempt to grasp the nature of the new experience, we then endeavour to understand it by processing or transforming. Here the tension is between a preference for doing (active experimentation) and watching (reflective observation).

2.3.4 ACHIEVEMENT STUDIES

Callender (1997:23) identified key factors that contribute to successful achievement of learners. These factors include learner characteristics, classroom ethos, educator perception of the factors contributing to achievement among learners and parental involvement.

Harris (1999:66) on the other hand, outlined the main findings about learners' achievement and classroom communication. He indicated that the communication role in the classroom involves the transmission and reception of ideas, directions, information, explanations and policies from person to person, person to group or group to group.

A research by Conran (1989:81) discussed three types of communications in which effective educators engage, each having a different purpose and effect; they are:

- ◆ Pro-active communication, a closed and direct form used by the educator. Its purpose is ordering, or directing and is characteristic of structuring a task and producing instructions.
- ◆ Defensive communication, used by both educators and learners, and is employed when someone feels threatened. It is not an open form of communication, is neither, constructive or effective, and results in closing off communication.
- ◆ Intensive communication, an indirect and open form of interaction used to describe and explore. It is characteristic by many teaching/learning situations.

Harris (1999:67) generally suggests that lack of two-way communication, especially lack of clear and constructive feedback, is a serious barrier to effective teaching and learning. The findings about learner achievement and classroom communication are the following: -

- ◆ Learner achievement is maximized when educators actively present material, structure it, provide overviews of the task and advance organizers, outline content and review the main ideas.
- ◆ Learner achievement appears to be higher when information is presented clearly, with enthusiasm and with a degree of redundancy or repetition through various channels.
- ◆ Learner achievement appears to be higher when educator's questions are pitched at an appropriate conceptual level, are asked clearly and are followed by a pause to allow learners to think before responding.
- ◆ Learner achievement is maximized when educators provide verbal and non-verbal feedback.
- ◆ Learner achievement is maximized when educators encourage learners' questions directing them to other class members for comment and response and including them within the discussion about the topic.

Learners can only achieve their studies through communication, but if there is no communication between educators and learners they will perform badly. Feedback is most importantly to effective teaching and learning. Educators should present their materials in such a way that the learners will at the end understand what they have been taught.

2.3.5 WAYS OF EMPOWERING LEARNERS

Educators are employed at schools to achieve educational goal, teaching and learning, and they are there to empower learners. The most important way of empowering learners is to educate them, and not only to produce good results at the end of the year, but also to be responsible, successful and independent persons of tomorrow (Badenhorst, 1995:6). Badenhorst also provided that the task of educating is aimed at providing society with educated and skilled people.

They are also empowered by attending workshops and participating in debating. Debate empowers learners with language awareness and they will gain experience of delivering speech which, at the end benefit from it, because they can be the best public speakers as they will not encounter problems in communicating with others (Irwin, 1996:146)

Van der Westhuizen (1991:366) maintains that learners have the opportunity for self-training by means of books and pamphlet which they can study in their own time. This means that learners are empowering themselves through reading because they gain knowledge from what they have read.

South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) provides that all learners have the right to be educated, and this can be achieved through empowerment. After been empowered learners are expected to participate fully in their work because they were provided with knowledge and they must use it.

Learners can also be empowered through motivation. Bush and West-Burnham (1994:237) provide that motivation is what drives individuals to work in the way they do to fulfill goals, needs or expectations. The effective educator has a major part to play in ensuring that learners are motivated. In the classrooms, educators can increase motivation by actively involving learners in decisions about their learning and in agreeing approaches to tasks. Agreement on key results and participation strengthens commitment and develops mutual expectation (Bush & West-Burnham, 1994:234).

2.4 PARENTS' EMPOWERMENT

Running through the legislation is the notion of parents and educators jointly involved in children's education: learners are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents (Education Act). Parents are responsible for education of their children and must ensure that their children receive quality education. Parents can only manage this when they are empowered.

2.4.1 LEARNER – CENTRED MANAGEMENT

Fennimore (1995:221) maintains that learner-centred management requires educators to keep parents and families informed and to invite them to engage in co-operative efforts to support education of their children. Educators can empower parents through positive communication that encourage them to show continual interest in the school experience of their children.

2.4.2 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Many surveys suggest that parents would like to be more involved in the life of the school. At primary level, it is known that parental involvement is a determinant of school effectiveness (Mortimore et al; 1988:34). Direct teaching of community participation skills can help learners to learn exercise power-to/power-with rather than power-over. Blasé & Anderson (1995:49) defined the power relations as follows:-Power-over: Leaders achieve through their control of resources, persuasiveness, and hierarchical position over followers. The power-over approach is strongly influenced by the bureaucratic tradition. Power is exercised over followers.

- ◆ Power-through: Leaders achieve goals through the motivation and mobilization of followers. The power-through approach is strongly

influenced by the human relations and organizational development tradition. Power is exercised through followers.

- ◆ Power-with: Goals are achieved through the collaboration of leaders and followers. Leadership and followers may shift depending on the issue. The power-with approach is strongly influenced by the feminist participatory and workplace democracy tradition.

2.4.3 HOW PARENTS ARE EMPOWERED

There are inexhaustible opportunities for inviting parents to the schools so that they can be informed and equipped for their task and so that their relationship with the school staff can be improved. A wide variety of general methods, techniques and activities can be applied to this end.

Parents are empowered by means of training. In most communities the training of parents for involvement in the formal education of their children will have to be initiated by the principal.

Badenhorst (1987:116) makes use of methods for parental training. Dekker & Lemmer (1996:177) identified the following methods for training parents: -

- ◆ The organization of guidance of parents as a whole through Workshops, which are designed to explain the academic and social activities of the school to parents and to show them methods for supporting their children's school performance. Workshops must be aimed at addressing the main goals of parent orientation; giving responsible consideration to the conditions set for these; workshops can be successfully utilized in introducing parents to the new subject terminology and orientating them in respect of subject syllabuses.

- ◆ Training by means of standard parents or class parents' committees: Parents may be divided into smaller groups and discuss the lecture. Such groupings are well suited to a video, or film show, followed by a discussion with the educator.
- ◆ Constructive, practical discussion evenings or educational excursions may be arranged to address their needs. Parents should also be prepared for conferences.

If parents are properly empowered, they will gain knowledge and skills and thereafter involve effectively in schools, supporting their children with school's work, and they will at the end, contribute to the effectiveness of school and producing good results.

2.5 SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES' EMPOWERMENT

South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) states that governance of every public school is vested in its governing body, which stands in a position of trust towards the school. Different duties are assigned to the members of the School Governing Body, and these members can only function effectively if they are empowered.

2.5.1 ENHANCEMENT OF CAPACITY OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS

Section 19(1) of South African Schools Act provides introductory training for newly elected governing bodies to enable them to perform their functions and also provides continuing training to promote the effective performance of their functions or to enable them to assume additional functions. For example, the government issued the training programs for School Governing Bodies, and they are trained by the seniors from the Department. By doing this, they empower

School Governing Body members so as to do their work effectively, because without being empowered, they will be unable to perform their duties. This training is continuous because the government issues a training programs for School Governing Body members every year to empower them so as to function effectively.

2.6 THE EFFECT OF EMPOWERMENT TO SCHOOLS

After all the above-stated stakeholders have been empowered, they will manage to do their work to the best of their abilities- because of knowledge and skills gained during empowerment, and this will lead to the effectiveness of the school, because everyone will participate fully in all matters relating to performance of learners and improvement of school. The researcher finds it important to explain the effective school.

2.6.1 EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Visscher (1999:38) indicated that in the educational discussion, the term effective is associated with the quality of education. Authors such as McIntyre & Byrd give a broader meaning to the word by speaking of the general goodness of an educational organization. The concepts that are used as synonyms for effectiveness include efficiency, productivity and survival of an organization (McIntyre & Byrd, 1996:98).

When applied to the educational phenomenon, effectiveness refers to the degree to which educational means or processes result in the attainment of educational goals or outcomes (Harris: 1999:2). Within the schools, the central aim is to judge whether differences in resources, processes and organizational arrangement affect learners' outcomes and if so, in what way.

Harris went on indicating that for most researchers, the concept of effectiveness is linked to the measurement of learners' achievements, which are aggregated for all the learners in the organization. In school effectiveness studies, test/examination results are usually used to gauge and compare learners' performance (Harris, 1999:3).

Visscher (1999:92) showed that effective schools are characterized by the degree of academic emphasis, educator actions in lessons, the availability of incentives and rewards, good conditions of learner, and the extent to which children are able to take responsibility. Harris (1999:10) identified key factors of junior school effectiveness, which are widely acted and reproduced. According to Harris, the characteristics of effective schools are: -

- ◆ Effective leadership of the staff by the head educator
- ◆ The involvement of the deputy-head educator.
- ◆ The involvement of the educators in decision-making.
- ◆ Work-centered environment.
- ◆ Maximum communication between educators and learners.
- ◆ Record keeping.
- ◆ Parental involvement
- ◆ Positive climate

The legacy of the effective schools movement leads inevitably into the territory of school improvement. The importance of this work resides not only in the challenges concerning schools' ability to make a difference, but more importantly, in its implications for school improvement. The central tenet of most recent school effectiveness work is the importance of establishing links between different levels of commitment within the school for improvement

purposes (Harris, 1999:14; Fennimore 1995: 219). These researchers underline the importance of commitment within the organization and emphasize the crucial contribution made by individual departments and educators to whole school performance. The overview of the research concerning departmental effectiveness is provided below: -

2.6.1.1 EFFECTIVE DEPARTMENTS

Fitz-Gibbon (1992:8) reinforced the message that the variation in effectiveness among schools is due to variation among classrooms, or departments within schools. Other researcher further emphasized the importance of exploring differential effectiveness within the school and of adopting a longitudinal model for estimating school, departmental and classroom effects.

The research into effective departments has revealed that there are features or characteristics which effective departments, or faculties consistently display (Fitz-Gibbon 1992:9; Harris, 1999:25). While the complexity and uniqueness of each school context is acknowledged, some generic features of both effective and less effective departments will be outlined.

The research studies have shown that style of management adopted within a school is centrally important in the perceived and realized effectiveness of the whole school. Researchers such as Van der Westhuizen (1996:96), Sergiovanni (1990:23), Owens (1995:125-126) distinguished three management leadership styles, that is, autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire and they are discussed below: -

- ◆ Autocratic leadership style: autocratic leadership style is leader-centred and dictatorial to a variable degree. Leaders of this type want to impose their own will on followers. They take all the decisions and adhere to a fixed and rigid

schedule. According to Van der Westhuizen and Theron (1992:136), this style of leadership will never disappear, since situations specifically requiring this style of leadership will always occur in the school.

- ◆ Democratic leadership style: this leadership style lies between the extremes of laissez-faire and autocratic leadership. Democratic leadership is group-centred, with decentralized authority and decision-making.
- ◆ The laissez-faire leadership style: Under laissez-faire leadership, the organization moves along under its own steam without specific direction from the leader. It relies on a let everyone do their own thing philosophy.

Apart from these three leadership styles, Bush & West-Burnham (1994:69-70) distinguished two approaches to leadership, and it seems as though most, but not all, leadership styles fall under one of these approaches. They are,

- ◆ Transactional leadership that can be seen as a contract between the leader and his followers. The leader gets an agreement from his followers that they will work towards the achievement of organizational goals while the leader agrees to good working conditions or to satisfaction of his followers' needs. It seems as though this leadership is more task-oriented rather than people-oriented.
- ◆ Transformational leadership, in other hand, ensures commitment from the followers. Both leaders and followers want to become the best and are united in pursuit of higher- level goals common to both. Both leaders and followers want to shape the school in a new direction and it seems as though this approach is more people-oriented.

A common place observation in the effective schooling literature suggests that for departments to be really effective, they need to be nested inside schools which are themselves managed effectively.

Research by Harris (1999:26) found that there are aspects of whole school policy which, effective departments can build upon. For example, school which have policies emphasizing the importance of rewarding positive behaviour and which acknowledge a range of achievements that have been shown to be more likely effective.

As in the school effectiveness research, the research into effective departments has shown that there are common features which effective departmental consistently display. These features as identified by Harris (1999:27) are: -

2.6.1.1.1 CLIMATE FOR CHANGE

Effective departments often have a climate for change or a climate for improvement, that is, the department is committed to improvement and is prepared to change existing practices. Developing this climate has been found to be a necessary prerequisite of effective departmental change.

