LEARNER UNDERACHIEVEMENT IN RURAL SCHOOLS IN KWAZULU-NATAL

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that *Learner Underachievement in Rural Schools in KwaZulu-Natal* (title of my dissertation) is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Dedicated to my late parents, Mr & Mrs Dala and my mother-in-law, Mrs Ncanyana Zungu.

ABSTRACT

Despite educational legislation and school reforms to promote improved performance and quality education, underperformance among secondary school learners is still the norm in the rural schools of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). This dissertation investigates the problem of learner underachievement by means of a literature study and an empirical inquiry. The former provides an overview of the provisions for and problems of rural schooling in both an international and local context and it is followed by a discussion of learner assessment and learner achievement in the South African education system, with specific reference to KZN's schooling system and the problem of learner underachievement. The empirical inquiry investigates the experience of learner achievement in four rural schools in KZN and makes use of qualitative data gathered during individual and focus group interviews conducted with a small sample of underachieving learners and their parents, educators and school managers. Based on these findings, recommendations for improvement are made.

KEY TERMS

Learner underachievement

Rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal

Rural schools worldwide

Rural schools in South Africa

Policies and provisions to address underachievement

Learners' experience of schooling and underachievement

Educators' experience of schooling and underachievement

Principals' experience of schooling and underachievement

Parents' experience of schooling and underachievement

School Governing Bodies' experience of schooling and underachievement

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

ANC	:	African National Congress
C2005	:	Curriculum 2005
CASS	:	Continuous Assessment
CE2	:	Cours élémentaire deuxième
CEM	:	Council of Education Ministers
cf	:	Refer to
CTA	:	Common Tasks for Assessment
DIT	:	Durban Institute of Technology
ESS	:	Education Support Services
FCAT	:	Florida Comprehensive Assessment Tests
GET	:	General Education and Training
GETC	:	General Education and Training Certificate
HEDCOM	:	Heads of Education Committee
HOD	:	Head of Department
HSRC	:	Human Sciences Research Council
IDP	:	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
IFP	:	Inkatha Freedom Party

IPEC	:	Inter-Provincial Examination Committee
IQMS	:	Integrated Quality Management System
K-8	:	Schools that include kindergarten through eighth grade classes, combining elementary and middle schools.
KZN	:	KwaZulu-Natal
LIFO	:	Last in First Out
LSM	:	Learner Support Material
LTSM	:	Learning and Teaching Support Material
MDR TB	:	Multi Drug Resistant Tuberculosis
MEC	:	Member of Executive Council
MTEF	:	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NCS	:	National Curriculum Statement
N.D.	:	No Date
NO	:	Number
NQF	:	National Qualification Framework
NSC	:	National Senior Certificate
NSLA	:	National Strategy for Learner Attainment
NSNP	:	National School Nutrition Programme
OECD	:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSD	:	Occupational Specific Dispensation

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS (cont)

PDoE	:	Provincial Department of Education
PPM	:	Post Provision Model
SA	:	South Africa
SABC	:	South Africa Broadcasting Cooperation
SADEC	:	Southern African Development Community
SASA	:	South African Schools Act
SGB	:	School Governing Body
SMT	:	School Management Team
TVBC	:	Transkei, Venda, Bophuthatswana and Ciskei
UKZN	:	University of KwaZulu-Natal
WSE	:	Whole School Evaluation
XDR TB	:	Extensively Drug Resistant Tuberculosis

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1 BACKGROUND, PROBLEM FORMULATION AND AIMS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

There is no specific definition of the term 'rural'. The United States of America (USA) defines 'rural' as the population residing in a non-urban area. An area is also regarded as rural if the community has less than 2 500 inhabitants (Lemmer 2003: 80).

Contextual factors surrounding rural schools affect the achievement of learners. In many countries including South Africa, some of these factors have affected rural areas. Consequently, the development of the entire region, and particularly the rural area, is affected. According to Arnove & Torres (2007: 316), Latin America, like other Third World countries, is still having trouble in schools that are found in rural areas. Latin American rural schools encounter problems in governance, financing and the provision of mass education. They further relate these problems to equality of educational opportunities, especially amongst those who have historically been sidelined and, in particular, women, ethnic minorities, and rural populations. Supplementary findings have revealed that, on average, poor rural children score twenty points below affluent urban children (Arnove and Torres 2007: 316). The statement clearly indicates that these children encounter difficulties in achieving academic merit. They contend that factors such as poverty, unemployment, disease and family background are the main causes. Galvis (2005: 6) also argues that numerous similar challenges face rural schools throughout the world. Among the many challenges faced, he highlights the struggle to improve the quality of educator preparation, educator professional development, retaining and attracting capable educators, and the provision of appropriate resources for the learners. He stressed that these make a critical contribution towards effective teaching of learners.

1.1.1 The Needs of Rural Schools in South Africa

The post-apartheid education management system in South Africa inherited a fragmented and racially divided education provision; the policy of apartheid discriminated against certain racial groups and resulted in unequal education provision in terms of race and region. Approximately 70% of South African children grow up in very poor conditions in rural communities. This impacts on their performance at school and so reduces their possibility of becoming economically and socially independent or of breaking the cycle of disadvantage. There are needs that have to be addressed in order to give rural learners equal opportunities to academic achievement.

1.1.1.1 Poor Nutrition

Holistic nutrition programmes should not only focus on primary school feeding schemes. They should also address poverty in such a way that learners are able to concentrate and learn effectively without having to perform duties that hamper their ability to focus on learning, such as working in order to provide food for the family (Okpukpora et al. 2006: 5).

1.1.1.2 Inability to Attract and Retain Well-Trained Educators

Newman, (2006), cites the lack of basic infrastructure such as electricity, decent roads, telecommunication systems, health facilities, police stations and financial institutions in the rural areas of South Africa as some of the factors that hamper the process of attracting and retaining well-qualified educators. Some educators even resort to leaving the country if they fail to find a job in an urban area.

1.1.1.3 Health Related Challenges

In rural areas the level of health awareness and health services is poor due to communication barriers and other geographic and political factors. Schools are adversely affected by high levels of educator and learner absenteeism which is a direct result of sickness. If proper awareness programmes were conducted and accessible medication provided, this could be reduced (Newman 2006).

Out of the estimated 48 million South Africans, 11.5% of the population is HIV positive (Nicolay 2008: 1). Despite efforts to curb the spread of the virus, KwaZulu-Natal remains the epicentre of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Statistics released by the Department of Health show that out of the population of 9 861 134 in KZN, 15.8% is infected (Nicolay 2008: 1). Most of these people live in the rural areas of KZN.

1.1.1.4 The Effect of Cultural and Traditional Customs

Many girls from rural areas are denied the opportunity to learn because of cultural and traditional beliefs. In traditional culture, married women have to depend on their husbands for all their needs. The influence exerted on school-going girls to marry at an early age so as to support their families greatly hampers an effective learning process.

Without exception, the main task of boys in rural areas is the daily herding of livestock (North West Provincial Government 2003). Often boys do not attend school when the dipping of livestock takes place and if livestock do not return home on an evening, the young herdsmen

must miss school the following day to search for them. During the initiation period which involves male circumcision, the learners do not go to school for the entire duration.

1.1.2 Rural Schooling in KwaZulu-Natal

KZN is one of the nine provinces in the Republic of South Africa and is predominantly rural. KZN has an estimated population of 9 426 017 of which 8 002 407 are Black, 141 887 Coloured, 798 275 Indian and 483 448 White (Statistics South Africa 2004). According to the Department of Education (2009: 18), KZN is divided into four educational regions and twelve educational districts. The regions are:

- eThekwini (iLembe, Pinetown, uMlazi)

- Ukhahlamba (Amajuba, uThukela, Umzinyathi)

- uMgungundlovu (Port Shepstone, Sisonke, uMgungundlovu)

- Zululand (Empangeni, Obonjeni and Vryheid)

Ukhahlamba and Zululand are primarily rural and there are no metropolitan structures within these regions. These areas rely on villages and small towns as their centres of development.

The vast majority of the districts within these regions are situated in remote rural areas where infrastructure is extremely poor and often non-existent. The rural districts comprise Amajuba, iLembe, uThukela, and Umzinyathi. In terms of schooling results, Obonjeni obtained the poorest results in the province of KZN with a 49.29% pass rate in the school-leaving examination of the 2007 academic year. Some reasons cited for the high failure rate were inadequate facilities and the shortage of personnel in rural schools.

Rural schooling in KZN suffers from the same problems facing rural schools throughout South Africa. Schooling takes place with very little resources or access to facilities such as audio tapes, computers and libraries. Furthermore, greater emphasis is often placed on cultural activities such as traditional dancing and this sometimes prevents the timeous completion of the school syllabus. The high illiteracy rate among parents in the rural schools of KZN also contributes to the lack of progress of learners. Parents often do not attend parents' meetings to discuss their children's educational matters and even fail to check the daily homework of their children (Business Times 1999).

1.1.2.1 Learner Achievement in Rural Schools in KZN

Although seventeen years have passed since South Africa attained its independence, life in the rural schools remains the same as it was pre-independence in some parts of the country because of the deterioration in terms of quality education and learners' performance, policy implementation and a decline in the matriculation results (Pandor 2006).

The Grade 12 results in 2007 were as follows: 564 775 candidates wrote the exam and the pass rate was 65.2% in South Africa as a whole. In KZN, 148 093 candidates wrote and 63.8% candidates passed. The province was ranked sixth in the country.

Table 1: Grade 12 Results for KZN (2001-2007)

Year	% pass rate	Position of province in country
2001	62.8	4
2002	70.8	4
2003	77.2	5
2004	74.0	5
2005	70.5	5
2006	65.7	6
2007	63.8	6

Source: Department of Education

The above table shows that the overall position of the province has deteriorated through the years. This reflects the negative conditions within the schooling system of the province.