2.6.1.1.2 CLEAR AND SHARED SENSE OF VISION

The departmental vision is shaped by the Head of Department and can influence how teaching and learning is organized within the department. Effective departments have been found to be talking departments that are marked by a constant interchange of professional information at both formal and informal level. Within effective departments meetings tend to be frequent, will all departmental members involved in the shaping of policy.

2.6.1.1.3 THE LEADING PROFESSIONAL

Effective departments tend to be both collegiate and co-operative in practice. This way of working is often a product of the style of management adopted by the Head of Department. The most typical management approach within an effective department is that of the leading professional where the HOD is considered by other departmental members as a model to follow. He/ She is viewed as an expert practitioner and is viewed as a source of good practice by members of the department such as educators.

2.6.1.1.4 MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION

Effective departments tend to be those with the ability to organize key elements of teaching and learning in an optimum way. The departments also tend to be highly organized and generate detailed and collectively agreed schemes of work

2.6.1.1.5 MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES

Effective departments tend to manage their resources to the advantage of the whole department and to the advantage of all learners. For example, one research project (Harris et al; 1995:49) described how a science department decided to buy enough sets of basic equipment so that all learners in that department could undertake the majority of experiments. In short, effective departments desire the enhancement of teaching and learning for all learners and this is often achieved through the optimum allocation of departmental resources.

2.6.1.1.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In an effective department, the mechanisms for monitoring learner progress have been found to be tightly in place. Information about the progress of individual learners tend to be systematically collected through a variety of means and is shared within and across departments. Effective departments keep detailed profiles of learner to chart individual progress. These profiles include detailed assessments of learners' strengths and weaknesses in the subject area and are regularly shared with learners. An effective department is one which 'self-evaluates', placing a high premium on both the process and outcomes of self-evaluation. Research has shown that effective departments know their own strengths and weaknesses and collect systematic evidence of their progress towards set departmental goals.

2.6.1.1.7 ORGANIZATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

At the heart of any effective department is the effective organization of teaching and learning. The research findings reveal that effective departments have certain set protocols in relation to teaching and learning. For example, the opportunities to offer learners regular feedback on their progress, has been shown to be central to the work of an effective departments. Effective departments find content and teaching methods, which match the capacities and interests of their learners.

2.6.1.1.8 ASSESSMENT

Effective departments are characterized by the care and attention, which they pay to the process of assessment. The assessment system of effective departments, have been found to include the following features: -

- ◆ Detailed and up-to-date record keeping, for example, a sophisticated spreadsheet of learner marks.
- ◆ Emphasis upon ensuring marking is consistent with the department.
- ◆ Efforts to try and give the learners a stake in the assessment, for example, to discuss their marks with the educators in order to try and understand the strength and weaknesses of their own efforts.
- ◆ An assessment system that is used as the vehicle for frequent feedback to the learners (Harris, 1999:28)

2.6.1.2 INEFFECTIVE DEPARTMENTS

Once the departmental subjects are not active, the whole school will be inactive. This means that school management team is not dedicated to its work. The school manager is responsible to see to it that Heads of Departments exercise proper control in their respective departments, and they must work together as a team. If the management is ineffective, this spoils the tone and the running of the school. School management becomes successful if there is supervision, which escalates from the school manager to the educators.

The research has pointed out that within the less effective departments, the very fact that there was little professional dialogue, interchange or development around teaching and learning points towards the main reason for under performance.

Harris (1999:29) identified features of ineffective departments, namely: -

- ◆ Poor leadership and management style.
- ◆ Lack of vision for the department and the departmental subjects.
- ◆ Poor communication within the department.
- ◆ Poor organization in terms of assessment, record keeping, homework,, etc.
- ◆ Inadequate system for monitoring and evaluation
- ◆ Isolationist and non-collegial educators
- ◆ Poor educator- educator relationship (personal) and poor educator- educator relationships (personal and professional)
- ◆ Lack of professional learning
- ◆ Insufficient focus upon teaching and learning
- ◆ Variable teaching and lack of interest in pupil learning.

Some of the above features of less effective department are the reverse of the effective characteristics identified in the earlier studies. For example, effective departments were identified as having a strong vision of their subject and subject teaching, which in direct contrast, ineffective departments were those, which had little vision of the subject or subject teaching.

In the next paragraph, the focus will be on effective schooling, which is the results of greater involvement in school management, hence higher commitment.

2.7 EFFECTIVE SCHOOLING

Empowerment is the key to effective schooling, meaning that, effective schooling can only take place through empowerment. If learners are not empowered, they cannot attend school properly and cannot perform their work effectively. The learners must be given direction or strength to enable to implement what they

gained from educators. If the learners are well empowered, they will attend school effectively.

Effective schooling apparently requires empowered professional educators, a professionally appropriate curriculum, and adequate facilities. The studies and proposals for the improvement of schools have also highlighted the importance of the organizational features (Maeroff, 1998:417). Technical movements in teaching and curriculum are necessary, but they are unlikely to be put to work for the benefit of learners unless they are supported by a positive organizational climate, culture or ethos.

Distinctions can be made among organizational context, climate, culture and ethos, but here the emphasis is on an implication for practice that the terms seem to share, namely; to improve the education of learners. Schools must try to nourish certain perceptions, attitudes, and perspectives that all school staff holds in common. It is important not only to help individual staff members become technically more effective, but deliberately to build the collective school wide ethos.

The research indicated that many dimensions of school climate have been proposed, but they have yet to be synthesized into widely accepted theoretical frameworks. Some researchers commonly mentioned variables including the staff's consensus on goals, educators' sense of influence over conditions of work, educators' collegiality, administrative support for experimental approaches to teaching, and the staff's sense of accountability to parents and learners.

Effective schooling is located in the hands of the teaching profession far more than in theory development and empirical research. Ultimately, it is the individual educator who will make the difference to school performance.

Educators can change school improvement and school effectiveness by committing themselves in their daily work, and by doing this, learners will be encouraged by effective classrooms that they are valued. For effective learning to take place, encouragement is essential along with a balance between support and challenge. Similarly, the balance and challenge is also important in teacher development. Educators can be developed by been empowered.

The research by Maeroff (1988:421) provides that participation is an essential requirement if individual educators are to feel that they are part of the change and not being asked merely to implement changes developed by others. Through participation of educators, learners and parents in changing the school management, schooling will be effective.

Oliver (1996:4) maintains that a change is not just about creation of new policies and procedures to implement external mandates. Change is also about the development of personal strategies by individuals to respond to, and seek to influence the impact of structural and cultural change: personal change as much as organizational change.

Visscher (1999:146) indicates that good performance demands a high level of personal commitment. The level of commitment tends to results in a considerable degree of attachment to various aspects of the work. For example, educators are regarded as tutors, therefore, must commit themselves in teaching the learners effectively. Effective teaching and learning achieved through empowerment, lead to effective schooling (Visscher, 1999:146). The principals should motivate educators to do their work effectively and encourage them to commit themselves fully in the work in order to achieve their goals. The commitment and motivation will be discuss below:

2.7.1 COMMITMENT AND MOTIVATION IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The reader here, is introduced into the issues concerning the motivation and commitment of educators. Motivation refers to the desire and willingness of a person to take some action in pursuit of some goal, while commitment refers to involvement and the emotional linkage between individual employee and the organization (Visscher, 1999:135). Presently, it is widely claimed that the teaching profession is demoralized and suffers from diminished job satisfaction and decreased commitment. In this chapter, motivation and commitment are discussed briefly from the perspective of the (inter) national level of education systems. The major part, however, focuses on the organizational level as it deals with commitment within schools.

Visscher (1999:136) continued mentioning that teaching profession currently faces some important issues and problems areas:

1. a sense of profound dissatisfaction within the teaching body
2. the perception of the key role of educators in the pursuit of quality in education and the increased demand for accountability

Successful educational policies are needed to influence these three trends and to tackle these problems of the teaching profession. These trends are discussed below:

2.7.1.1 Dissatisfaction of educators

Educators are expected to have a calling for their profession they have chosen and to be devoted to their jobs. Recently, however, many complaints can be heard from educators about the low standing of the profession, redeployment, high workload and inadequate compensation. According to Visscher (1999:136) educators are less satisfied in their profession and suffer from more stress than people in comparable professions. The magnitude of staff absenteeism is relatively high in education, although it is mainly caused by a small group of most-elderly educators. Vecchio (1991:124) maintains that each year more work time in organizations is lost due to absenteeism.

Visscher continued mentioning that burnout, is the phenomenon of being physically and mentally exhausted, is considered a severe threat to many well-functioning educators. Burnout is an extreme form of stress. Farber (1994:325) defined burnout as a progressive diminution of idealism, energy, purpose and concern as a result of job conditions. Farber noted that in general, burnout is a function of feeling inconsequential- feeling that no matter how hard one works, the payoffs in terms of accomplishment, recognition, or appreciation are not there. This is the main factor that causes demotivation according to Van Ginkel (1985:45), and arises from the main combination of factors, but difficulties with learners are considered to be one of the main sources, or at least the crucial element that sets it off (Huberman, 1993:69)

Visscher distinguished between two groups of factors, which increase the demands on educators and are likely to lead to educator burnout, that is, primary factors and secondary factors, and they are discussed below: -

- ◆ **Primary Factors:** Visscher (1999:137) described primary factors as those factors which have a direct effect on the educator in the classroom and which may result in tension connected with negative emotions. Examples of such factors are lack of materials, inadequate working conditions due to institutional limitations, increased violence within schools and the use of modern information technology in schools. Workload is not only related to the number of working hours, but also to the tasks to be performed in those hours. The amount of time the educator has to spend on teaching is regarded as an indication of the workload; more teaching hours are associated with a higher workload.

- ◆ **Secondary Factors:** The secondary factors are more indirect and many diminish educator motivation, involvement, and the effort he or she is willing to put in the job (Esteve, 1998:132 as in Visscher, 1999:138). There have been, for instance, changes in the role of the educator and of the traditional agents of social integration (family, community): educators are expected to take part in a greater part of primary social integration and also held as responsible for unsuccessful learner careers.

Furthermore, some secondary factors are related to the modernization of teaching job. These factors can be interpreted negatively in the sense of an increased burden, but they can also have a stimulating effect on educators. An example of such factor is the increased decision-making power provided to educators, which implies that educators have to invest more time in school policy-making and in contacts with parents (Scheerens, 1995:48). Educators are compensated for their efforts in various ways. Among them, intrinsic motivation as a result of contact with youth can be regarded as very important (Huberman, & Grounauer, 1993:89). Other forms of compensation are salary, immaterial

rewards, career opportunities and, in principle, public recognition for the teaching job.

Dissatisfaction, according to Visscher (1999:140) can easily emerge when there is no longer a balance between the professional, competence and commitment, the professional demands, and professional recognition in terms of either status or financial compensation or both. Obviously, some distortions in this balance have appeared and educational policies aimed at maintaining the balance cannot neglect any of these aspects if they are going to be successful.

2.7.1.2 The teaching role of educators in the pursuit of quality in education

Visscher (1999:140) states that the second reason for paying attention to educator motivation and commitment is the alleged role of educators in the pursuit of quality in education. Visscher continued mentioning that to improve the quality of education is at the policy agenda of the government. High motivation and strong commitment to work are essential requirements for effective schooling (Sergiovanni, 1990:14). Although the role of educators in and of itself cannot guarantee the quality of education, it is considered the most necessary factor in providing a sound education (Visscher, 1999:140).

Educators' variables that might influence the quality of education from a holistic perspective; are educator motivation and satisfaction. Visscher underline three elements of the teaching process that can be influenced by educators on the one hand and may improve learners' achievement on the other hand, they are, optimizing instructional time, giving learners the opportunity to learn in the sense of correspondence between the content taught and content assessed, and lastly, providing structured teaching characterized by setting clear instructional objectives, frequent review and questions, and feedback and corrections

(Scheerens, 1990:67). Consequently, educators have to stay motivated and committed to play their role in the pursuit of quality adequately.

Effectiveness-enhancing conditions of schooling that are indirectly connected to educators' functioning are according to Visscher (1999:141): a productive school climate and culture, collaboration, communication, and by faculty input in decision-making. Furthermore, both outstanding leadership and the availability and effective utilization of instructional support personnel should support educators adequately.