1.1.3 An Education Systems Approach

A useful theoretical approach for the analysis of any education system (or an educational problem such as learner achievement in rural schools in KZN) is a systems approach. Just as the education system is analysed according to its constituent parts so the educational problem is analysed. The components of an education system are as follows:

1. *Contextual factors*: Contextual factors refer to those factors that constitute the forces of reality or realities in a particular country. These influence the education as well as all

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other cultural activities of the people in the country. Contextual factors are, for example, demographic and geographic factors, historical background, socio-cultural situations, political systems, economic systems and religious orientations (Dekker and Schalkwyk 1995: 4). Changes in contextual factors may disrupt the equilibrium of an education system, requiring the need for changes, re-organisation, adaptation and renewals.

2. *Aims, policy and legislation*: Educational aims and objectives are normally included in policy documents and legislation dealing with education. Policy and legislation enable the Minister of Education to govern effectively and have control in the current educational sector of schools within the country but also in such a way that will reflect the new dispensation that aims to eliminate discrimination and promote equity and the enforcement of human rights.

3. *Administration and governance*: According to Arnove and Torres (2003: 204-224), an education system is governed by the sate and can be centralised or decentralised. Decentralisation is a process through which a central authority establishes field units or branch offices where personnel of the ministry of education may either work together in the same central building, or be posted out to provinces and districts. This means that structures of public education must be established and overseen. Here the state delegates many educational functions to local educational agencies and schools must be administered or run by school managers and leaders. A centralised system on the other hand requires that the governance and administration of education be located in a central office of the state.

4. *The schooling system*: Dekker and Van Schalkwyk (1995: 88) divide the schooling system into school types (represented vertically) and school phases (represented horizontally) where the vertical orientation emphasises the differences and the horizontal one the similarities between levels within the school system.

5. *Support services with an interest in education*: According to Dekker and Van Schalkwyk (1995: 43), finance is the energy that keeps an organisation going. The more finance available, the more facilities (such as classrooms) can be provided and better salaries can be paid to educators. The financing of education is mainly the responsibility of the state.

All discussion in this study, and particularly in Chapter 2, refers to the above components of the education system.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The main aim of this research is to examine the underachievement of learners in rural schools in KZN. The main research problem was formulated as such: *What factors influence learner achievement in rural schools in KZN?*

The main research problem was further divided as follows:

i)   How is rural schooling defined? How could contextual factors affect rural schooling? What were the provisions and problems of rural schools in selected countries?

ii)   What is the situation with regard to learner achievement in South Africa? What policies and provisions have been made to the components of the education system to address the situation? What is the position of rural schools in KZN in light of this discussion?

iii) How can learner achievement at a small sample of selected rural schools in KZN be understood according to the experiences of parents, learners and educators, members of the School Governing Bodies (SGB) and principals?

iv)   Based on the literature review and empirical inquiry, what guidelines can be offered to improve practice in rural schools?

1.3 AIMS

The study set out to meet the following aims:

- to define rural schooling; to investigate the effects of contextual factors on rural schooling; and to discuss rural schooling in South Africa;

- to establish factors which affect the learner achievement at a small sample of selected rural schools in KZN by means of an empirical enquiry according to the experiences of learners, parents, teachers, members of the SGB and principals;

- to make recommendations based on the literature study and empirical inquiry to improve practice.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

The researcher conducted the study according to a literature study and an empirical investigation. The literature comprised the study of relevant books, journal articles, newspaper reports, official government policies and legislation as obtained in print and through the Internet. Other published and unpublished reports on the subject matter were consulted as a means of collecting secondary data. The literature study provided the theoretical framework for the empirical inquiry.

A qualitative research design was used for the empirical inquiry. This approach enabled the researcher to rely on observation, interviews and document analysis, or a combination of these, to provide in-depth understanding of what was studied. This thesis aims to describe and explain learner underachievement by interpreting the feedback from the participants using the statements made by a small sample and using observation and interviews as instruments of data collection.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001: 101) describe qualitative research as questions about phenomenons which aim to describe and understand the phenomenon from participants. By using a qualitative approach, an attempt was made to understand the factors responsible for learner achievement in Grade 11 learners.

1.4.1 Sampling

According to De Vos et al. (2004: 207), purposive sampling is used in a study to select information rich participants and sites guided by contextual factors that have been identified in the introduction. The sample used in this study focussed mainly on learners but also on other stakeholders such as educators, school principals, parents and members of SGBs.

Four secondary schools in KZN were purposively sampled. Class managers were asked to identify four learners per school who could participate in the study. Principals of the schools were also consulted to identify four educators per school to form part of the sample group. Parents and members of the School Governing Bodies were informed by means of formal letters inviting them for interviews. Interviews took place within the natural setting of the school.

1.4.2 Data Collection

The main method of data collection was interviews. Four focus group interviews were conducted to collect data from participating learners and educators, and one focus group interview was held to collect data from school principals, parents and SGB members respectively. McMillan and Schumacher (2005: 130) state that a qualitative technique for data collection is in the form of words rather than numbers. This enables an in-depth verbal description of observed phenomenon. The goal is to capture the richness and complexity of the behaviour that occurs in a natural setting, from the participants' perspective. All interviews were recorded on audiotape.

1.4.3 Data Analysis and Data Interpretation

The main data was the verbatim transcripts of the interviews. Analysis followed the procedures for qualitative analysis: the reading and rereading of the transcript, the organisation of recurring findings into broad categories and eventually themes substantiated by excerpts from the interviews.

1.4.4 Ethical Measures

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001: 107), ethical issues refer to the honesty of professional colleagues. Although fewer defects are expected from participants, ethical issues played a very prominent part of this study to ensure representative outcomes. Access to the school premises was requested in a formally written letter to the Department of Education and also to the principals of the schools where the study was to be conducted.

Participants were given the freedom to take part or withdraw if they wished to do so. Confidentiality was guaranteed and potential harm to participants or problems of deception did not exist.

1.5   LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to a small sample typical of qualitative research and no attempts are made at generalisation. However, the findings may contribute to the understanding of similar problems in rural schooling elsewhere.

1.6   CHAPTER DIVISION

The research report is presented in six chapters as follows:

- Chapter One provides the background to the study, the research problem, theoretical

factors which impact on schooling and the aim of the study.

- Chapter Two surveys the relevant literature on the provision for and problems of rural schooling with special reference to KwaZulu-Natal.

- Chapter Three discusses learner achievement in the South African schooling system.

- Chapter Four provides the research methodology, data collection, population and sampling procedures and methods of data analysis.

- Chapter Five presents analysis, findings, discussions and policy implications.

- Chapter Six provides conclusions and recommendations.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

Key terms are defined in this section and further explained in the literature study.

Learner underachievement: learner underachievement can be defined as a discrepancy between ability and performance (Ford and Thomas 1997: 1). Grade results are determined by whether learners perform in a manner that will enable them to avoid difficulties in the following grade. They act as a benchmark or criteria used as part of the growth and development from one grade to the next.

1.8 SUMMARY

In this chapter the background to the problem was given. The problem was formulated in terms of a key research question and sub questions. The aims of the study were provided and an outline of the research design was given.

In chapter two the provision for and problems of rural schooling with special reference to KZN will be discussed.

2 CHAPTER TWO: PROVISIONS FOR AND PROBLEMS OF RURAL SCHOOLING WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KZN

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The following topics will be dealt with through a literature study. Firstly, rural schooling as a worldwide phenomenon is defined with reference to various writers and the particular problems affecting rural schools are briefly identified. Thereafter, attention is given to the state of rural schooling in South Africa. The contents of special reports commissioned by government and private agencies are summarised. Finally, the system of rural schooling in KZN is fully described according to the components of the education system.

2.2 RURAL SCHOOLING

2.2.1 Description of rural and rural schooling

Rural depends on primary activities such as farming, meaning it is unifunctional, whereas urban depends on secondary and tertiary activities, meaning it is multifunctional. The dilemma around the true definition of rural has been a matter of debate for a number of years. Demographers, especially in geography, have their own specific criteria when defining the term and they usually do so in terms of the provision of services such as primary economic activities. This is based on the natural activities of the settlements themselves (Brett et al. 2007).

For us to understand what rural is, we need to conceptualize and define the term 'rural' in its broader sense. The term is derived from the Latin word *"ruralis"* which means countryside or open land. It has been associated with environmental settings. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) uses a threshold of 150 inhabitants per square kilometre to identify "rural communities." This definition is applied in Canada at the level of the census consolidated subdivision (CCS). Thus, all CCSs with population densities below 150 inhabitants per square kilometre are classified as "rural communities." This includes individuals living in the countryside, towns and small cities (inside and outside the commuting zone of larger urban centres).

Before setting its "rural/urban" threshold at 150 inhabitants per square kilometre, the OECD analysed existing thresholds and settlement patterns within Member countries. A review of "national distributions of local communities by density class showed that for most countries changing the threshold to 100 or 200 inhabitants per square kilometre would not lead to major

changes in the share of rural population." The only exception is in Japan where the OECD applies a population density threshold of 500 inhabitants per square kilometre to distinguish between "rural communities" and "urban communities." (OECD 1994)

Carmichael (1982: 5) defines rural schooling as "education provided for the school-age children residing in rural areas."

Rural schools are common in third world countries but are also found in developed countries. It is interesting to investigate rural schooling in the USA. The most common question that is asked is "does the USA have rural areas as in the third world countries?" The answer is yes. Often when people think about the USA, they imagine a 'heaven'. They believe that all places are like New York or Hollywood. The USA, like any other first world country also has problems in financing rural schools. For example, in western Kentucky, there are four K-8 schools and only one high school. Schools in the rural areas are predominantly low-income. The rural school week in Kentucky is four instead of five days and there are only six instead of eight instructional hours. This is in place to decrease financial costs for, for example, educators' salaries and the transport of learners to school which minimizes their walking distance. They also experience problems of educator absenteeism, ineffectiveness of staff recruitment, unfocussed instruction, and learners arriving home just a little before their parents in the afternoon (Yarbrough and Gilman 2006).

Rural school education in the USA is not well respected and does not enjoy the image of professionalism that it deserves. Educators, administrators, the curriculum and staffing are not valued in the rural school setting. This is complicated by the fact that rural districts often have low property values and minimal sales tax bases to support them. Consequently the schools have a limited number of educators from which to choose and there is only one educator per department. Extra-curricular activities are insufficient and schools are often very small and plagued by staff shortages which adversely affect productivity and teamwork (Roth 1996).