2.7.1.3 Theories of commitment and motivation

From the above explanation of the issue of educator motivation at the level of a country's education system as a whole, some intrinsic aspects of educator commitment and motivation within school organizations will be focused on. First, some motivation theories will be presented below. Several definitions of the concept of commitment emphasize the linkage between the individual and the organization.

Commitment implies motivation, agreement on goals, loyalty and effort. Referring to Scheerens (1995:56), Huberman & Gouneauer (1998:98), Reyes (1990:23), Visscher (1999:143) state that commitment leads to a (1) strong belief and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and (3) a strong desire to maintain organizational membership. From a perspective of exchange, commitment can be regarded as a function of cognitive evaluation of the costs and beliefs of maintaining organizational membership. From a psychological perspective, people's need for stability leads to an identification with the goals and beliefs of the organization. In this view commitment arises to the extent that

organizational experiences help to attain goals of mastery and support. The sociological perspective posits that commitment is a central process by which the personality system and the social system become articulated. Theories of commitment will be presented below.

2.7.1.3.1 Theories of commitment

This section presents theories on commitment from the sociological and psychological perspectives.

According to Visscher (1999:145) commitment is mainly an investment of the individual in the organization and is associated with individual solidarity to the organization. Visscher distinguishes between three forms of solidarity;

- ◆ The first form, called continuance commitment, is characterized by cognitive, rational commitment. Individuals believe that their interests are sustained by participants in the organization. They know that personal sacrifices are necessary to remain members in the organization and that their investments give them the right to future gains. Commitment arises from the feeling that participating with the organization provides more benefits than leaving the organization.

- ◆ The second form is more relationship oriented and is called cohesion commitment, defined as the individual's effective solidarity with a group. Organizations engage in symbolic activities to develop psychological attachments to the organization. On the other hand, individuals have to renunciate outside relationships that may disrupt group cohesion and harmony.

- ◆ The third form is called control, by which a more evaluative commitment of the individual to the organization is meant. Individuals become attached and obedient to the norms and values of the organization, which on the other side, become an important guide to suitable behaviour. Control commitment involves both mortification and surrender. Mortification as indicated by Visscher (1999:145) refers to the submission of individual identity to social control, whereas surrender refers to an attachment of decision-making prerogatives to a greater power.

A research by Etzioni (1995:71) as in Visscher (1999:146) conceptualizes commitment as a compliance relationship between the organization's application of control and the type of employee involvement within the organization. In contrast to Visscher, Etzioni views commitment more as an exchange relationship than as mere response to behavioural requirements. Commitment or involvement is exhibited in three forms: moral, alienative and calculative. The discussion of these three commitments is as follow:

- ◆ moral commitment refers to a strong positive orientation toward the organization, in other words, to a higher commitment. Individual internalizes the goals, values and norms of an organization and identifies with the authority structure. In organizations in which moral involvement is high, normative power is supposed to be the reward for this high commitment. Normative power can be associated with the use of esteem, prestige, and rewards to obtain employee compliance (Visscher, 1999:146)
- ◆ At the other end of continuum commitment, alienative involvement is found. Alienative involvement represents a negative orientation toward the organization, a very low level of commitment. In this case coercive power, which refers to threats of physical harm or punishment, is used to secure compliance and to obtain commitment. Etzioni (1995:46) recognizes that

individuals are seldom either fully committed to or alienated from their organizations.

- ◆ Calculative involvement is less intense than moral involvement and largely based on an exchange relationship. Individuals become committed to the organization because of the benefits and the rewards they receive from the organization and respond calculatively to those in power. Remunerative power fits to this form of commitment and, refers to control of the allocation of material sources and rewards to secure compliance. Examples of such material means are salaries and wages, fringe benefits, services and commodities.

Summarizing this commitment theory, indication is that some individuals serve within the organization at a higher level of involvement than others. For these, people rewards will do, while others, less involved, may require harder rewards and sanctions of money, power or threat of punishment. Porter and Miles (1974) as in Visscher (1999:146) suggest that what happens to the individual in the work situation is also a centrally motivating force. Porter and Miles approached the concept of commitment the other way around by focusing on the organization's commitment to its employees, guided and displayed by the attitude and the behaviour of the organization's manager. This is based on motivation theories, which play an important role in the human-relations view on management.

2.7.1.3.2 Motivation theories

The concept of motivation is closely related to satisfaction. A widely used conceptualization of job satisfaction is Herzberg's two-factor theory. Herzberg distinguishes between satisfiers, which are factors give rise to job satisfaction and

that are intrinsic to the job, and dissatisfiers, which are contextual factors that cause dissatisfaction, but cannot in and of themselves bring about satisfaction. Intrinsic motivation arises from satisfiers as achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement and possibility of growth. Examples of demotivating dissatisfiers are company policy and administration, supervision, working conditions, personal life, security and salary.

Although Herzberg's distinction has been subject to considerable criticism, several researchers underline the importance of intrinsic job factors as source of job satisfaction of educators (Huberman, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1987; Hill, 1987). Following the well-known need classification scheme of Maslow, Sergiovanni (1987:79) examined the competence motive- the desire for mastery over one's environment. Sergiovanni concluded that the need to be competent is intrinsic and is aroused when individuals are faced with new challenges rather than in response to external matters such as increased pay or directives.

Visscher (1999:144) indicated that the effort people put into their work will depend on their expectations of the results that are likely to occur, the values they place on the expected rewards associated with the results and the probability that such rewards will actually be received if the work is done. Therefore, results or rewards should be perceived as being desirable, individuals need to know what needs to be done to obtain the outcomes and need to be confident in their own ability to perform adequately.

Empowerment can only contribute to successful management if it is managed, meaning that empowerment should be managed hierarchically. The following is the discussion on managing empowerment.

2.8 MANAGING EMPOWERMENT

Management is the collective body of individuals who are employed to oversee and to operate the day- to- day affairs of a school district within the policies and directives of a board of education. For management to be successful, all stakeholders must be empowered, and the question that can be raised here is: Who will empower the stakeholders?

Van der Westhuizen (1991:273) maintains that effective management implies the ability to get things done by people. For this reason an ideal school manager is constantly aware of the fact that educational and teaching task of his school can only be carried out with continued, dedicated co-operation on the part of his entire staff corps (educators and non-teaching staff alike).

The government provides that educators acquire knowledge and skills in order to perform their work effectively, and they can do this when empowered. Here it is the responsibility for the government to empower educators. Van der Westhuizen (1991:276) also indicated that many in-service training opportunities are being provided throughout the country for school managers, Heads of Departments, subject educators and interested groups such as pre-primary staff and many others. This may take the form of the refresher courses, work seminars, symposia. The presenters of these wide-ranging courses are trained academics and they must also empower others and therefore, regarded as escalation of knowledge.

The government should send the authorities from the Department to empower district managers who in turn will empower school managers. The school managers are responsible for the improvement of the schools in terms of learners' performance; school culture, school climate, and they can only manage this if

they are empowered. The school managers after been empowered, must do the same by empowering the School Management Team (SMT) because they cannot manage the schools without educators' help, and School Management Team, must implement what they have been taught, and then develop educators.

Herman & Herman (1993:30) say that empowering implies giving additional and non-traditional decision-making power to individuals or groups who previously were not given the authority to make those decisions. Empowering educators and sharing decision-making means anything more than new management techniques for greater control and efficiency. This shows that all stakeholders must be involved in decision-making after been empowered, and once they all participate in decision- making, the school management will be successful.

2.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a detailed explanation has been given of the empowerment and how it features in education. It has become important to discuss effective schooling and successful supervisory school management as they are at the core of this discussion. The research findings concerning school improvement similarly point towards the importance of enhancing the performance at different levels within organization in order to achieve greater effectiveness. The researcher outlined that empowerment is the key to effective schooling and successful supervisory school management.

CHAPTER 3

THE RESEARCH DESIGN OF THE QUALITATIVE INVESTIGATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter attention will be given to the stages of designing research method prior to data collection. A qualitative method was employed, reasons for using this method were stated (chapter 1) and what the researcher intended to achieve by using such research method. Following is the description of the qualitative research and its justification in this research.

3.2 METHOD OF RESEARCH

This section looks at the methodology used to investigate this research project. Research methods are the ways the researcher collects and analyzes data. Methods were developed for acquiring knowledge by reliable and valid procedures. Data collection may be done with measurement techniques, extensive interviews and observation, or a collection of documents. De Vos (1998:240) provides that methodology refers to the researchers perception of how they can find out about reality or the world. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:55) argued that methodology refers to a design whereby the researcher selects data collection and analysis procedures to investigate a specific research problem.

In this research, the researcher intends to use a focus group interview to obtain information about perceptions and attitudes of educators, learners and school managers concerning learners' performance especially to those schools which continuously obtained low pass rate (low-performing schools) and to compare the management styles of the school managers in two groups (high performing

and low performing schools) particularly to extend of delegation by the school managers educators and learners. The reason for opting for this research technique (focus group interview) amongst others, is that it closes the gap between the interview's initial perception of the topic and after reports thereof. More about this technique will be discussed as the study progresses. Following is a detailed description of qualitative method and why it was chosen.

3.2.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND WHY WAS IT CHOSEN

Qualitative research is the interpretation or construction of the lived experiences of subjects (De Vos, 1998:241). Lemmer as in De Vos argues that qualitative research has its aim, the understanding of the life world of the individuals or groups studied from their own frame of reference (Lemmer, 1992:292).

It should be clear that various definitions of qualitative research may apply, but both the above-mentioned authors emphasize that qualitative research tries to describe and understand how the interviewee (subject) experiences his or her life world as he or she sees it. Qualitative research tries to understand the meanings held by the person or group being studied. Furthermore, the interviewee (subject) can describe spontaneously what he or she feels or does, and what he or she thinks about the theme. Hughes (1976:44) further argues that qualitative research paradigm in its broadest sense, refers to research that elicits participant's account and meaning, experience or perceptions. It also produces descriptive data in the participant's own written or spoken words. It thus involves identifying the participant's beliefs and values that underlie the phenomena (De Vos, 1998:248).

Hughes (1976:45) argues that, like the quantitative paradigm, the qualitative paradigm is more than a set of data-gathering methods. It is a way of

approaching the empirical world. Qualitative researcher is concerned with understanding (*verstehen*) rather than explanation (De Vos, 1998:243), in contrast with quantitative research where phenomena are controlled. It is from this qualitative research that the subject (interviewee) has a possibility of replying back to the interviewer and the interviewee can register and interpret what is said and how it is said. It is also from the qualitative research that the researcher interacts with what is being studied and it is from this discussion that the researcher intends looking into why this method was chosen.

3.2.2 IMPORTANCE OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN THIS STUDY.

The qualitative research was used, because this project is searching for creativity. The project requires participants to describe their situations from their own points of view, that is how they understand it. The aim is to obtain as many different descriptions from different settings of the interviewer's life-world as possible.

Qualitative research became important in this study. Merriam (1988:19-20) in Cresswell (1994:144-145) identified six assumptions regarding qualitative research. These assumptions are as follows:

- ◆ Qualitative researchers are concerned primarily with process, rather than outcomes or products: this assumption makes the qualitative method particularly relevant because this research assumes the process of development of educators, learners and parents to schools.
- ◆ Qualitative research is descriptive in that the researcher is interested in the process, meaning and understanding gained through words or pictures. It

enables the researcher to obtain access to hidden data, that is, information from actors which is both unexpected and unintended (Lemmer, 1992: 293).

- ◆ Qualitative researchers are interested in meaning, that is how people make sense of their lives, experiences and structures of the world. This confirms the relevance of qualitative method in this research. This brought to establish the meaning of empowerment to the school community.
- ◆ Qualitative research is interpretative. As such, the biases, values and judgement of the researchers become stated especially in the research report. Such openness is considered to be useful and positive (Appendix A:147)
- ◆ Qualitative research involves fieldwork. The researcher physically goes to the people, setting, site or institution to observe or record behaviour in its natural setting.
- ◆ The process of qualitative research is inductive in that the researcher builds obstructions, concepts, hypotheses, and theories from details. The qualitative research is appropriate because the researcher did not have a theory that he wanted to prove or disapprove but from different interviews he make abstractions and formed a shared sense of reality.