Like any other third world country, Peru also experiences problems in rural schools (Alcázara et al. 2006: 117). Educator absenteeism reached 21% in 2006. According to a study conducted in Peru, the lack of intrinsic motivation is considered the root cause of absenteeism amongst educators (Alcázara et al. 2006: 119). Another is unfair working conditions. Educators in urban areas, *"nombrados"* (the regular educators), receive preferential treatment to those from rural schools. Poverty also affects schooling in the rural areas and this in turn affects the ability of the community to retain their educators. The remoteness of the school is also a factor that promotes absenteeism in Peru and transportation difficulties make it more difficult

for the educators to arrive at school on time. Educators spend more time away from their postings, for example, heading to urban areas for weekends, than they should. In most cases, they are also separated from their own families and immediate relatives.

According to Ansell (2002: 91), both Lesotho and Zimbabwe, examples of third world countries on the African continent and former colonies of Britain, adopted a European-style system of education and rural pass rates for both countries are very poor. In Zimbabwe, the enrolment of girls in secondary school is considerably lower than that of boys because girls are expected to stay at home and marry at a young age. This situation is contrasted in Lesotho were the girls outnumber the boys but this is regarded as remarkable in Africa. Nevertheless, both countries have the same crisis of learner dropouts.

Life Orientation is of no use because assessment performance is based on exam results. The existing system of schooling in the rural areas suffers from a decline in quality education and the lack of relevance to occupational social realities. The quality of the final examinations is, therefore, below the International Examination Certificate. Rural areas face obstacles such as network communication problems, the lack of qualified educators, under-resourcing and financial cutbacks which retard the introduction of new textbooks (Ansell 2002: 119).

According to Admassie (2003: 167), Ethiopia has one of the lowest school enrolment rates in the world due to a poor and underdeveloped education system and the absence of a compulsory education system. Rural schooling here is highly affected by the problem of child labour which is one of the highest in the world. Children are more involved in economic activities and such practise has pushed several rural children into exploitative and hazardous work conditions that put their health at risk. Domestic needs prevent rural children from having access to basic education and activities like fetching water, firewood, looking after small children, the preparation of food, feeding and milking domestic animals, as well as the sale of grain and livestock in the local market take precedence over school attendance.

Admassie's research also highlighted the fact that more than 60% of primary school-aged children miss all form of education because they must herd livestock (2003: 169). On top of this, there is a high dropout rate in the grade one level. Ethiopia resembles other African countries where enrolment for boys is higher than that of girls. Children in Ethiopia are expected to start school at the age of seven but more than 70% of boys and 85% of girls do not start school until much later. Consequently the country has one of the highest illiteracy rates in the world.

Ghana, like many other African countries, experiences problems in their rural schools (Pryor 2005: 1). Community involvement in the education system is erratic and slow. Educators often complain about the lack of interest amongst learners. Dropout rates are very high and the curriculum seems to be irrelevant to rural life and have no intrinsic quality.

Pryor (2005: 2) further highlights the fact that in Ghana, migration from rural to urban areas also has a negative impact on the education system of the country. In the north of Ghana, which is regarded as the poorest area, no more than two boys from any family are sent to school. Drunkenness in rural schools is a big problem and because of this, parents do not want to send their children to school. Parents in the rural areas do not attend meetings as they consider schooling the sole responsibility of educators.

2.2.2 Conclusions

The definition of the word "rural" was defined in this section according to various authors. Furthermore, the various countries that were studied differ in how they prefer to associate the term "rural."

2.3 RURAL SCHOOLING IN SOUTH AFRICA

In 1948, the National Party won the election under the leadership of D.F. Malan. The victory of the National Party, which was regarded as a turning point in the history of South Africa, gave Malan the power to implement the racial policy of Apartheid (Govender et al. 2004: 62). The policy of Apartheid was specifically based on race. Govender, et al (2004: 71) refer to laws designed to bring about the separation of races within South Africa and the implementation of these laws meant the unequal treatment and exploitation of Black people.

According to Govender, et al (2004: 74), The Group Areas Act of 1950 was created in order to further the policies of Apartheid. The policy set aside areas where each racial group could live and own property. To put this law into practice, people were subjected to forced removals and Blacks where not allowed to live in towns. To further the interests of the Apartheid policy, the Bantu Authority Act No. 68 of 1951 came into effect. Tribal Authorities were set up and positions were given to Chiefs and Headman who became responsible for the allocation of land, the welfare and pension system and development.

The Tomlinson Commission of 1954 was passed to give weight to racial laws. The commission was appointed under Professor Frederick Tomlinson to determine how Black reserves could be developed. These are a few of the recommendations:

- Industrialists should invest in the reserves; and

- It was proposed that seven 'Bantu' areas should be established and that the tribal authority ought to be reviewed (Govender et al. 2004: 92).

The Promotion of Bantu Self Government Act was passed in 1959. This Act was regarded as the keystone of Apartheid legislation as Blacks were given the mandate to establish their own governments but under the control of the central government. With this, the idea of rural development was cemented. The following homeland governments were established as a result of the Promotion of Bantu Self Government Act:

- Bophuthatswana

- Gazankulu

- Ciskei

- KwaZulu

- Lebowa

- Qwaqwa

- Transkei

- Venda

The Bantu Education Act of 1953 provided, amongst others, for the following:

- Bantu Education was to be controlled by the central government;

- Syllabi were to be tailored to the Black way of life; and

- Missionary bodies would no longer administer Black schools.

The promotion of the Bantu Self-Government Act was proposed and implemented in 1959. This Act was proclaimed as Verwoerd's "master piece." According to this Act, Blacks were supposed to vacate the so-called "white area" and build their permanent homes in the

Reserves. This was the beginning of rural development and it had a negative impact on education, especially within the Black communities (Govender et al. 2004: 93).

The De Lange Commission of 1980 (African National Congress, 1994) was appointed by the South African government to investigate issues around Black education. The outcomes of the commission publicised the fact that Black education suffered severe deficits in the areas of science, mathematics, technology and arts and culture. After 1984, with the introduction of the tri-cameral parliament, the four self-governing states of the time, Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei (TBVC States), were responsible for the provision of their education with the exception of the University of Fort Hare (Govender et al. 2004: 95).

2.3.1 Rural Education Since 1994

After the 1994 democratic elections, South Africa was organised into nine provinces with a central Department of Education in Pretoria headed by the Minister of Education. Each of the nine provinces have their own provincial Department of Education headed by a Member of Executive Council (MEC). Of the nine provinces, five are predominantly rural: the Eastern Cape, North West, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal.

According to Kallaway (2002: 21-32), provinces such as the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal are the greatest victims of Apartheid as they are predominantly rural areas. KZN has 1.2 million cases of illiteracy (Ndebele 2007).

According to research conducted in the Northern Province, now known as Limpopo, the system of Learner Support Material (LSM) is in a chaotic state, almost to the point of total collapse (Themane and Mabasa, 2002: 275-281). The authors state that there is a lack of proper recording systems, wrong deliveries of materials and packs are made, packs of unused but usable books are not delivered and the purchase and requisition of books are in disarray.

The Province has a serious shortage of books and textbooks in particular and so learners do not have enough relevant reference material. Apart from these shortages, books are almost always delivered late and when they arrive, they are often not what is needed. Sometimes it is because an incorrect order is placed by the school principal.

A numbers of schools are situated in high poverty areas and the illiteracy rate amongst parents is very high which means there is a lack of parental involvement in the education of their children. Rural schools in the province have serious safety problems; school facilities are not safe and violence and crime dominate the area. Poor physical facilities are a big concern as

about 80% of the classrooms are made of planks and mud, without doors and windows. There are not enough classrooms and those that exist are not properly maintained. Research has established that there are no safety policies in place in rural schools and that about 55% of the rural schools in Limpopo do not have playgrounds. About 45% are not well kept and toilet facilities are a big problem as about 70% of the toilets are pits. Only 15% are flushing and 35% of the schools do have toilets.

According to a study conducted in the Eastern Cape (Sharpley 2003) poverty impacts directly on the functionality of a school because parents are unable to offer financial assistance in the form of school fees. Schools struggle to collect school fees of as little as R20 per year. The largest source of family income in rural areas is an old-age government pension. Rural parents who must deal with daily survival, and who are in most cases are illiterate, find little time to be involved in the school curriculum. Learners attending school on an empty stomach are a common occurrence in rural schools and there are cases of learners fainting from hunger. The government has introduced a feeding scheme for junior primary learners but this also presents a challenge for the school as half its learners are fed whilst the older half go hungry. In addition to attending school, learners who live with their grandparents are burdened with having to run the house. The scarcity of jobs in rural areas forces those of working age to leave the rural area to seek employment in the city. This exacerbates poverty, as this working member of the family has to accommodate the costs of a new life in the city. This trend began during the days when the mines recruited rural workers for the shafts. Although the trek to the city is considered a viable alternative, it undoubtedly has drawbacks, not least of which is that the family is split and that the poverty of the rural home increases. This has a direct impact on the school and its ability to function as a centre of learning for the community. Many programmes fail because poverty and its impact is not addressed.

Many schools in the Eastern Cape, especially in the Transkei, do not have formal structures built by the government. Only two of the ten schools in Mqanduli on the EQUIP programme have formal classrooms built by government. The other schools have mud structures built by the community. Poor infrastructure impacts directly on programmes dealing with the management and governance of schools. On rainy and cold days, the schools are forced to abandon classes. The shortage of classrooms in the Eastern Cape highlights the need for all stakeholders to assist where they can.

According to research conducted by Ndandani (2001), a lecturer at North-West University in the Department of Foundations of Education, most rural schools in the North-West do not

have the infrastructure for technology education. This includes computers, television sets and telephones which facilitate learning activities. The study revealed that learners are strangers to overhead projectors, video machines, video cameras, and so forth. The lack of public infrastructure such as transport was also emphasised because it prevents learners from visiting neighbouring towns; the cost is beyond the reach of most parents.

2.3.2 The School Register of Needs

As reflected in the Human Science Research Council special report of 2005, the School Register of Needs provides an important benchmark for addressing historical inequities, particularly in rural schooling. The annual School Register of Needs (Human Sciences Research Council) was first compiled in 1996. It was conducted by Mariette Visser and is normally published every four years. The study was based on social development, particularly in primary and secondary schools and it shows that there has been considerable progress since 1994 in redressing imbalances in the country as a whole. The survey conducted in 2000 by the Department of Education (HSRC 2000: 65) also shows a significant improvement in school structures countrywide.

The School Register of Needs was not repeated in 2004 as it overlapped with other data collected which pertains to issues of education (Simbayi et al. 2005).

Table 2: National Education Infrastructure (1996-2006)

Infrastructure	1996	2000	2006
Schools with no source of water on or near site	8823	7817	2891
Schools with no arrangement for disposal of sewage			15 428
Schools with no source of electricity on or near site	15263	12109	4046
Schools with unsafe structures		4389	1719
Mud structure schools		1751	939
Asbestos schools		994	575
Platoon schools		1023	473

Schools with no fence or fence in poor condition			10308
Schools without libraries	21907	22101	19940
Schools without laboratories	5870	5879	3387
Schools without access roads	630	2295	883

Source: http://us-cdn.creamermedia.co.za/assets/articles/attachments/07378_070914pos_report.pdf

2.3.3 Conclusions

In this section, an explanation on rural schooling in South Africa was given. The relationship between rural areas and education was clarified and the education system in South Africa since 1994 was placed in a historical context.

2.4 PROVISION FOR RURAL SCHOOLING IN KZN: CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

The South African Concise Oxford Dictionary (2005: 249) defines the word "context" as 'the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea.' In this study, the contextual factors referred to are those factors that, in terms of their nature or time, hamper the effective and efficient learning process between educators, learners, and parents. Steyn and Wolhuter (2000: 360) refer to challenges of the 21st century that will affect education particularly in third world countries dominated by rural areas. These can be summarised as follows: demography, geographical determinants, tendencies in science and technology, socio-economic tendencies, political tendencies and religious and philosophical tendencies.

Dekker and Van Schalkwyk (1995: 4) identify six factors that determine educational conditions and needs in any country or area of a country. They are demographic and geographical factors, socio-cultural situation, political dispensation, economic realities and the religious situation.

2.4.1 Geographical Factors

Statistics South Africa (2004) reflects that KZN is comprised of eleven district municipalities covering an area of 92 100 km^2. The province has extended its borders to three neighbouring states, namely Swaziland on the south, Lesotho on the southwest and Mozambique on the north. It also borders on three South African provinces, namely Mpumalanga on the northwest, Free State on the west and Eastern Cape on the south.

The largest city in KZN, Durban, has a tropical climate with abundant sunlight and rainfall. The air in Durban is humid and the subtropical latitude brings a lot of rain in summer and very mild weather in winter. During the summer months (September to April), the temperature ranges from 23°C to 33°C and the winter months are mild and warm. Conditions become sub-tropical further north. The low-lying coastal area makes way for the emerald hills of Zululand and the Thukela regions and reaches up to the Great Escarpment (SA-Venues).

KZN is surrounded by mountains and most rural schools are built on plains that are far away from the village. Children must travel long distances and traverse rivers without bridges and this hampers their access to schools (Cele 2005). In an attempt to address some of these geographical challenges, the Department of Transport in KZN embarked on a drive to roll out a *shova kalula* (ride easily) bicycle programme 2007. Through this programme, learners who must travel more than 5 kilometres per day are offered bicycles.

2.4.2 Demographic Factors

The province of KZN has a total of 6 066 school in urban and non-urban areas. Of these, 5 907 are public schools and 159 independent schools. The majority are located in non-urban areas (School Realities 2009: 4). KZN is highly populated and has too few schools. Its learner-educator ratio is 1:32 compared with Gauteng which has a learner-educator ratio of 1: 28.

2.4.3 Political Factors

KZN experienced political and faction fights prior to the democratic elections of South Africa in 1994. Schools were sites of violence during these periods of unrest. Harber & Davies (1998) refer to a report in the Durban Mercury newspaper of February 1996 which gives an account of 100 of the residents in KwaMashu (Durban) who demonstrated at the ANC regional offices. Their protest was that schools were like a war zone. In addition, periodic clashes between the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) have also affected education.

Faction fights still dominate the rural areas and this has a negative effect on the process of learning in these areas (Ntshoe 1999). The construction of schools and supply of learning materials through the tendering process is greatly influenced by the political affiliation of the area. Often communities need to be affiliated to a certain political party or be in support of the political leadership of the time in order to receive preferential treatment in terms of educational material supply (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education 2005: 1).

2.4.4 Economic Realities

The high rate of unemployment (35%) in KZN hinders access to better educational resources and limits the performance of learners in rural schools. Payment of the child support grant is a way to poverty alleviation but most girls who are of school going age have children. Girls miss classes on the days when they receive their grant money in order to support their children, and this is greatly influenced by the lack of banking systems in the rural areas. Female learners often 'fall in love' with male educators in an effort to get favours like school funds or money to buy uniforms. This situation continues despite the good efforts by the Department of Welfare that offer social grants to boost available disposable income that helps to pay the otherwise unaffordable costs of attending school. Recently the Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, announced that child support grants would increase to R240. Compelling evidence that the phasing-in of the child support grant has significantly reduced child poverty has emerged in recent research. Consideration is therefore being given, subject to affordability, to the extension of the child support grant to the age of 18 (Manual 2009).

2.4.5 Socio-Cultural Factors

There is a high rate of divorce in the population which is caused by forced or arranged marriages, a practise still widely in effect in KZN. Some people opt for single parenting. Children from these types of families are affected because they no longer get affection and guidance from both parents. Most of the learners in KZN doing their final year at high school or first years at tertiary level were born during the time of violence in the early 1990s. Also, the majority are affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and this causes faction fights in KZN. Because of this, learners adopt an aggressive attitude and bring weapons into the institution of learning. Early childhood development institutions that would motivate and instil interest in education to children are very few (Ricci, 2006).

2.4.6 Health Factors

Tuberculosis (TB) is claiming many lives in the province. According to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health (2008/09), the province has seen an increase in the TB caseload from 98 000 cases in 2005/06 to 110 000 in 2007/08. In 2008/09, a total of 1 134 MDR TB patients (compared to 1 128 in 2007/08) and 109 XDR TB patients (compared to 168 in 2007/08) were registered. KZN is the highest infected HIV/AIDS area in the whole world with more than 30% of its population being infected (HIV and AIDS KwaZulu-Natal, Project Gateway, Statistics, 2008).

2.5 THE ORGANISATION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN KZN

2.5.1 Policy and Legislation Regarding the Development of Rural Schooling

The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education has implemented policies that form part of national directives in order to develop rural schooling in KZN. The following policies have been implemented according to the KwaZulu-Natal Annual Performance Plan (2006/7: 1)

2.5.1.1 No Fee School Policy

This is a national policy proposed by the Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor. The intention behind it is to benefit the poorest learners who, in spite of the provisions of fee exemption in the National Norms and Standards for School Funding, still experience barriers in accessing education. There are 1 323 schools in KZN that are benefiting from this policy.

The Amended national norms and standards for school funding (Government Gazette No. 29179 2006) describes the National Quintile for public schools as follows: One of five groups into which all South African public ordinary schools are placed, and where the grouping is according to the poverty of the community around the school. Quintile one is the poorest quintile; quintile two is the second-poorest quintile, and so on. Each national quintile encompasses one-fifth of the learners enrolled in the public ordinary schools.

Table 3 establishes target per learner amounts for the school allocation. Column A provides the percentages that underlie the pro-poor funding approach. For example, the first national quintile (or one fifth) of learners should receive 30% of funding, which is six times more than the 5% of funding which should go towards the least poor quintile. Column B specifies the target per learner school allocation amount in rands for each of the years 2007, 2008 and 2009. Column B further specifies what the average per learner target value would be for the country as a whole. The 'no fee threshold' amount appearing in column B indicates the per learner amount that Government considers minimally adequate for each year. For 2007, the no fee threshold was set at R554, and for the following two years, inflationary increments have been calculated to give R581 and R605. Column C indicates the maximum percentage of learners in each national quintile that could be funded to the no fee threshold level. Column C provides an indication of both the possibility of adequate resourcing without school fees, and the percentage of learners that could be exempted from the payment of school fees, given the existence of fees. For example, in 2007, in national quintile 5, if school fees were used to finance the needs of 78% of learners, then 22% of learners could be financed through the

state's school allocation, in other words 22% of the learners could be fully exempt from the payment of school fees.

Table 3: National Table of Targets for the School Allocation (2007-2009)

		2007		2008		2009	
	A	B	C	B	C	B	C
NQ1	30.0	R738	100%	R775	100%	R807	100%
NQ2	27.5	R677	100%	R711	100%	R740	100%
NQ3	22.5	R544	100%	R581	100%	R605	100%
NQ4	15.0	R369	67%	R388	67%	R404	67%
NQ5	5.0	R123	22%	R129	22%	R134	22%
Overall	100.0	R492	89%	R517	89%	R538	89%
No fee threshold		R554		R581		R605	

Source: (South Africa National Department of Education 2006-Quintile)

2.5.1.2 National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)

Nutritional and health statuses are powerful influences on a child's learning performance in school. Children who lack certain nutrients in their diet (particularly iron and iodine) or who suffer from protein-energy malnutrition, hunger, parasitic infections or other diseases, do not have the same potential for learning as healthy and well-nourished children do. Poor health and nutrition among school-age children diminishes their cognitive development either through physiological changes or by reducing their ability to participate in learning experiences – or both (Kallman 2005).

The extra demands on school-age children (to perform chores, for example, or to walk long distances to school) creates a need for energy that is much greater than that usual to younger children. Indeed, the data available indicates high levels of protein-energy malnutrition and short-term hunger among school-age children. Furthermore, deficiencies of critical nutrients such as iodine, vitamin A and iron are common among school-aged children (Kallman 2005).