Now that a clear exposition has been given as to why qualitative research is important in this project, a focus group interview used as a research technique will now be discussed hereunder.

3.3 WHAT IS FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Three concepts of this research instrument need to be explained. These concepts are focus, group and interview. A group can be defined as a number of individuals between whom a distinguishable pattern of interaction exists (Steyn, & Uys, 1988: 22) in De Vos (1993: 314).

Interview signifies the presence of a trained moderator who could skillfully facilitate the discussion that takes place between all the members in the group to elicit information on the desired topic.

Focus implies that the discussion that takes place in the group will be limited to the specific theme under investigation (Steward & Shamdasani, 1990:10).

According to Topor (1997:2), a focus group interview is a representative sample of a target audience. In other words, a focus group is six, eight, ten or twelve people, carefully selected, who represent a specific target audience. Krueger in (Barnard & Venter, 1996:57) described focus groups as a special type of groups in terms of purpose, size, composition and procedures. As in Topor, Krueger defines a focus group as being composed of six to twelve participants who are unfamiliar to each other, share a common denominator, for instance, a common background.

De Vos (1998:314) described the focus group interview as a purposive discussion of a specific topic or related topics taking place between eight to ten individuals with a similar background and common interests. The group's interaction will consist of verbal and non-verbal communication and an inter-play of perceptions and opinions that will stimulate discussion without necessarily modifying or changing the ideas and opinions of participating individuals.

The group interview is facilitated by a trained moderator who acts as a data collection instrument by creating an atmosphere in which each group member will feel free to share his or her own knowledge, attitudes and past experiences of a topic under discussion. The aim of focus group interviewing is never to reach consensus on matters being discussed, but to elicit a range of opinions and new views on the subject. This interview eventually provides a forum for opinion gathering.

The focus group interview is thus conducted as an open conversation on a specific topic in which each participant may make comments, ask questions of their participants, or respond to comments by others, including the Moderator (Ferreira & Puth, 1988:167). The focus group interview enables the researcher to develop inductively, that is, from the bottom up rather than from the top down, concepts, generalizations and theories that are grounded in or reflect to intimate knowledge of the people participating in the focus group interview.

3.4 WHY FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW AS A RESEARCH TECHNIQUE

For the purpose of this research project, the aim of the focus group interview is mainly to gain insight into this research area, that is, empowerment as the key to both successful supervisory school management and effective schooling and also, to stimulate and build a strong School Management with leadership skills. The focus group interview acquaints the researcher with the language that his /her populations use to describe their experiences and also acquaint the researcher with the research population's cultural values and styles of thinking and communicating about the research topic (De Vos, 1998:3).

Now that the necessity of the focus group interview in this research project has clearly been epitomized, the focus will be on the advantages and disadvantages of the focus group interview.

3.5 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Focus group interviews have both advantages and disadvantages, which will be discussed below.

3.5.1 THE ADVANTAGES OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Focus group interviews are cheaper to conduct and can be completed in a short time. This interview is also exploratory in the sense that participants are able to express their concerns about a particular issue, that is, it closes the gap between the interviewee's initial perception of a topic and after reports thereof (Byers & Wilcox, 1991:64). Focus group interview allows the researcher to probe, creating flexibility that is so important for exploring unanticipated issues. Indeed, flexibility is impossible within the structured design of quantitative methods, such as social surveys (De Vos, 1998:11). Focus group interviews are not rigid in the sense that they create an open, relaxing environment whereby the interviewees can say anything they want to say without interruptions or limitations. The researcher, on the other hand, is able to ask questions whenever necessary.

The most important advantage of the focus group interview is that the researcher is confronted with the meanings and assumptions that the individual or group holds on its own life world. This can be substantiated by Brotherson (1994:57) when he explains that focus group interview allows for open, reflexive and

democratic about a phenomenon. The focus group interview offers rich contextual data for understanding the depth and dynamics of phenomena in their particular contexts. Therefore, Paton as quoted by Brotherson (1994:57) argues that focus group interview can lead to understanding attitudes, behaviours and contents from many points of view. In other words, to gain insight that would otherwise be less attainable. A focus group interview can also provide speedy results. They have an advantage over other data gathering methods in that they can be conducted their results analyzed and report written in a very short time (De Vos, 1998:11). The main disadvantages of the focus group interview will be examined.

3.5.2 THE DISADVANTAGES OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Recruiting the right people to participate in the focus group interview is a difficult challenge. Researchers should be able to get those people who are best able to discuss the topic at hand or, to put differently, the researcher should be able to match the right people who have the ability to discuss the given topic. This becomes a difficult in that, should the researcher fail to match his or her group participants, for example, having to interview learners and educators in the same group at the same time that would create a scenario whereby one of the members (learner) is unable to express his or her view in the presence of his or her educator(s). On the other hand, the educator may influence the learner to say what he or she doesn't agree with, and that could cripple the research findings.

Again, focus groups are often difficult to assemble, because the participants have travel or go to a set place at stipulated time, to share their views with others for a few hours, and sometimes there is a possibility that some participants may not be present on the day of the interview and that may result in the postponement of the interview.

Having examined both the advantages and disadvantages of focus group interview, it becomes apparent that focus group interview is relevant for this research study in the sense that it is more democratic, that is, participants can freely speak their minds, unlike in a questionnaire, whereby the interviewee can be asked to answer with a yes or no. Haralambos (1990:733) provides that, in a questionnaire, it cannot be assumed that different answers to the same questionnaire, researchers assume that they know what is not requested, they cannot answer questions, which are not asked. For this reason, it is difficult to develop hypothesis during the course of the research and researchers are limited to testing those theories, which they have already thought of.

With the focus group interview, it does exactly what the name implies-focus. Focus groups have focuses and clear agendas. In fact, the topics of discussion in a focus group interview are carefully predetermined and sequenced in an understandable and logical way. As such, they facilitate the natural, spontaneous discussion of events or experiences by the participants. De Vos (1998:32) argued that participants in focus group interviews need not reach consensus, instead, emphasis is placed on findings out about the participants' experiences and feelings about the specific aspect of social reality, such as an event, product or service. Now that the disadvantages and advantages of the focus group interview have been outlined, the process of focus group interview is discussed below.

3.6 THE PROCESS OF FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWING

As with unstructured interviews conducted with individuals, the focus group interview could be divided into specific phases. The most important steps and decisions will therefore be described on the basis of the following phases;

3.6.1 PLANNING THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

In addition to the decision on what is to be studied, the following appears to be the most important decisions: -

3.6.1.1 IDENTIFY SELECTION CRITERIA AND SELECT AND RECRUIT THE PARTICIPANTS

According to LeCompte and Preissle (1993:56) all qualitative research use both selection processes and sampling. LeCompte and Preissle described selection as a process that involves defining what kinds of people and how many of them can be studied, as well as when, where and under which circumstances they will be studied. De Vos (1998:4) argues that it is important when using focus group interview to make the right selection or recruitment of participants, which is the most overlooked and underestimated aspect of the focus group interview. Krueger as in De Vos, contends that the research must asked questions such as; What do I want to know? Who will be able to provide the information? Who is the information for? How will I get hold of the participants? (De Vos, 1998:4)

In this research project, the researcher made sure that the right participants were selected. The school managers and educators from the two groups of schools, that is, low performing and high performing schools were interviewed. In order to ensure a naturalistic setting required by qualitative research, interviews were conducted at schools during school hours (De Vos, 1998:19)

In line with the qualitative research paradigm, it is in this research project that the research allowed the topic under discussion to continue until it was saturated. This point is discussed further by Glasser and Strauss, when they state that ideally, a focus group that discuss a specific topic should continue to discuss that topic until data reach saturation point and no new issues or categories emerge. However, because of practical problems such as a limited time span, it is not always possible to continue until all the relevant data have been generated (Glasser & Strauss, 1997:11)

3.6.1.2 THE SIZE OF A FOCUS GROUPS

In most cases, the size of a focus group ranges from six to twelve participants. This appears that the ideal size is between six and nine participants (Barnard & Venter, 1997:57). Groups with more than twelve members limit each participant's opportunity to share experiences. Groups with four to six participants are popular because smaller groups are easier to recruit and host. In this research project, the researcher made use of four to six participants merely because people who promised to participate in an interview pulled out on the last minute. Nevertheless, it becomes easier to steer the interview in the right direction when the group is small.

3.6.1.3 ENSURING THAT PEOPLE WILL ATTEND

Focus group interviews are time consuming, particularly for participants who have worked all day. Therefore, incentives such as the provision of snacks, free transportation and payment for participation are typically used (De Vos, 1998:8). The researcher made sure that the above points were satisfied. On the contrary, instead of the researcher paying for transportation, the researcher made sure that

the venue was to everybody's convenience,, that the participants concerned would be able to walk for a short distance to the venue of the interview. Also, to ensure that people will attend, the researcher wrote letters to all targeted schools requesting permission from the school managers to meet with them (school managers) and educators to explain the importance of this project, how it could benefit the researcher academically, and how the research could benefit their schools. The participants in this interview, encountered no transport problems because the researcher visited the targeted schools and the interview was held during working hours (De Vos, 1998:19)

After the permission was granted, the researcher met with individual participants to confirm that they would attend the interview, and briefed them on what the interview was all about. In this regard, Krueger says that the invitation should stress that the potential participants have special experiences or insights that would be of value in this study (Krueger, 1994:25)

3.6.1.4 SELECTING THE INTERVIEW LOCATION

Steward & Shamdasani argue that focus group interviews can be successfully conducted in a variety of settings, but that it is always crucial to choose a location that is not difficult to find and is situated in an area that is well travelled or rather perceived as attractive. In other words, the location should be free from outside distractions, background music or ventilation systems (Steward & Shamdasani, 1990:56-57).

In this project, the researcher provided the location chosen by the participants. Because the interview was conducted during the school hours, they chose one of the offices, and the researcher agreed on this venue because it was free from all the distractions discussed above.

3.6.1.5 DESIGNING THE INTERVIEW GUIDE

The basic idea of the interview guide is to set down specific issues for the group to discuss or to set the agenda. When constructing the interview guide, close attention should be paid to the ordering of the questions. The questions should be ordered from the more general to the more specific (Steward & Shamdasani, 1990:52).

In this case, the researcher arranged the interview questions prior the interview process. The researcher made sure that the questions asked would satisfy or answer the research problem. Simple, specific, clear questions were arranged and there was also room for probing in case of an unclear answers emerge or questions not understood clearly (De Vos, 1998: 6).

3.7 CONDUCTING THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Nine important steps in conducting the focus group interview are discussed below:

3.7.1 PURPOSEFUL SMALL TALK

The moderator should attempt to create an atmosphere of trust, friendliness and openness from the moment the participants arrive for a focus group interview, because purposeful small talk facilitates a warm and friendly environment and this puts participants at ease.

3.7.2 PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE GROUP

The participants should be asked to sit around the table to ensure maximum opportunity for eye contact with the moderator as well as other participants.

3.7.3 HANDLING UNWANTED PARTICIPANTS

People who are not invited to be interviewed, may not be allowed in the interview session because they may affect the interview negatively. The researcher may convince the participants to be patient until the interview is over. In this research project, the researcher never experienced such problems.

3.7.4 THE BEGINNING OF THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Brotherson (1994:112) indicated that the beginning of an interview sets the tone and the agenda for the rest of the procedure. Therefore it is crucial that the moderator creates a thoughtful, permissive and friendly atmosphere. The goal is to direct the focus group with limited intervention. De Vos (1998:321) on the other hand, argued that in order to regulate the interaction of participants in a non- directive way, the moderator must clearly set the goal and objects of the interview as well as ground rules for participation during his or her introduction. Brotherson also notes that it becomes imperative that participants are to be made aware that their opinions count and that they are valued.

At the beginning of the focus group interview, the moderator will be regarded as the role model and his behaviour will determine the group norm. Steward & Shamdasani (1990:94) pointed out that securing participation is particularly important at the beginning of the focus group, because this will reassure the

hesitant respondent and provide a basis for dealing with overtly dominant members of the group.

Brotherson (1994:115) maintains that the most aspects when beginning the focus group interview is insuring confidentiality right from the outside, because confidentiality will or may enhance honesty during group interview. De Vos (1998:22) says that a common practice in overseas countries is to have every participator, the moderator and the researcher sign a statement of confidentiality nevertheless, such an agreement, as with all confidentiality agreements in research is a matter of honour rather than law. Use of this sort of document, however, does allow the participant an opportunity to reflect on issues of confidentiality. If the participant believes he will be unable to keep information confidential, this is the opportunity to withdraw. Similarly, if the participant is fearful about confidentiality, he or she can withdraw from the group.