In this way, poor nutrition and health among schoolchildren contributes to the inefficiency of the educational system. Children with diminished cognitive abilities and sensory impairments perform less well and are more likely to repeat grades and drop out of school than children who are not impaired in this way. They also enrol in school at a later age, if at all, and finish fewer years of schooling. The irregular school attendance of malnourished and unhealthy children is one of the key factors in poor performance. Even temporary hunger, common in children who are not fed before going to school, can have an adverse effect on learning. Those who are hungry have more difficulty concentrating and performing complex tasks, even if otherwise well nourished. Research and programme experience shows that improved nutrition and health can lead to better performance, fewer repeated grades, and reduced dropout rates (Kallman 2005).

The NSNP is designed to identify and reach areas where poverty is extreme. It aims to provide one meal or snack a day by 10am through one of 22 approved menu options. Provinces select their menus based on social acceptance, availability and cost. The Eastern Cape and Western Cape provinces currently follow a cold menu that comprises brown bread, margarine, peanut butter and a nutritious drink. The Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and North West provinces follow a warm menu, which includes pap and beans or soya, samp and beans or soya, with vegetables wherever possible. In addition to the delivery of food to learners, the programme aims to involve local communities in the procurement and preparation of the food. Establishing and supporting food gardens have become a focus of support for the programme and schools (Kallman 2005).

2.5.1.3 Compulsory Education Policy

According to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Operations Manual (1999: 325), the provincial Minister is required to introduce and implement compulsory school attendance in accordance with national and provincial policy. According to this policy, the parent of a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance, who without a sufficient cause and after a written warning by the Secretary, fails to send their child to school regularly, is guilty of offence in terms of both national and KZN Acts.

In this way, an attempt is made to provide a solid foundation for learning. The Minister of Education has also issued a directive to extend the compulsory school requirements which were originally set for Grades 1-9. The goal is to ensure that by 2010 all children of school-going age in KZN attend Grade R before they start Grade 1.

2.5.1.4 Infrastructure Provision Policy

The infrastructure provision policy (KwaZulu-Natal Annual Performance Plan, 2006/7: 6) addresses infrastructure backlog. According to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (2008/09) the backlog for classrooms has reduced to 12 500. Through the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), the Department of Education KZN intends to implement an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The MEC took a policy decision to incorporate the following issues in the IDP:

* the consolidation of rural and farm schools;

* the upgrading of historically disadvantaged schools with boarding facilities; and

* the conversion of ordinary schools to full-service schools.

2.5.1.5 Tooling Centre of Excellence Policy (TEP)

This policy aims to increase artisans in industries which are generally under-rated in the world. The KZN sectors do not have a TEP, however, as a result of the ever-increasing demand from the bookmaking industry in KZN, a partnership has been established between the Toolmaker Association of South Africa (TASA) and Coastal Umgungundlovu FET colleges. This has led to the establishment of a Centre of Excellence to serve KZN (KwaZulu-Natal Annual Performance Plan 2006/7: 7).

2.5.1.6 Curriculum Implementation Policy

The focus of the MTEF is the implementation of a national curriculum statement from Grades 10 to 12 and it was started in 2006. The following is part of the policy (KwaZulu-Natal Annual Performance Plan 2006/7):

* orientation and training of educators in both General Education and Training and Further Education and Training Bands,

* ensuring that learners attain the educational outcomes at the General Education and Training Certificate level,

* provision of Learning and Teaching Support Material to support curriculum, and

* promoting multilingualism with specific reference to the indigenous languages.

2.5.1.7 Grading of Schools

A policy is starting to emerge at national level regarding the grading of schools. It intends to provide a basis for career progression within the system so that the Department can retain principals by improving their remuneration, without necessarily promoting them to administrative posts outside the schools as the current policies for career progression within schools stipulate (KwaZulu-Natal Annual Performance Plan 2006/7: 9).

2.5.1.8 Information Communication Technology (ICT) roll out

In terms of the policy on e-Education, the Department of Education in KZN must provide infrastructure to schools, that is, connectivity and computers, the professional development of educators and the development of digital content.

The Department is also aiming to integrate ICT to General Education Band and Further Education Band which requires a budget of approximately R500 million (KwaZulu-Natal Annual Performance Plan 2006/7: 9).

2.5.1.9 Conclusions on Development of Rural Schooling

Policy and legislation regarding rural development (schooling) in KZN were discussed in this section and include references to the no fee school policy, National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP), Compulsory education policy, Infrastructure provision policy, establishing a Tooling Centre of Excellence Policy (TCE) and Curriculum Implementation Policy.

2.5.2 Administration of Schooling

Prior to 1 April 2006, the administration of schools in KZN was such that the rural schools in the province were not receiving the services deserved in terms of administration. There is no specific policy set in place that is designed particularly to govern and administrate rural schools in KZN. Figure 1 represents overview of organisational structure of education in KZN.

Figure 1: KZN Educational Structure

MEC
Superintendent General
SGM: Service Delivery Management
GM: Service Delivery Management
District Manager
CES: Service Delivery Managment
Superintendent of Education
School
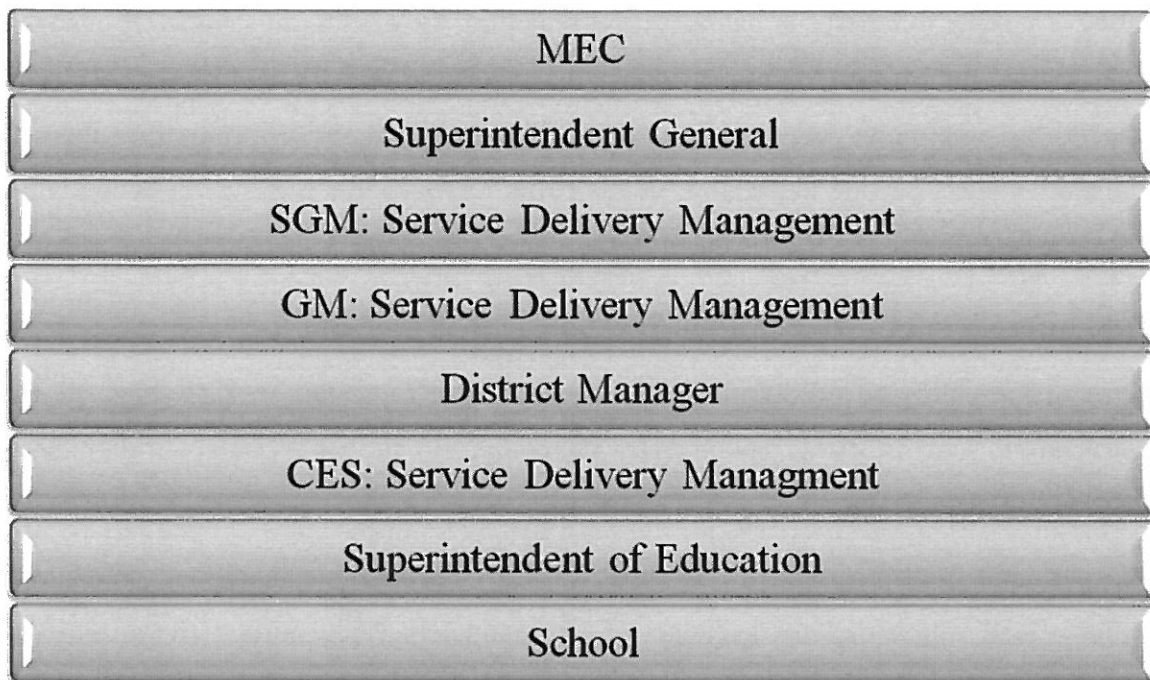
Source: KwaZulu-Natal Department of Communication and Information

The administration structure is headed by the Member of Executive Council (MEC) as a political head of the educational division responsible for following duties according to the South African Schools Act (1996). It require that the following take place:

- Educational centres for the purpose of development and the promotion of learners' attitudes must be established and maintained,

- Hostels in the public schools must be established and maintained,

- Centres for adult education must be established and maintained,

- Provision must be made for educational support services,

- Conditions for financial or other material aid must be determined,

- Educator's centres must be established and maintained, and

- Enables the Minister to temporarily close a state school, centre or hostel, without consulting interested parties.

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After the MEC, there is Superintendent General (SGM) who is accountable for the four educational branches.

Figure 2: Four Educational Branches of KZN

Superintendent General

| Service Delivery Management | Human Resource and Administration Services | Chief Financial Officer | Planning and Support |
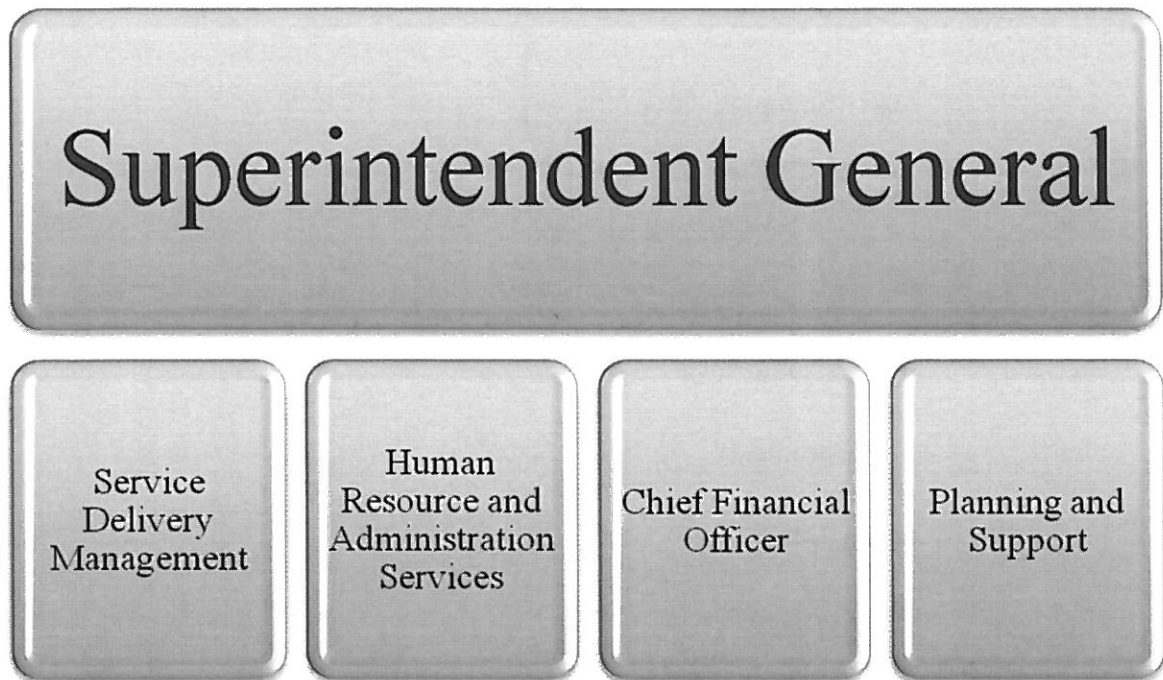
Source: KwaZulu-Natal Department of Communication and Information

(i) The Service and Delivery Management Branch

According to the KwaZulu-Natal Annual Performance Plan (2006/7: 10), Service and Delivery Management Branch consist of Three Educational Clusters (known as Regions prior to the 1994 general elections) under the supervision of the Chief Directorates in each cluster. The following clusters are identified:

- Cluster A

  - Ilembe

  - Pinetown

  - Port Shepstone

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- Umlazi

- Cluster B

  - Kokstad

  - Othukela

  - Umgungundlovu

  - Umzinyathi

- Cluster C

  - Amajuba

  - Empangeni

  - Obonjeni

  - Vryheid

The Chief Directorates of each cluster provide the curriculum for Further Education and Training (FET), Special Education within the province, Libraries, Information and Technology Services, School Nutrition Programme and Co-Curricular Services. Psychological Services, HIV/AIDS, Life Skills and Career Counselling also receive special attention.

(ii) Planning and Support Branch

The Planning and Support Branch under the Directorates in each cluster is responsible for Quality Assurance and Assessment, Infrastructure, Strategic Management Support and Education Management Services within the province.

(iii) Chief Financial Officer Branch

The Chief Financial Officer branch under the Chief Directorates is accountable for providing Financial Services and supply Chain Management, as well as the granting of Financial Support Services, monitoring of Internal Control, monitoring of Budget and Expenditure, Accounting, Budget and Salaries.

(iv) Human Resource and Administrative Services Branch

The Human Resource and Administrative Services Branch under Chief Directorates in each cluster deals with Human Resource Policies, monitoring Deputy Managers, and providing Employee Assistance Program (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, MM and A Report 2002: 1-11).

In terms of the governance of schools, the governance of the public school is vested in its body and it may perform only such functions and obligations and exercise only such rights as prescribed by the Act in terms of (KwaZulu-Natal School Education Act 3 1996). The following are the requirements stated in the pre-amble the governing bodies:

1. Constitution of the governing bodies,

2. Code of conduct of the governing bodies,

3. Enhancement capacity of the governing bodies,

4. Functions of all governing bodies,

5. Allocated functions of all governing bodies,

6. Withdrawal of functions from governing bodies,

7. Membership of governing body of ordinary public schools,

8. Failure of the governing body to function,

9. Reimbursement of the governing bodies, and

10. Elections of the members of the governing bodies.

The KwaZulu-Natal School Education Act (Act 3 of 1996) provides the regulations relating to the Governing Bodies of Public Schools. The Acts require that the membership of the governing body consists of:

- the principal;

- one educator elected by the educators at school;

- one non-educator elected by the non-educators employed at the school;

- parents;

- two learners nominated by the representative council;

- one representative from the organisation of parents;

- one representative from disabled persons;

- one expert from an appropriate field, and

- two members from the community with special interests in the school nominated by the governing body and appointed by the Secretary.

The following are regarded as the duties of the governing body:

- to promote the best interests of the school;

- to adopt the constitution of the school;

- to develop the mission statement of the school;

- to support the principal, educators and other staff members;

- to determine the times of the school;

- to administer and control the school property;

- to encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff;

- to keep the minutes of all meetings;

- to prepare an annual budget, and

- to open and maintain a bank account.

2.5.3 The Schooling System in KZN

The KwaZulu-Natal School Education Act 3 (1996) makes use of a different nomenclature in places. For example, the KZN Act refers, inter alia, to combined schools, community schools,

independent schools, independent schools for specialized education, industrial schools, intermediate schools, pre-schools, primary schools, reform schools, schools for specialised education, secondary schools, state-aided schools, state subsidised schools and state schools.

2.5.3.1 State Schools

Section 12 of the KwaZulu-Natal School Education Act 3 (1996) prescribes the types of state schools that the Minister may establish and maintain in the province. These are:

- Pre-primary schools

- Primary schools

- Secondary schools

- Combined schools

- Schools for specialised education

- Industrial schools

- Reform schools

- Any other school that the Minister may deem necessary to for education

Governance of the state schools vest in the authority of the principals who act on behalf of the Head of Department. The administration is carried out by the governing body of which the principal in his or her official capacity is a member.

2.5.3.2 State-aided Schools

According to the KwaZulu-Natal School Education Act (Act 3 1996), State-aided schools registered, declared or created in any way by law may be repealed by House of Assembly Act of 1998.

The person who manages state–aided schools is, for the purposes of the Act:

- the owner of the school; or

- a person appointed or authorised by the owner with approval of the Superintendent General of education.

2.5.3.3 Independent Schools

The KwaZulu-Natal School Education Act 3 (1996) provides that no person be permitted to establish, conduct or maintain a school or any institution purporting to be a school unless it is registered in terms of the Act. Application for registration must be made to the Superintendent-General and comply with the prescribed requirements and contain any additional particulars that Superintendent-General may require.

2.5.3.4 Curriculum

Outcomes Based Education (OBE) was officially introduced in South Africa by the former Minister of Education, Professor Sbusiso Bengu. It requires that all learners in South Africa make 'a shift from content based learning to one based on outcomes' (Vermuelen 2005: 3). The majority of the intensification OBE took place in the 1990's (Jacobs 2004). OBE has been implemented in the countries such as Scotland, Australia, Holland, and the USA. The implementation of the curriculum was met by a number of hitches such as poorly trained facilitators. The department simply took educators from schools to be facilitators without training them properly in subject content. This resulted in them imparting scanty information to other educators.

Harber (Curriculum 2005, Outcomes-Based Education, and the South African Schools Act: n.d.) states that C2005 commonly known as the National Curriculum Statement and Outcomes-Based Education allows for existing changes in teaching particularly with regard to implementation as it involves the integration of skills that include conflict management and environmental awareness.

There is, however, still an ongoing crisis in its implementation as a result of:

- the supply of running water, electricity, books and desks that makes the implementation of the curriculum too difficult (cf paragraph 2.3.1);

- the massive lack of coordination and leadership amongst the school administration;

- the absence of any real ethos of professionalism among many educators;

- large numbers of textbooks which are outdated, irrelevant and inaccurate;

- the absence of a community-wide appreciation for the importance of education;

- a school management that is typically hierarchal, inflexible and devoid of a sense of ownership among parents.

Harber (Curriculum 2005, Outcomes-Based Education, and the South African Schools Act: n.d.) further suggests that C2005 has been a political platform for the majority approval for party survival. The lack of education itself in terms of motivation and the spiralling disillusionment are among the factors that make the implementation of the C2005 almost impossible.

2.5.3.5 Assessment

Harber (Curriculum 2005, Outcomes-Based Education, and the South African Schools Act: n.d.) established a few elements that contributed to the unsatisfactory assessment particularly in the rural schools of KZN.

Fundamentals of the assessment of the C2005 include the complexity of language and concepts associated with the curriculum. Such barriers affected educators in classroom activities at some point in teaching and learning.

The assessment of C2005 caused problems because it offered instrumentalist views of knowledge that violated the structure of some learning areas. C2005 placed numerous burdens on educators and demanded a lot of paper work. As a result it made assessment impractical. The following were considered a way to improve the assessment criteria:

- To train and retrain educators;

- To have classrooms which facilitate the monitoring and assessment required by C2005;

- The allowance of additional time for management duties;

- The retraining of education managers;

- The encouraging of parental support and involvement; and

- The creation of opportunities for educator dialogue and networking.

2.5.3.6 Educator Training

According to the Department of Education (2009), 106 330 educators in 2007 were trained in the 23 higher education institutions from under-graduate to post-graduate levels in South Africa. After the closure of fourteen educational colleges that were converted to Further Education and Training (FET) colleges in 1997, a proposal was tabled that led to the amalgamation of many universities in South Africa. The University of Durban Westville and Natal University merged to form the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN). University of Zululand (UniZul) which was established by the apartheid government to prop up separate development never merged with any institution. Salton Technicon and Technicon Natal merged to form the Durban Institute of Technology (DIT). The two universities (UKZN and UniZul) and the DIT train educators and statistics from 2006 show that UKZN produced 5 120 educators, UniZul 3 718, and DIT 584 educators.

2.5.3.7 Inset Training

A tendency exists to misrepresent the concepts of 'in-service training' and 'workshop,' especially since the implementation of C2005. In-service training refers to facilitations of existing knowledge, whereas workshop refers to facilitations of new knowledge that was not in existence before. Educators in KZN, if not the whole of South Africa, do not receive inset training, but rather workshops as a means of development in their educational field.

2.5.3.8 Social Structures in Partnership in Education in KZN Rural Schools

To ensure effective discipline, safety and security, social structures should be in partnership with education. According to KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (2003: 21), the followings measures were embraced in order to achieve this:

- Sports programmes;

- Cultural events;

- School breaks;

- School publications; and

- Community support activities.

The community should have access to schools so that they can participate in fire prevention, night and weekend security, monitoring and the promotion of communications.

2.5.3.8.1 Medical Services (clinics)

The Province of KZN has 47 health posts, 152 mobile clinics, 553 fixed clinics, 16 community health centres, 41 district hospitals and 14 provincial hospitals (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health 2008/09). According to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Health (2004: 1-35) the following are some of the services they provide at schools:

- **Life Skills Education**

    Life skills refer to the abilities that help an individual to meet the challenges of everyday life. The primary aim of life skill education is to develop knowledge, attitudes and values so as to empower people to deal with the challenges of everyday life.