3.7.5 TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED BY THE MODERATOR

To ensure participation by each and every member, the moderator should encourage all participants to speak and asking follow-up questions or probing. The moderator must also help by asking more questions or probing. Another important tactics is the five-second pause, which entails the moderator refrain from responding for about five second after a participant has made a comment. In this way the participant is unobtrusively prompted to give more information (Krueger, 1994:45).

3.7.6 MANAGING PROBLEMS DURING GROUP INTERVIEW

During a focus group interview, a number of problems can arise. De Vos (1998:23) identifies the following problems: -

- ◆ Participants sometimes spill tea or coffee, fall ill, receive emergency telephone calls.
- ◆ Because focus group interview quickly generate a large range of views or ideas, it is quite difficult to manage the time allocated to group interview.
- ◆ Although focus group bring a variety of people with differing socio-demographic characteristics together, individual characteristics often pose awkward problems to the moderator.

Although the moderator cannot anticipate all problems during the interview, he must be prepared for the unexpected, and when confronted with such problem, he must swiftly and firmly guide the group back to its task.

3.7.7 GROUP DYNAMICS

The focus group interview does not consist only of individuals lumped together in a group, it consists of different facets of people shaped by intra-and interpersonal, and environmental factors, for example, it could be predicted that the physically attractive person with an extrovert personality would communicate more easily in a group situation than a physically disabled person with an introvert personality (De Vos, 1998:8). This is to say that differences in groups for example with regard to education, economic status, religion can influence participation by the individual, group cohesiveness. The more homogeneous or compatible a group is, the easier it will be for the moderator to

make the group dynamic work in service of the goal and objects of the research (Steward & Shamdasani, 1990:41).

3.7.8 MODERATOR ROLES AND INTERVIEW STYLES

Steward & Shamdasani (1990:89) pointed out that different styles of interview found in focus group interview vary according to personality differences among moderators, different moderator roles, different types of groups and different research aims, but one important dimension is the degree of direction emanating from the moderator. The second important dimension along which interview styles may vary is the role of the moderator as perceived by him. In some cases the moderator takes an objective, distanced stance with respect to the groups, and in other cases you may facilitate discussion by offering personal and anecdotes and examples. Finally, interview style may vary with respect to the use of discussion aids (De Vos, 1998:9). Moderators may for example, with or without the aid of pictures or cartoons, ask participants to tell a story about a particular incident related to the topic of the research.

3.7.9 CONCLUDING THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

The researcher must after the interview, thanked the participants for having sacrificed their time to attend the interview. Krueger (1994:68) pointed out that it is advisable to have the main points summarized and verify the information with the participants. The summary typically lasts a few minutes, after which comments are invited. The moderator should thank the group for participating in the interview and provides them with cash if promised and also wishes them a safe journey home (De Vos, 1998:10).

3.8 INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

QUESTIONS GUIDING THE INTERVIEW

Different groups of stakeholders (school managers, educators) from the two groups of schools were asked more or less the same questions.

GROUP ONE (HIGH PASS RATE SCHOOLS)

1. THE SCHOOL MANAGER GROUP

To this group three questions were asked:-

- 1.1 How do you view interaction between educators and learners?
- 1.2 To what extent is the SGB involved in your school?
- 1.3 How do you develop your educators?

2. THE EDUCATOR GROUP

Nine questions were put to this group.

- 2.1 How do you relate to your principal
- 2.2 What do you think are the principal's strengths and weaknesses?
- 2.3 What leadership styles do you believe your principal demonstrates?
- 2.4 Are relevant records kept in your school for educators and learners?
- 2.5 How is the perception and attitude of other educators with the staff?
- 2.6 Does your principal involve your staff in decision-making?
- 2.7 According to the analysis of grade 12 results, your school is continuously obtained high pass rates. How do you manage this?
- 2.8 What are the attitudes of parents/learners towards discipline?
- 2.9 Do you find the involvement of your Deputy principal supportive?

GPOUP TWO (LOW PASS RATE SCHOOLS)

1. THE PRINCIPAL GROUP

Five questions were asked to this group.

- 1.1 How do you view interaction between educators and learners.
- 1.2 To what extend is the SGB involved in your school?
- 1.3 Is there commitment between educators and learners/
- 1.4 What do you think are the causes of low pass rate?
- 1.5 How do you empower your staff?

2. EDUCATOR GROUP

To this group eight questions were asked.

- 2.1 How do you relate to your principal
- 2.2 What do you think are principal's strengths and weaknesses?
- 2.3 What leadership styles do you believe your principal demonstrates?
- 2.4 Are relevant records kept in your school for educators and learners?
- 2.5 How is the perception and attitude of other educators within the staff?
- 2.6 According to analysis of grade 12 results, your school continuously obtain low pass rate. What do you think are the causes?
- 2.7 What are the attitudes of parents/learners towards discipline?
- 2.8 How do you empower learners?

3.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher explained the research method used, its importance and steps of conducting the focus group interview. The next chapter is the presentation of the findings. The findings are presented according to responses to major questions of research mentioned in the interview protocol.

CHAPTER 4

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS AND ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher will look into the research data and the discussion outline of the research project of the data collected from the focus group interview. The research comprises four groups of focus group interview; two groups from the low-performing schools and two groups from the high-performing schools. Only educators and principals were interviewed. Following is the interview transcripts followed by discussion outline.

4.2 GROUP ONE (HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOLS)

4.2.1 THE PRINCIPAL GROUP

4.2.1.1 How do you view interaction between educators and learners?

Mrs Logan: The interaction is very positive and yields good results. The interaction also facilitates learning and relationship. Through the interaction, the school is able to accomplish its vision.

Mr Modise: I have realized that educators find it difficult to have learners do their work especially those who are not firm with them. There is declining exercise of authority and supervision of educators upon the learners. However, learners especially grade 12 learners, often co-operate with educators towards the end of the year and this yields good results

4.2.1.2 To what extent is the School Governing Body involved in your school?

Mr Bauwer: The School Governing Body is always only active immediately upon its election, but the involvement fades away in the course of time. Though the School Governing Body operates ineffectively, it supports the school towards progress.

Mrs Fredericks: The School Governing Body is involved in the governance of the school. The SGB is the highest decision-making body. The constitution of the School Governing Body is the guideline on which most school policies are based.

4.2.1.3 How do you develop your staff?

Mr Modise: Staff-development is ongoing. The development programmes are in accordance with the needs. The development is conducted through formal and informal meetings, workshops and seminars. The development takes place at national, provincial, district, circuit and school level.

4.2.2 THE EDUCATOR GROUP

4.2.2.1 How do you relate to your principal?

Daisy: I can say, a professional relationship that is businesslike and purposeful prevails. The principal in our school is friendly but not too friendly to the staff that I regard as the best characteristic of leadership quality. The organization on the other hand functions as a family with very clear and limited set of rules that brings security and certainty of behaviour. We work as a team at school, respect each other's culture and share ideas together.

David: In our case, there are no ill-feelings or negative attitudes among us. The relationship is good and healthy with the principal. No problems encountered when communicating with the principal, but at times, according to him, he is never on the wrong side. The principal always want to be in the right road and this means that he does not want to be criticized.

4.2.2.2 What do you think are the principal's strengths and weaknesses?

Daisy: The principal always encourages his staff to co-operate and function as a group for the sake of achieving a specific group objective. For example, he initiates activities, keeps the staff on track, holds up a work plan and most importantly, he makes information available. Our principal is good in planning, motivating, organizing and counseling. He always encourages his staff members to develop themselves by attending workshops, seminars and upgrading their qualifications through correspondence with other universities. The principal's weakness is that he often functions autocratically and at times fast to react. When under stress, loses rationality.

David: Well, our principal is very concerned about the school and puts a lot of extra time into school involvement. The principal tries her best to obtain discipline in the school that is the school's advantage, but she is positively influential and decisive. Her weakness is that in many instances she never consult stakeholders in some major decisions and the principal does not listen to any suggestions from the staff members.

Betty: In addition to that, our principal on the other hand, is good at generating and fostering a good working atmosphere and good working relationship. When he wants to get something done, he does take much notice of rules and

procedures. The principal is good in maintaining discipline among staff members and learners. In the case of any problems or conflict in the school, the principal come up with solutions. He does not take sides, instead he applies the rule of audi alteram partem which means to hear the other side and those who found guilty, are charged following the procedures stipulated in the educational law. At the end, everyone becomes satisfied about how the conflict is handled. The only weakness the principal has is that he is too moody.

4.2.2.3 What leadership styles do you believe your principal demonstrates?

The purpose of this question is to compare the management styles applied by principals in schools. Van der Westhuizen (1996:96) maintains that educational leaders differ, so do the leadership styles.

Betty: What I can say is that our principal prefers sharing, planning and responsibility. He also prefers to guide staff rather than telling them what to do. The principal shares as much information as he can with educators and learners.

Daisy: Well, the ability to maintain discipline is often a prerequisite for a manager being accepted by his staff. Unquestioningly, the principal leads by examples and the democratic ruler who co-plan with his staff and encourages group decisions, hence being supportive. He believes in work of higher quality and a friendly interpersonal relationship. The principal prefers high commitment from both the educators and the learners and this will enable the educators and learners to improve the quality education and learning.

David: I think the principal leads by example and she does her work willingly and spontaneously. She is also a motivator and follows up progress of educators.

Daisy: On addition to what I have said earlier, the principal is flexible and able to exercise leadership skills. He involves all members of the group in determining objectives, planning and executing activities. The principal shares responsibilities and also involving other stakeholders in decision-making. We are treated with respect. Our principal follows an open door policy and listens to the opinions and this will at the end create a relaxed atmosphere and gives rise to a positive group spirit.

4.2.2.4 Are relevant records kept in your school for educators and learners?

Mary: Yes, all relevant records for educators and learners are kept at all times. For instance, in a case of misconduct there is a lock book in which the principal states in black and white the kind of misconduct and steps taken on that regard. Besides, records of outstanding performances are also kept.

4.2.2.5 How is the perception and attitudes of other educators within the staff?

Daisy: Here, I can say that, every person is unique and on that score it is normal that educators can perceive things differently. The differences in the staff do not destroy the team- work. Educators who might happen to be out of order are shown the right way because the aim is to maintain group ties and favourable interpersonal feelings.

Mary: The perception and attitudes is good, though at times the principal is perceived to be very autocratic, and sometimes lacks flexibility. Senior educators are strongly motivated to get the best out of learners, but, most of young educators are not motivated at all, they only work for their monthly salary.

David: In my opinion, educators at our school do not automatically work together in harmony with one another. They divided themselves into two groups of which the principal does not intervene. Enthusiastic co-operation needs to be consciously cultivated. We strive to promote healthy relationships.

4.2.2.6 Does your principal involve you (staff) in decision-making?

For effective schooling and successful management to take place, stakeholders must be involved in decision-making. The purpose of asking this question is to see the extent of involvement of stakeholders in decision-making. Van der Westhuizen (1996:40) states that decision-making is the means by which the administrator plan, organize, lead and control.

Daisy: Yes, he does because the actualization of leadership is a social interaction in which give and take occurs. However, the principal at the end of the day is the dead lock mechanism. This implies that he decides which suggestions to be followed, but I wouldn't say he is autocratic.

David: In our case, the principal does not involve us in decision-making. She decides and we must abide whether we agree or disagree. She is only interested in results. Educators have no say in decision-making, only certain tasks are delegated to the staff. The communication takes place in one direction since the principal gives instructions while educators are required to execute assignments. The principal is extremely task-oriented but takes fully responsibility for the exercise of her authority. She does not share her knowledge with other staff members; she makes all decisions and is the major source of influence in the group's activities. The principal allows no initiative or judgment on the part of his subordinates.

Betty: Absolutely yes, everybody is free to express his or her opinions within the working relationships. Opportunities are there to participate in decision-making.

4.2.2.7 According to the analysis of the grade 12 results, the school has continuously obtained high pass rates. How do you manage this?

Daisy: Well, this is achieved through learners' and educators' commitment in their school's work. When educators prepare their lessons thoroughly and are also attractive in their presentation, learners are encouraged to study very hard. Dialogic teaching and co-operative learning are contributory factors in high pass rate. If there is no commitment in school's work, the learners will perform badly, therefore, in our school, the work of both educators and learners are controlled on weekly basis. The policies for each and every subject are drawn and educators must stick to these policies. This enables the educators to become fully committed with their work, not necessarily that they work for salary, but to prepare learners for tomorrow. Learners also, work hard to produce good results and those who performed better than others are rewarded with merit certificate.

4.2.2.8 What are the attitudes of parents/ learners towards discipline of the school?

Mary: I think discipline as an interpersonal concept refers to the set of rules and norms that determine acceptable behaviour. Both parents and learners are quite content with the rules and regulations of the school because discipline is equated with teaching competence. Once the school is disciplined, effective teaching is more likely to take place. The attitude of both parents and learners is very positive towards school discipline.

David: What I can say is that parents are always encouraged to participate actively in the school- thus being responsible for their children's behaviour. As compared to schools in town, the township parents are not actively involved with school activities.

4.2.2.9 Do you find the involvement of your Deputy- principal supportive?

Daisy: Absolutely yes, because when the principal is not present, the deputy-principal sees to it that the school runs smoothly. In addition to that, the deputy gives orders, hence authority and discipline are conditions for effective teaching and learning.

Betty: Yes of cause, the deputy- principal shares responsibilities of organizing and conducting extra-mural activities with educators. The deputy ensures that departmental circulars and other information received which affect members of the staff are brought to their notice. He always has ideas that promote progress and smooth running of the school.

4.3 GROUP TWO (LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS)

4.3.1 THE PRINCIPAL GROUP

4.3.1.1 How do you view interaction between educators and learners?

Mrs Peacock: Interaction between educators and learners is a sound one in that it is conducive for teaching and learning. Serious business is meant in the classroom whilst in informal situation learners confide to the educators and solicit help in personal capacities.

Mr Davids: To my observation, the interaction between the two groups viz, educators and learners is healthy. Learners are able to communicate freely, and this will result in good performance because communication in classroom about the subject matter necessitates the learner to know the content of the subject.

4.3.1.2 To what extent is the School Governing Body involved in your school?

Mr Pollock: In this regard, most of the School Governing Body members are working and they are unable to go on an extra mile for the school, especially the fund-raising projects. Anyhow, the members of school governing body contribute a lot in the development of the school discipline.

Mrs Peacock: The involvement of the School Governing Body is satisfactory. All decisions taken include the school governing body. Regular meetings are held to keep contact and the school governing body is involved in the running of the school. However, some members are not actively involved.

4.3.1.3 Is there commitment between educators and learners?

High performance is achieved through educators' and learners' commitment in the school's work. The question is asked to look whether there is commitment at schools or not. Sergiovanni (1990:14) indicated that motivation and strong commitment are essential requirement for effective schooling

Mrs Peacock: In this case, commitment is still lacking from certain educators as well as learners. Some educators display their commitment by going an extra mile while others only do the minimum. The same applies to learners.

Mr Pollock: Well, educators and learners are trying to work hard but, they still need motivation and to be monitored, because if you do not control their work, they work at their own pace of which at the end, the syllabus will be incomplete.

4.3.1.4 What do you think are the causes of low pass rate?

Mr Davids: I think that is because learners are not motivated at home, they do not even study because most of them do not stay with their parents. Another thing that can cause low pass rate in schools is poverty and lack of facilities. Some of the learners from the poor families do not perform better as they do not get support from their parents. Overcrowding in classes is also a contributory factor.

Mrs Peacock: The low pass rate can be contributed by the wrong grading of subjects, lack of commitment from both educator and learners. Learners are also lazy, they lack study skills and this affect the pass rate in schools.

4.3.1.5 How do you empower your educators?

The purpose of this question is to see whether educators are empowered at schools by principals. In White Paper 1 (1995:30), it is indicated that educators must undergo workshops to acquire certain skills and knowledge to do what is expected of them.

Mr Davids: Here, educators are empowered by managing their own classrooms and learners. Educators are also appointed to senior posts. Some of them act as Heads of Department in various subjects, and also encouraged to attend workshops. Apart from that, educators are motivated to upgrade their qualifications by self-study.

Mr Pollock: In this point, educators are empowered by allowing them to make suggestions towards the development of schools, this will make every educator to be involved in decision-making. Educators are also empowered by organizing management workshops whereby the school management team workshops them. By doing this, the school effectiveness will be improved.

4.3.2 THE EDUCATOR GROUP

4.3.2.1 How do you relate to your principal?

Mavis: My relationship with the principal is very much sound. There is harmony and understanding and educators together with the principal communicate to each other with good smile.

Ronny: Well, we are in good terms because the principal discloses everything that concerns educators particularly the academic or developmental issues. The

principal is supportive and understanding but firm for the sake of progress and direction.

Johanna: Very close indeed. The principal can share with educators some ideas whenever educators have problems, but when coming to sensitive issues, we differ a lot especially during the staff meetings.

4.3.2.2 What do you think are the principal's strengths and weaknesses?

Ronny: I can say the principal does not have any hidden agenda. The principal is straight and forward. Transparency is his norm, but the principal used to outline issues in the staff meeting unlike calling a person to the office or to meet school governing body and school management team.

Mavis: In this regard, the principal is always motivating educators to be committed to their work. The principal checks preparations, class-works and lesson presentations, guiding educators after their lessons. By monitoring educators' work, the principal tries to improve the learners' performance. The principal's weakness is that sometimes he becomes aggressive when the educators' work is not up to standard.

Johanna: I have realized that the principal is capable of uniting educators whenever there are conflicts and also be able to mediate between educators and learners. Amazedly, the principal does not check the educators' work. He cannot even visit the classrooms to see whether effective teaching is taking place. What is important to him is punctuality. The principal encourages all educators and learners to be punctual at all times. No commitment whatsoever.

4.3.2.3 What leadership style do you think your principal demonstrates?

Ronny: The principal possesses all leadership skills such as planning, organizing, leading and control because his management is up to standard in the sense that he produces good results in the subject he is teaching. In a nutshell, all leadership skills required are well demonstrated to the school and before the entire staff and the community as well. The principal manages the school properly with the help of educators. He delegated other duties to educators and monitors them. The principal is a democratic ruler because he shares responsibilities with the staff.

Maureen: With regarding to the principal's leadership skills, our principal is too lenient even when there is a need for him to act. The principal lacks some of leadership skills because his management is poor. I think that to develop his skills he needs to be inducted on management and leadership in order to change his attitude. The principal practices laissez-fair leadership style because there is no planning at all. Explicit goals are rarely set, problems are solved by whoever is on hand. The educators are expected to motivate themselves with little or no feedback on their performance. The principal also leads through suggestion and delegation. There is a lot of freedom in the school. The success of projects undertaken will depend exclusively on the input of educators.

Mavis: In our case, the principal practices his leadership skills properly. The principal is the motivator who always motivates educators and learners to commit themselves in their work. The principal guides everyone at school when needs arise. He also encourages effective teaching and learning, and once there is commitment, the quality education and quality learning will be improved which will result in good performance. Accountability is one of the skills demonstrated by our principal. The principal is accountable for everything that is happening in

the school. Accountability plays a prominent role in the whole school management.

4.3.2.4 Are relevant records kept in your school for educators and learners?

Mavis: Indeed, all records are kept for reverence sake. Previously, information was kept in files and scheme books, but now that things have changed, computers are used to store information.

Maureen: There is a difference when coming to record keeping. In our school, no records for learners kept. Only educators' records kept, but only for sensitive issues where educator is charged with misconduct. Apart from that, educators do not keep records because the principal does not bother himself to monitor educators' as well as learners' work.

4.3.2.5 How is the perception and attitude of other educators within the staff?

Ronny: What I can say is, educators are in good terms because all educators are sharing staff- room and there is no any negative remarks and negative attitudes between them.

Mavis: Educators accept the type of principal's leadership and also the type of motivation given because motivation empowers them within the working situation.

4.3.2.6 According to the analysis of grade 12 results, the school has continuously obtained low pass rate. What do you think are the causes?

The purpose of this question is to see what might be the causes of low pass rate at schools, whether the causes might be the lack of commitment in school's work, absenteeism, lack of motivation or burnout. Scheerens (1995:67) supported this by indicating that educators have to stay motivated and committed to play role in quality education.

Mavis: Regarding the causes of the low pass rate, the causes might be educators who do not understand the syllabus and/ or not qualified for the subject he is teaching, therefore cannot plan correctly, which at the end, will makes the quality of teaching drop. Another thing is that learners are not committed with their work; their participation in the classroom is passive. Learners do not even ask questions when they do not understand during the lesson presentation. When the educators evaluate them by either class tests or monthly tests, they do not make it.

Ronny: Precisely, grade 12 results are deteriorating gradually; the reason is lack of parental involvement in the education of their children. Educators do not get support from the parents. When calling the parents meeting, they do not attend. Sometimes educators call them individually to discuss with them their learners' performance, they do not bother to come to school. Another thing that causes the low pass rate in our school is that learners are not serious about their work. If they are given homework, they did not do it for themselves at home, no, they come to school earlier the following day and copy the work from others. Even if the learners did this, educators do not despair, they keep on motivating the learners to study hard.

Johanna: In our case, I can say that the educators who are not dedicated to their work might cause the low pass rate. At some stage, educators do not complete the syllabus and this is because the principal and Heads of Department do not control educators' and learners' work. Practice makes perfect. In our school, learners are not given more work to do, which is why they perform poorly at the end of year. Lack of learner material is also a contributory factor, because many schools experience a severe shortage of textbooks. Learners are unable to study at home because they do not have study material.

Mavis: In addition to what I have said, educators felt burned out because they work very hard, and even if they try by all means to work harder, the payoffs in terms of accomplishment, recognition, or appreciation are not there. At some stage, more stress causes the educators to absent themselves from work. In other words, absenteeism is one of the factors contributing to low pass rate at school, because if educators continuously absent themselves from school, they will be unable to complete the syllabus and this will affect learners' performance.

4.3.2.7 What are the attitudes of parents/ learners towards discipline of the school?

The purpose of the question is to inquire to what extent does discipline play in the learners' performance. Callender (1997:98) maintains that discipline is associated with ideals and principled behaviour.

Ronny: Well, whenever parents are gathered at parental meetings, they show a concern about their children, but they do not help educators to discipline their children. Educators are caring all responsibilities to maintain discipline in the school, and they can manage this through the support from parents. Some parents do not want their children being disciplined at school and because of

this, the learners misbehave to such an extent that they do not do their work knowing that they are not going to be punished.

Mavis: Regarding this, parents accepted the disciplinary measures by the school as this is done according to the departmental policy. Most parents in the community gave educators permission to discipline their children but in a polite way, because by doing this they build them.

4.3.2.8 How do you empower your learners?

Ronny: What I can say is that educators are trying by all means to empower the learners in order to improve their performance. Learners, particularly Learner Representative Council (LRC) are encouraged to attend workshops and give feedback to other learners where ideas are to be shared and also, class representatives must conduct groups in the class to bring up new ideas on management and improvement of results. Educators also motivate learners to work hard without supervision.

4.3.2.9 Does your principal involve you (staff) in decision-making?

Johanna: The answer is no, our principal does not involve educators in decision-making. The principal always makes decisions with the management team. Educators are only consulted when the principal together with the management do not find solution to the problem. Even if in the meetings, when suggestions are made, the principal ignores those suggestions.

Mavis: Yes, because all staff members have a say. Decision-maker allows inputs. During staff meeting, open discussion is allowed where educators must give different opinions that would lead to one opinion.

4.4**DISCUSSION OUTLINE**

From the focus group interview, the data analysis is as follows:

4.4.1 THE PRINCIPAL GROUP (HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOL)**INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS**

Purpose: To obtain information on what causes continuous low pass rate in schools.

Participation: Eight possible participants were identified. Letters were written to invite them to take part in the interview. Out of eight principals only one attended. The researcher was forced to postpone the interview. Another date and venue were set and out of six who indicated that they would attend, only four attended the interview and the researcher proceeded with the interview.

Limitation: The discussion was structured in such a way that the researcher had to ask a question and each participant would give his or her own answer. Along the way the researcher was forced to probe because she did not always understand what was said.