- **Primary Health Care**

    This care includes the prevention of health problems at schools and in the community. It emphasises equity, community participation, intersectional collaboration, appropriateness of technology and affordable costs.

- **Risk Factors**

    This refers to social, economic, or biological status and behaviours or environments that are associated with or cause increased susceptibility to specific diseases, ill health or injury.

A large percentage of the KZN population live with the risk of malnutrition, becoming a school dropout, the lack of parental guidance, the existence of child labour and the possibility of becoming a street child. It is, therefore, the requirement of the Department of Health that schools should develop their own policy in dealing with the above-mentioned crisis by making use of the above-mentioned facilities (hospitals and clinics), particularly as regards the problem of HIV/AIDS.

The policy could include:

- Helping to establish contacts with care agencies;

- Ensuring that the families' basic needs are being met;

- Spreading information about the disease;

- Dispelling falsehoods about HIV/AIDS;

- Giving sensible advice about affordable funerals;

- Helping children to prepare for the death of a parent; and

- Supporting those who must care for others.

2.5.3.8.2   Religious Organisations

Section 7 of South African Schools Act states that religious observations may be conducted at a public school as long as the rules issued by the governing body are applied and if such attendances are conducted on an equitable basis and voluntarily attended by learners and staff (KwaZulu-Natal School Act, 30/1996). The province is home to a number of religions and Shembe, Muslims, Islam, Hindu, Christian, and various African religions are permissible in KZN schools. According to South African Statistics (2009), 67% of the South African population are Christians. For this reason, Christianity plays a major role in the education system of South Africa and many schools still practise religious observances, some even to the extent of conducting certain ceremonies.

2.5.3.8.3   Policing

Violence continues to be a major concern in the province and it was reported in 2002 that about 11.8% of the learners reported being assaulted by a partner, 8.7% were forced to have sex and 9% admitted forcing someone else to have sex. Addressing the media in Pietermaritzburg, KZN education MEC Ina Cronje said that all the poorest schools in the province should have at least have one security guard by the end of the 2008/2009 financial year (Government Communication and Information System, 2007). This means that 3 342 schools would benefit from the MEC proposal. KZN Department of Education Circular Number 55 of 2001 gives information about security and safety in the public schools of KZN, including rural schools. It states that the Minister of Education, after consultation with the Council of Education, gives notice, according to the South African Schools Act (1996), of the regulations relating to safety measures at public schools. Dangerous objects that are not allowed within the borders of the school are:

- any explosive material or device;

- any firearm or gas weapon;

- any article, object or instrument which may be employed to cause bodily harm to a person, or to render a person temporarily paralysed or unconscious; and

- any object which the Minister by notice may declare to be a dangerous object for the purpose of these regulations.

All public schools are declared drug free and dangerous object free zones. According to KZN Schools Act, no person may:

- allow any dangerous object in the public schools;

- carry a dangerous object within the public school premises;

- store any dangerous object on the public school premises;

- posses illegal drugs on public school premises;

- enter a school premises whilst under the influence of an illegal drug or alcohol;

- cause any form of violence or disturbances which can negatively impact on any public school activity;

- directly or in indirectly cause harm to anyone who exposes another person or who makes an attempt to frustrate or prevent any dangerous object or activity;

- search any public school premises if there is reasonable suspicion that a dangerous object may be present;

- search any person present on the public school presses, and

- seize any dangerous object or illegal drugs present on public school premises.

With regards to access to public schools and subject to the Constitution, laws and national and provincial policies it is stated that:

- no person shall be allowed to enter into any public school premises without the permission of the principal or HOD.

2.6 CONCLUSIONS ON PROVISION OF SCHOOLING IN KZN WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RURAL SCHOOLING

Several factors such as policy and legislation regarding rural schooling development in KZN, the administration of schooling, the schooling system itself and educator training contributed to the quality of education provided in KZN. Unfortunately the implementation of the factors is hampered by the fact that the province is predominantly rural. Most of the provinces in South Africa, like KZN, however, face major problems in improving the education system in spite of the above factors being in force.

2.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the problems affecting the running of rural schools internationally, locally and within the provinces of South Africa were discussed. The policies and legislations created by the South African national government and which were adopted and implemented in the provinces are giving promising solution to redress rural schooling problems. Chapter Three discusses learner achievement in South African schools with special reference to KZN.

3 CHAPTER THREE: LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLING SYSTEM

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Learner achievement in schooling with particular reference to the South African Schooling system will be dealt with. Learner achievement will first be defined according to various authors and then the ways in which learner achievement is measured in various education systems will be discussed. After this, a minimum standard or benchmark to be achieved by a certain age or grade will be considered.

Secondly, learner achievement in the South African education system with reference to how OBE is assessed in Grade R-3, Grade 4-6, Grade 7-9, and Grade 10 -12 will be discussed. Other areas such as maths and reading skills as a benchmark will be included in the chapter. The rate of failure and dropouts will be part of the study in this chapter.

Finally, policies and provisions in the South African schooling system to address learner underachievement will be summarised.

3.2 LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT IN VARIOUS EDUCATION SYSTEMS

According to Ministère des Affaires étrangères (2007), education in France aims to prepare young people for a successful working life. The national tests to assess the progress of learners are set CE2 (8 years of schooling) and the first year of college (11 years of schooling). This programme has been in operation for more than 10 years and is in place to identify learners who are struggling in school, to ensure quality access to colleges and to support learners experiencing learning difficulties, so as not to let them "fall by the wayside."

Decisions about pupils (repeating years, moving up to a higher class) are taken through this procedure which involves a dialogue between educators, administrative and ancillary staff and the families and pupils themselves. Although educators give their opinions in what is known as "class council", formed of representatives of pupils, educators and parents can appeal against a decision and demand, depending on the pupil's level that the pupil either be moved up or repeat a year.

Florida et al. (2006) reported on the assessment according to the education system of the USA. It is the government's responsibility to determine the learners' assessment policies. Assessment is carried out in such way that it should guarantee the mobility of learners so that

they can be accommodated by other states. In Florida, assessment is based on curriculum objectives, assessment tests, and reform guidelines.

The reform process began with the development of Blueprint 2000 that provided the framework for the Sunshine States Standards (SSS). Learners are assessed in seven subject areas; these include language, mathematics, science, social studies, arts, health, physical education and foreign languages. The assessment is done in four grade clusters, which are K-2, 3-5, 6-8, as well as 9-12. The benchmarks provide the objectives that students should be able to meet by the time they progress to the next grade level. For example, the benchmark in 6-8 level is that students should know generally organisms of the population in which they live. To date, Florida Comprehensive Assessment Tests (FCAT) is given in reading at 4th, 8th, and 10th, grades.

The education system of Jamaica is unlike that of other countries. According to Sternberg (1998) assessment is according to the ability of a learner to memorise, recall, and recognize information. Ability tests are set to assess such standards. The problem facing this system is that these abilities are not necessarily the ones that matter most in the life activities for which the school is supposed to prepare for the children.

According to Wu (1999), the Japanese Education System depends on the application of motivation on assessment. Assessment is based on academic standards, individual student differences, adolescent life, and the educator's life. In Japan, whole-class instruction is used as a tool of assessment of learners. Through this system, students are asked to stand up to present their subject matter, and then ask members of the class to evaluate each solution. Whole-class instruction plays a large role in the Japanese students' academic success. This system of assessment helps the educators not to exercise stern authoritative control over their classrooms. It also encourages student participation. Assessment through whole-class students helps to build strong classroom relationships and unifies students under one goal.

3.3   LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLING

3.3.1   Foundation Phase

All information in this section is gained from the National Policy on Assessment and Qualification in the General Education and Training Band (Department of Education, 2007).

3.3.1.1 Assessment in the Foundation Phase (Grades R-3)

Learner performance in Grades R-3 (5-9 years of age) in the three Learning Programmes should mainly focus on the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards defined in the Languages, Mathematics, and Life Orientation learning areas. The learner's level of competence in the Natural Sciences, Technology, Social Sciences, Economic and Management Sciences and Arts and Culture learning areas should be planned for, taught and assessed in an integrated manner within the three Learning Programmes offered in the phase.

3.3.1.2 Recording and Reporting in Grades R-3 (Foundation phase)

The National codes and their descriptors in Table 4 are used for recording and reporting in the Foundation Phase.

Table 4: Codes and Descriptors

RATING CODE	DESCRIPTION OF COMPETENCE
4	Outstanding/Excellent Achievement
3	Satisfactory Achievement
2	Partial Achievement
1	Not Achieved

Source: The Government Gazette (Vol 500 No.29696)

In the Foundation Phase the performance should take place based on the three Learning Programmes offered, that is Literacy, Numeracy, and Life Skills.

3.3.1.3 Recorded formal assessment tasks for Grades R-3

The requirements for formal assessment for Grades R-3 have been set out in Table 5. It also indicates the number of recordings per Learning Area required in the Foundation Phase.

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Table 5: Number of Recorded Assessment Tasks for Grades R-3

Learning Programme	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term	Total
Literacy(Language)	4	4	4	4	16
Additional Language(Optional in Grade 1-2)	2	2	2	2	8
Numeracy (Mathematics)	3	3	3	3	12
Life Skills(Life Orientation)	1	1	1	1	4

Source: The Government Gazette (Vol 500 No.29696)

3.3.2 Intermediate Phase

3.3.2.1 Assessment in the Intermediate Phase (Grades 4 - 6)

In the Intermediate Phase (10-12 years of age), the assessment of a learner's performance should focus on the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards of each of the eight learning areas. These include Languages, Mathematics, Life Orientation, Natural Sciences, Technology, Social Sciences, Economic and Management Sciences, and Arts and Culture Learning Areas.

3.3.2.2 Recording and Reporting in Grades 4-6

National codes, together with either percentages or descriptions as provided in Table 6 should be used.

Table 6: Recording and Reporting in Grades 4-6

RATING CODE	DESCRIPTION OF COMPETENCE	PERCENTAGES
4	Outstanding/Excellence Achievement	70-100
3	Satisfactory Achievement	50-69
2	Partial Achievement	35-49
1	Not Achieved	1-34

Source: The Government Gazette (Vol 500 No.29696)

In the Intermediate Phase, the recording and reporting performance in the formal assessment tasks should be against the eight Learning Areas.