Strong points: Since the participants formed a small group, personal opinions and feelings were freely exchanged. The participants were not afraid to say whatever they thought had to be known.

Weaknesses: One of the participants never shared his views, despite the

researcher's efforts trying to engage him in the discussion. there was also one who dominated the discussion in that he tended to answer all the questions whilst others were still thinking about their responses.

4.4.2 THE EDUCATOR GROUP

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Purpose: To obtain information on what causes continuous pass rate in schools.

Participation: Eight schools were identified. Written invitations were addressed to the principals of individual school, requesting permission from the principal to allow his staff to take part in the interview. Permission was granted and the researcher was able to meet with the educators to recruit volunteers. Though not all schools and principals responded positively, 10 educators volunteered to participate in the discussion. On the day of interview only six educators showed up and the researcher proceeded with the interview.

Limitations: Participants were asked to give their own perceptions or opinions. They were also asked not to feel obliged to agree with their counterparts. The rest of the interview went smoothly as there was an active participation.

Strong points: Because the group was small, it was easier to involve all the participants in the discussion. All the participants who took part in the interview, had a chance to express their opinions. They gave inputs and made recommendations. They were not afraid to point out that they still lack knowledge regarding some of their responsibilities.

Weaknesses: The participants gave impression that they felt they should agree on every issue. The researcher interrupted the discussion frequently that they did have to agree to anything.

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

4.4.3 THE PRINCIPAL GROUP (LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS)

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Purpose: To obtain information on what causes continuous low pass Rate in schools.

Participation: Six participants were identified. The researcher wrote letters inviting principals to participate in the interview. They all promised to attend. The researcher personally contacted participants who had to participate and briefed them about what the interview entailed. On the day of the interview, only four turned up and the researcher proceeded with the discussion.

Limitations: The discussion was structured so that each participant could respond to questions from his or her own point of view.

Strong points: In most cases, some of the participants tended to change the topic, but the researcher managed to bring them to the matter under discussion.

Weaknesses: Questions were not answered directly, some tend to discuss the problems experienced at their schools. The researcher intervened frequently as some of the participants seemed to be evasive.

4.4.4 THE EDUCATOR GROUP

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Purpose: To obtain information on what causes continuous low Pass rate in schools.

Participation: Six participants were identified. The researcher wrote letters to different schools, requesting principals to allow the researcher the time to search for volunteers, who could take part in the interview. From the schools identified, eight educators confirmed that they would attend. The researcher constantly reminded them until the day before the interview. Form a group of eight, only two attended. The researcher rescheduled the interview for the second time and out of six volunteers, only four attended. One of the four walked out in the middle of the interview.

Limitations: The discussion was structured in such a way that each participant was expected to give his or her perception or opinion about what causes low pass rate in schools. Each participant was given a chance to express his or

her views. At first, the group seemed uncertain. Later on, they started to respond more readily. Inputs were freely shared and educators seemed to be able to discuss ideas among themselves. They agreed on many aspects.

Strong Points: The group was small and participants had a chance to express their feelings about the topic. Suggestions were made on how to improve the learners' performance.

Weaknesses: The researcher intervened whenever the group became unresponsive, trying to explain to them what the question required. Some educators seemed to be holding back on important information and the researcher was unable to extract answers.

4.5 ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The following categories broadly represent the information obtained from the focus group interview:-

- ◆ Discipline
- ◆ Lack of commitment and motivation in the learning environment
- ◆ Management styles applied in schools
- ◆ Lack of support.

4.5.1 DISCIPLINE

In order for the school to run smoothly, there must be a proper discipline exercised in schools. Discipline is one of the factors that can contribute towards the management of the schools. Research by Callender (1997:98) maintains that discipline refers to general beliefs concerning the observance of rules.

The participants' views on discipline were: *Some parents do not want their children being disciplined at schools, and because of this, the learners misbehave to such an extent that they do not do their work knowing that they are not going to be punished.* This shows that there is a lack of parental support in disciplining the children. It seems that parents are only concentrating on the policy of abolition of corporal punishment (SASA, 84 of 1994, 10(1)). Parents do not have an idea that there are other ways of disciplining the learners without applying corporal punishment. Therefore, there is a need for school managers to organize workshops that will address matters relating to discipline, especially for parents who do not support educators in disciplining the learners.

Under no circumstances can educators teach undisciplined children, therefore, learners should be disciplined. They are expected to adhere to the rules of behaviour and to perform in ways that are acceptable to the educators. This provides what was expressed in literature review, viz, that effective teaching cannot take place without good discipline.

The participants also indicated that some parents accepted the disciplinary measures by the school as this is done according to the departmental policy. According to the policy on discipline, children should be disciplined to regularize children conduct, moderate their egocentric desires and encourages them to respect authority, but not corporally. This is supported by the view of participants when saying: *Most parents in the community gave educators permission to discipline their children but in a polite way, because by doing this, they build them* This shows that at some schools, especially the schools with high pass rate, the attitudes of parents and learners towards discipline is highly acceptable and very positive, because discipline is equated with teaching competence.

4.5.2 LACK OF COMMITMENT AND MOTIVATION IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

For effective schooling to take place, there should be commitment from educators and learners, and also that, they must be motivated. Commitment implies motivation, agreement on goals, loyalty and effort (Visscher, 1999:145). The participants indicated that the cause of low pass rate in schools is the lacking of commitment, lack of motivation and lack of support from the parents. The indication is that educators and learners from high performing schools have high level commitment as compared to educators and learners from the low performing schools. The views from the respondents were: *learners are not committed with their work; their participation in the classroom is passive. I can say that*

the educators who are not dedicated to their work might cause the low pass rate. This shows that there is no commitment at all. Some principals do not commit themselves in their school's work, they do not even check whether effective teaching and learning is taking place in classrooms. The participants supported the above statement when they say: Amazedly, the principal does not check the educators' work. He cannot even visit the classrooms to see whether effective teaching is taking place.

Lack of motivation emerged when the respondents expressed their views: *learners are not motivated at home, they do not study because most of them do not stay with their parents. Educators are expected to motivate themselves with little or no feedback on their performance.* The presentation here clearly indicates that there is a lack of motivation from learners and educators. Principals do not encourage educators to do their work to the best of their abilities, and this destroys the educators' spirit of hard working. The principals as educational leaders, must motivate educators and learners to commit themselves in their work to produce quality education and quality learning. High motivation and strong commitment to work are essential requirements for effective schooling (Sergiovanni, 1990:14). Even if educators get no motivation from their principals, sometimes they try by all means to work hard, but at some stage, become demoralized because they are not recognized. The expression of this statement comes from the participants' views when they say: *In addition to what I have said, educators felt burned out because they work hard, and even if they try by all means to work harder, the payoffs in terms of accomplishment, recognition, or appreciation are not there.*

The respondents from the low performing schools mentioned that there is a need for principals to be inducted in order to understand the principles of management by showing commitment in their work. This statement is supported

by Preedy (1997:14) when he states that in order to improve performance, principals must be inducted on how to ensure quality of work done in schools.

4.5.3 MANAGEMENT STYLES APPLIED IN SCHOOLS

Effective management of the school can only be successful if all stakeholders are involved in decision-making. Van der Westhuizen (1996:96) mentioned that educational leaders differ, so do leadership styles. In the researcher's opinion, the educational leadership has strong influence on the smooth running of the school. According to respondents from the focus group interview, the principals exercise different leadership styles. Some of the participants indicated that their principals do not involve them in decision-making, of which educators prefer principals who involve them in decision-making. The participants' views were: *the principal does not involve us in decision-making. She decides and we must abide whether we agree or disagree. Educators have no say in decision-making, only certain tasks are delegated to the staff. The communication takes one direction since the principal gives instructions while educators are required to execute assignment: When suggestions are made in meetings, the principal ignores those suggestions.*

From the participants' responses, at some schools, educators are involved in decision-making. The views were: *the principal does involve us in decision-making because the actualization of leadership is a social interaction in which give and take occurs; the principal at the end of the day is the deadlock mechanism. This implies that he decides which suggestions to be followed Decision-maker allows inputs; during staff meetings open discussion is allowed where educators must give different opinions that would lead to one opinion.*

For school management to be successful, all stakeholders should be involved in decision-making, but not in all issues. This statement is expressed by Bush & West-Burnham (1994:34) when they state that, if subordinates have personal

stake in the decision and have knowledge to make a useful contribution, then they must be involved in decision-making process, but if the issue is not relevant and it falls outside their sphere of competence, however, then involvement should be avoided. If the school management becomes poor, the principal is accountable for that. Accountability is one of the skills demonstrated by the educational leaders, therefore they are accountable for everything that is happening in the school. Bush & West-Burnham (1994:309) maintain that accountability plays a prominent role in the whole school management.

4.5.4 LACK OF SUPPORT

From my personal experience as a learner from 1967 – 1979, the department of Bantu Education did not supply schools with learning material (including stationery and textbooks). Parents knew that they could not send their children to schools without learner support material, therefore, they bought books for their children. Since 1994, the government of New South Africa promised to supply learner support material to schools, but does not meet the schools' requisitions (Appendix C). This leads to shortage of books. When educators request parents to buy books for the learners, they say that the books are supplied at schools as the government promised to supply books at schools, therefore, they are not willing to buy the books.

The respondents' views were: *lack of learner support material is also a contributing factor to low pass rate, because many schools experience a severe shortage of textbooks. Learners are unable to study at home because they do not have study material.* This shows that the government did not fulfill its promise, and also that parents do not support educators in the education of their children. This provides what was expressed in literature review, viz, that parents are responsible for education of their children and must ensure that their children receive quality education.

The participants contend that no form of support was given to them as far as improving learners' performance is concerned: *Precisely, grade 12 results are deteriorating gradually, the reason is lack of parental involvement in the education of their children. Educators do not get support from the parents.* From the participants responses, it is clear that parents do not engage themselves in the education of the learners, they do not even help their children at home with home-works, and this causes the low pass rate at schools.

4.6 CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, the evidences were clearly stated that some schools perform better than others. The causes of low pass rate at schools are the fact that educators and learners are not committed to their work. Once there is no commitment, effective teaching and learning cannot take. Educators mentioned that learners are not engaged in their work, and this shows that they need to be empowered in order to improve the learning culture.

The fact that there are educators not qualified for the subjects they are teaching, might be the cause of low pass rate in schools. Those educators need to be empowered through workshops and in-service training to acquire knowledge. The principals should try to the best of their abilities to empower educators, as it is one of their responsibilities to see to it that effective teaching and learning take place for improvement of school effectiveness and school development. The group also indicated that there is a lack of parental involvement of which educators need support from them, more especially for encouraging their children to study at home and again for maintaining discipline, but there are parents who do not want their children to be punished. These parents need to be empowered in order to be actively involved in education of their children.

Educators, learners and parents should all be involved towards the attainment of the school's vision. The group pointed out that some principals are not committed to their work. Even if educators, learners and parents are empowered for effective schooling and successful supervisory management, principals should also time and again be inducted in order to understand the principles of effective teaching and apply those principles to achieve optimal learning outcomes, hence providing support to educators and learners.

In the next chapter, the findings will be interpreted according to responses to major questions of research mentioned in the interview. Recommendations and conclusion of the research will be dealt with.

CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The interview conducted clearly indicated that commitment, motivation and discipline are needed in schools to improve learners' performance as well as effectiveness of school. This can only be achieved through empowerment; therefore, all stakeholders such as educators, learners, parents and principals should be empowered to promote effectiveness of schools. If there is no interaction among these stakeholders, effective schooling cannot take place. In this chapter, the findings and the recommendations of the research investigation will be discussed.

5.2 THE IMPORTANT FINDINGS

Chapter four summarized the responses of the investigation and the following categories emerged:-

- ◆ Discipline
- ◆ Lack of commitment and motivation in the learning environment
- ◆ Management leadership styles applied in schools
- ◆ Lack of support

5.2.1 DISCIPLINE

The indication from the focus group interview is that there is still a lacking of discipline in other schools. If educators do not discipline the learners, they are not going to do their work properly and this will lead to poor performance. Learners must be disciplined. The government abolished corporal punishment at schools, but this does not mean that learners should not be disciplined. There are many ways of disciplining the children to maintain order in schools.

Parents are regarded as primary educators but they do not support educators in disciplining their children. Undisciplined learner, can under no circumstances, produce good performance. Parents are only aware of one way of disciplining the learners at school, which is corporal punishment that is why some of them do not want their children being disciplined. The researcher here thinks that these parents need workshops so as to understand different ways of disciplining the children and for them to be able to discipline the learners at home.

The researcher also realized that there are no disciplining committees at schools. These committees are important because they help in disciplining the learners when the need arises. The committee can only function effectively when empowered about the procedures to be followed when applying discipline at schools. Good discipline depends on good management both in schools as a whole and in the classroom. Because principals are ultimately responsible for establishing order and good conduct, planning for good school discipline begins with them.

5.2.2 LACK OF COMMITMENT AND MOTIVATION IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

There is still lacking of commitment from educators, learners and some of principals especially from the low performing schools. If the said stakeholders do not commit themselves in the school's work, then, schools will continue obtaining low pass rate. Nothing will improve their results. Where there is high level of commitment, there will be high achievements. For instance, there are schools which, continuously obtain high pass rate and they only achieve this because the principals from these schools encourage educators and learners to commit themselves in their work. They are also motivated to do their work to the best of their abilities and this means that there is a lot of support.

Some principals do not encourage the educators and learners to commit themselves in their work because they are also not committed to the school's work. This is the main factor contributing to low pass rate in schools. Educators and learners can improve their performance when they are motivated because without motivation, learners' performance cannot be improved. Principals, according to respondents from the low performing schools, do not motivate educators and learners, and that is why the learners' results drop every year. To improve school's effectiveness and effective teaching and learning, developmental programs should be drawn up and implemented without a failure to empower all stakeholders in order to participate effectively in schools.

5.2.3 MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP STYLES APPLIED IN SCHOOLS

According to respondents, the indication is that the principals from different schools exercise different management leadership styles. Some principals are democratic leaders and others are autocrats. At schools where democratic

leadership style is practiced, the performance of learners is good in the sense that the schools are continuously obtained high pass rate. The principals involve the educators in managing the schools, and this lead to high commitment. Everybody in schools does his/her work to the best of his/her ability without being pushed. Everybody feels free to consult other stakeholders for betterment of learners' performance and improvement of school effectiveness. The principals encourage, motivate and support the educators and learners to engage themselves in school's work.

In other schools, learners are victims of circumstances because the culture of teaching and learning is affected, especially to the schools where principals exercise autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles. Learners' performance will not improve, as there is no commitment at all. Everybody does anything he/she wants to do, that is why the schools where there is no commitment from stakeholders, continue obtaining low pass rate.

In a nutshell, the management styles applied in schools are contributory factors in learners' performance depending on the school as well as classroom management. Where there is democracy, there is commitment, but no one can expect good performance in schools where autocratic and laissez-faire management styles were practiced, because there is a lot of relaxation.

For the management to change, it is very important for the education department to prepare the stakeholders in terms of improvement. Regular workshops should be organized for principals in order to empower them about the improvement of learners' performance and school effectiveness.

5.2.4 LACK OF SUPPORT

It is clear from the interpretation that there is no support from the parents. Educators need parental support in order to achieve educational goals, that is effective teaching and effective learning. If there is no support, the educators cannot achieve this. Neither the parents nor the educators alone can fulfill the education task completely. As partners, they should collaborate in the closest possible way. The parents, as primary educators of the child, and the educators, as the child's secondary educator, are in a state of mutual independence – a relationship, which has to develop. The relationship between the parent and the educator can be described in more practical term as one of effective communication.

In chapter two it was stated that running through the legislation is the notion of parents and educators jointly involve in children's education. Parents are responsible for education of their children and must ensure that children receive quality education, but parental involvement in and acceptance of responsibilities for their children's education are still unsatisfactory. The principal as the leader and the manager of the school has a crucial role in the creation and establishment of opportunities for optimal and harmonious parental involvement – a matter which is independent of the relationship between the parent and the educator.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings of this research, the following recommendations can be made.

5.3.1 RECOMMENDATION 1

Motivation

Both educators and learners must be motivated intrinsically (the true pleasure in teaching) and extrinsically (monetary or other rewards). Learners must be motivated to do well in their tests for some reward. They must be praised for achieving good marks. Educators must also be motivated to work hard, and those who produced good results, must be awarded merit certificates and they must receive additional notch for the performance. Schools, with the principals' efforts, that obtained 90% and upwards, must also be awarded a certificate of achievement.

5.3.2 RECOMMENDATION 2

Empowerment

All stakeholders (principals, educators, learners, parents) should be empowered. The principals should time and again empower educators in the form of meetings and workshops for improvement of learners' performance and school effectiveness. Empowered educators must also empower learners in classrooms so as to instill a conducive atmosphere, which will result in good performance. Parents must also be empowered during their meetings. Development programmes should be drawn up and implemented without a failure.

5.3.3 RECOMMENDATION 3

Workload

Because of the high workload of educators, a plea is made for a more professional school organization providing educators with better support, improved working conditions and more task differentiation (teaching specializing in what they do best) to increase mobility. In general, human resource management should be strengthened in schools.

5.3.4 RECOMMENDATION 4

Commitment

Educators and learners as well as principals must commit themselves in their work to improve learners' performance and school effectiveness, because without commitment, teaching and learning cannot take place. The school management team should be assigned the duty of checking the commitment of educators and learners by controlling educators' as well as the learners' work. If the SMT find that educators' work is unsatisfactory, the team must develop them through workshops. Learners must be given more work to do.

5.4 FURTHER RESEARCH

The following areas need further research:

- ◆ Organizational development as efficiency strategy for the school.
- ◆ Managing schools towards high performance.
- ◆ The contribution of parents to school effectiveness

5.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided important findings drawn from the data analyzed for this investigation. The analysis of data exposed the aspects that may cause low performance in schools. The researcher attempted to show that empowerment is the key to effective schooling and effective management. Recommendations, based on literature review as well as data collected through focus group interview, were given in order to improve the learners' performance and school effectiveness.

BIBLIOGRAGHY

BARNARD, S. & VENTER, A. (1996). *Focus group interviews: Progressio: 18: 55-65.*

BLASÉ, J. & ANDERSON, G. (1995). *The micro politics of educational leadership: from control to empowerment.* London: Cassell.

BROTHERSON, MJ. (1994). *Interactive focus group interviewing: A qualitative research method in early intervention: Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 14 (1): 114.*

BROWNS, S. (1993). *Making sense of teaching:* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

BUSH, T. & WEST-BURNHAM, J. (1994). *The principles of educational management:* Pretoria: Haum.

BYER, Y. & WILCOX, J. (1991). *Focus groups: A qualitative opportunity for researchers: Journal of Business Communication, 28 (1): 63-78.*

CALLENDER, C. (1997). *Education for empowerment: the practice and philosophies of Black teachers:* England: Trentham Books.

CASEY, JM. (1997). *Early literacy: the empowerment of technology:* Englewood Co: Libraries Unlimited.

CORSON, D. (1993). *Language, Minority Education and Gender:* Clevedon: Multilingual matters.

CRESSWELL, JW. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and Quantitative approaches*: London: Sage Publications.

De VOS, AS. (1998): *Research at grass roots: A prime for caring professions*: Pretoria: Van Schaik.

DEKKER, EJ. & LEMMER, EM. (1996). *Critical issues in Modern Education*: Durban: Butterworth.

DENZIN, MK. & LINCOLN, YS. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*: Thousand Oaks: Sage.

ESTEVE, J. (1989). *Teacher burnout and teacher stress*: Philadelphia: Open University Press.

FENNIMORE, BS. (1995). *Student- Centred Classroom Management*: Albany New York: Delmar.

FERREIRA, M. & PUTH, G. (1988). *Focus group interviewing: In research methods*: Pretoria: HSRC: 160-189.

GLASER, BG. & STRAUSS, AL. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*: Chicago: Aldine.

HAMPTON, DR. (1977). *Contemporary Management*: New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

HANKS, P. (1995). *Encyclopedia World Book*: London: The Hamlyn Publishing Group.

HARALAMBOS, M. (1990). *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*: Avon: University Tutorial Press.

HARRIS, A. (1998). *Teaching and learning in the effective school*: Bookfield. Harlow: Longman.

HERMAN, JJ. & HERMAN, JL. (1993). *School- based management: current thinking and practice*: Thomas C Publishers.

HILL, P. (1995). *School effectiveness and improvement: present realities and future possibilities*: Melbourne: Faculty of Education.

HUBERMAN, M. (1993). *The lives of teachers* : New York: Teachers College Press.

HUBERMAN, M. & GROUNAUER, M. (1993). *Teachers' motivation and satisfaction*: New York: Teachers College Press.

HUEBSCH, JC. (1983). *Communication 2000*: Durban: Butterworth.

HUGHES, JA. (1976). *Sociological analysis*: London: Nelson.

IRWIN, JW. (1996). *Empowering ourselves and transforming schools: educators making a difference*. Albany State University of New York Press.

KROONZ, H. & O'DONNELL, C. (1972). *Principles of management: An analysis of managerial functions*: Tokyo.

KRUEGER, R. (1994). *Focus groups (2ed)*: Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage.

LeCOMPTE, MD. & PREISSLE, J. (1993). *Ethnography and Qualitative Design in Educational Research* (2ed): Toronto: Academic press.

LEMMER, E. (1992). *Qualitative research methods in education: South African Journal of Education*, 12 (3): 292-296.

MAEROFF, GI. (1988). *A blueprint for empowering teachers: Phil Delta: Kappa*, 69(7): 473-477.

MAGER, GM. (1992). *The place of induction in becoming a teacher*. Albany: Suny Press.

MANKOE, J. & MAYNES, T. (1994). *Decentralization of educational decision-making in Ghana, International Journal of Educational Development*, 14(1): 23-33.

MAYKUT, P. & MOREHOUSE, R. (1994). *Beginning qualitative research*: London: Falmer.

McINTYRE, & BYRD, (1996). *Preparing tomorrow's teachers: The field experience*. Newbury park: CA: Corwin Press: Sage.

McMILLAN, JH. & SCHUMACHER, S. (1993). *Research in Education: A conceptual introduction*: Harper Collins.

OLIVER, P. (1996). *The management of educational change: a case study approach*: Aldershon: Arena.

OWENS, RG. (1995). *Organization behaviour in education*: Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice- Hall.

PARAMES, C. (1975). *The nature and contents of management*: London: Open University press.

PATTON, MQ. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*: Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

POPLIN, M. (1992). *The leader's new role: Looking to the growth of teachers, educational leadership*, 49 (5): 10-11.

PORTER, LW. & MILES, RE. (1974). *Motivation and Management*: New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

PREEDY, M. (1990). *Educational Management strategy and quality resources*: Buckingham: Open University Press.

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA: *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996*: Pretoria: Government Printers.

REYES, P. (1990). *Teachers and their workplace: Commitment, performance and productivity*: London: Sage Publications.

SCHEERENS, J. (1995). *The selection and definition of international indicators on teachers*: Paris: OECD.

SERGIOVANNI, TJ. (1990). *Teacher Motivation and Commitment: requirements for effective schooling*: Boston: Allyn and Bacon, inc.

SMITH, SC. & SCOTT, SS. (1990). *The Collaborative School. A work environment for effective instruction. Clearing house on Educational Management*: Oregon.

STEWART, DW. & SHANDASANI, PN. (1990). *Focus Group: Theory and Practice*: Newbury Park: Sage.

THERON, AMC & VAN DER WESTHUIZEN, PC. (1992). *Die onderwyser en sy bestuurswerk*: Pretoria: Butterworths.

TOPOR, P. (1997). *How to run a Focus Group*. [internet] Available from: [<http://www.marketing.com/news/focus.ht>].

VAN DER WESTHUIZEN, PC. (1991). *Effective Educational Management*: Pretoria: Haum.

VAN DER WESTHUIZEN, PC. (1996). *Schools as organizations*: Pretoria: Van Schaik.

VAN GINKEL, AJH. (1985). *Demotivation of teachers in general secondary education*: Rotterdam: Erasmus University.

VERDERBER, RF. & VERDERBER, KS. (1992). *Inter-act: Using interpersonal communication skills*: Belmont: Calif: Wadsworth.

VISSCHER, AJ. (1999). *Managing schools towards high performance: Linking school Management theory to the school effectiveness knowledge base*. University of Twente: The Netherlands.