3.3.2.3 Recorded Formal Assessment Tasks for Grades 4 – 6

The requirements for formal assessment for Grades 4-6 have been set out in Table 7. It also indicates the number of recordings per Learning Area required in the Intermediate Phase.

Table 7: Recorded formal assessment tasks for Grades 4-6

Learning Area	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Total
Language 1	2	2	2	2	8
Language 2	2	2	2	2	8
Language 3	1	1	1	1	4
Mathematics	2	2	2	2	8
Natural Sciences	1	2	1	2	6
Social Sciences	1	2	1	2	6
Technology	1	1	1	1	4
Economic and Management Sciences	1	1	1	1	4
Life Orientation	1	1	1	1	4
Arts and Culture	1	1	1	1	4

Source: The Government Gazette (Vol 500 No.29696)

3.3.3 Senior Phase

3.3.3.1 Assessment in the Senior Phase (7 - 9)

In the Senior Phase (13-15 years of age), the assessment of a learner performance should focus on the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards of each of the eight Learning Areas. These are the Languages, Mathematics, Life Orientation, Natural Sciences, Technology, Social Sciences, Economic and Management Sciences, and the Arts and Culture Learning Areas. National codes, together with either percentages or descriptions as provided in Table 8 should be used.

Table 8: Assessment in the Intermediate Phase (7-9)

Rating Code	Description Of Competence	Percentage

7	Outstanding achievement	80-100
6	Meritorious achievement	70-79
5	Substantial achievement	60-69
4	Adequate achievement	50-59
3	Moderate achievement	40-49
2	Elementary achievement	30-39
1	Not achieved	0-29

Source: The Government Gazette (Vol 500 No.29696)

3.3.3.2 Recorded Formal Assessment Tasks for Grades 7 – 8

The requirements for formal assessment for Grades 7 and 8 have been set out in Table 9 below, which gives the number of recordings per Learning Area required in the two grades.

Table 9: Recorded formal assessment tasks for Grades 7-8

Learning Area	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Total
Language 1	3	2	3	2	8
Language 2	2	2	2	2	8
Language 3	2	1	2	1	6
Mathematics	3	3	3	3	12
Natural Sciences	2	2	2	2	8
Social Sciences	2	2	2	2	8
Technology	1	1	1	1	4
Economic and Management Sciences	1	1	1	1	4
Life Orientation	1	1	1	1	4

Arts and Culture	1	1	1	1	4

Source: The Government Gazette (Vol 500 No.29696)

3.3.3.3 Recorded Formal Assessment Tasks for Grade 9

In Grade 9, the internal Programme of assessment constitutes 75% of a learner's mark result, and evidence of learners' work in these tasks should be easy to locate for moderation purposes. The external Common Tasks for Assessment (CTA) in Grade 9 count 25% of the final mark assessment and constitute the assessment tasks for term four.

The requirements for formal assessment for Grades 9 have been set out in Table 10. It also indicates the number of recordings per learning area required in the Grade 9.

Table 10: Recorded formal assessment tasks for Grade 9

LEARNING AREA	TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 3	TERM 4	TOTAL
Language 1	3	2	3	CTA	8
Language 2	2	2	2	CTA	6
Language 3	2	1	2	CTA	5
Mathematics	3	3	3	CTA	9
Natural Sciences	2	2	2	CTA	6
Social Sciences	2	2	2	CTA	6
Technology	1	1	1	CTA	3
Economic and Management Sciences	1	1	1	CTA	3
Life Orientation	1	1	1	CTA	3
Arts and Culture	1	1	1	CTA	3

Source: The Government Gazette (Vol 500 No.29696)

3.3.3.4 Progression in Grades R-8

- Ideally, all learners in Grades R-8 should progress with their age group.

- Any decisions about progression should be based on the evidence of a learner's performance against recorded assessment.

- Where a learner needs more time to demonstrate achievement, decisions shall be made based on the advice of the relevant role-player: educators, learners, parents and education support services (ESS).

- No learner should stay in the same phase for longer than four years (or five years in the Foundation Phase where Grade R is offered) unless the provincial Head of Department has given approval based on specific circumstances and professional advice.

- If a learner needs more time to achieve the Learning Outcomes, then that learner need not necessarily be retained in the grade for a whole year.

3.3.3.5 Promotion at Grade 9 level

- Promotion occurs only at Grade 9 level. A learner is promoted from Grade 9 level on the basis of demonstrating a competence that reflects a balance through all eight Learning Areas, and which has been assessed through a continuous assessment programme and an external summative assessment component.

- A learner will be promoted to Grade 10 only if he/she has satisfied the following requirements:

  a) At least a "moderated achievement" or level 3 rating in one of the Official Languages offered and Mathematics;

  b) At least an "elementary achievement" or level 2 rating in one of the Official Languages; and

  c) At least a "moderated achievement" or level 3 rating in four other Learning Areas.

- All eight Learning Areas are compulsory and their assessment is compulsory, but the awarding of a qualification will be based on Languages, Mathematics and four other Learning Areas.

- The Learner will be promoted only if he/she satisfies the requirements of both the Continuous Assessment (75%) and the External Assessment (25%) components in all Learning Areas.

3.3.3.6 Condonation at Grade 9 Level

1. The minimum requirements in terms of offering eight Learning Areas, a minimum of two languages, and evidence of performance in CASS and CTA should be met before condonation may be considered.

2. A learner's results will be condoned only once in one of the following cases:

   a) when s/he achieves elementary achievement or level 2 in Mathematics; or

b) when s/he achieves elementary achievement or level 2 in Languages; or

c) when s/he achieves elementary achievement or level 2 in only one of the four other Learning Areas required for promotion.

3. Grade 9 signifies an exit point in the education system. All accredited examining bodies for this level must meet assessment requirements in terms of the provisions of the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Council.

3.3.3.7 Exemption

- An immigrant learner that has been in the country for less than three years by the beginning of the grade 9 year will be exempted from the requirement of two official Languages. Such a learner still has to offer two official languages, but needs to obtain only a "moderate achievement" in one of these languages.

- A deaf learner will be exempted from the position requirement of two official languages. However, this learner still needs to be proficient in two languages, a South African Language and one other official language. He/she is also required to obtain a "moderated achievement" in only one of these languages.

- Learners with other special needs, including serious forms of language development delays such as dyslexia and mathematical disorders such as dyscalculia, are also considered for exemption.

3.3.3.8 Qualifications

- In the General Education and Training (GET) Band, Grade 9 marks the end of the compulsory education phase of schooling.

- Qualifications at this level must be registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) at level 1 and will be quality assured by the relevant Education and Training Quality Assurances (Umalusi).

- A Grade 9 qualification is required for access to Grade 10 at a school or NQF level 2 qualifications at a Further Education and Training (FET) College.

- If a learner meets the requirements for a qualifications and decides to exit the system at the end of Grade 9, he/she may be issued with a General Education and Training Certificate (GETC).

3.3.4 Senior Phase

3.3.4.1 Assessment in the Senior Phase (10- 12)

The Department of Education developed and published Subject Assessment Guidelines for the National Curriculum Statement (National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General) 2003). The purpose of assessment in the Senior Phase is to describe regulations, rules and provisions for the award of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) at Level 4 of the National Qualification Framework (NQF). The policy is based on norms and standards to which all assessment bodies in terms of Sections *3(4)(1)* and *7* of the National Education Policy Act, (Act No.27 of 1996) and Sections *6(A)* and *61* of the South African Schools Act (1996).

3.3.4.1.1 *Assessment in Grades 10-11*

Grades 10 and 11 are assessed internally according to the requirements as specified in the Subject Assessment Guidelines. The internal assessment mark allocated to assessment tasks completed during the school year is 25% and the end-of-year assessment mark is 75% of the total mark.

The end of the assessment must consist of tasks that are internally set, marked and moderated, as specified in the Subject Assessment Guidelines.

3.3.4.1.2 *Assessment in Grade 12*

The internal assessment mark is 25% and the external assessment mark is 75% of the total mark, as specified in the Subject Assessment Guidelines. This requirement applies to full-time, part-time and private candidates. The internal assessment must be externally moderated.

3.3.4.2 Recording and Reporting

Seven levels of competence have been described for each subject in the Subject Assessment Guidelines. These descriptions assist educators to assess learners and grade them at the correct level. The various achievement levels and their corresponding percentage bands are shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Scale of achievement for National Curriculum Statement for Grades 10-12

RATING CODE	RATING	MARKS
7	Outstanding achievement	80-100
6	Meritorious achievement	70-79
5	Substantial achievement	60-69
4	Adequate achievement	50-59
3	Moderate achievement	40-49
2	Elementary achievement	30-39
1	Not achieved	0-29

3.3.4.3 Supplementary Examinations

Supplementary examination is granted under the following conditions:

- If Grade 12 full-time candidates have not met minimum certification in the final external examination and require two subjects to obtain a National Senior Certificate, he or she may register for supplementary examinations in the following year. These subjects must be subjects that the candidates sat for in the previous October/November examination.

- If a Grade 12 part-time candidate or a private candidate has not met the minimum promotion and certification requirements, he or she may register for the supplementary examinations in the following year. These subjects must be those that the candidates sat for in the previous October/November examination.

- In exceptional cases, candidates who are medically unfit and, as a result, are absent from one or more external examinations, may write the supplementary examination and have it regarded as part of the same sitting.

- A candidate who wishes to improve his/her performance in the end-of-year examinations may register for supplementary examinations in a minimum of two subjects.

- Admission to the supplementary examination is at the discretion of the Head of Department.

3.4 MATHEMATICS AND READING SKILLS AS A BENCHMARK

The South African failure rate in Mathematics and reading skills is used as a benchmark for learner achievement. The Department of Education aims to improve pupils' average skills in reading and numeracy to 50% proficiency by 2011. This programme will be introduced from Grades 1-6 and learners will write a national assessment test. The results of the assessment will be sent to the Minister of Education annually. At the time of writing, this is Naledi Pandor.

3.5 FAILURE RATE IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLING

According to The Council on Higher Education, data from the Senior Certificate examination cycle in 2006 highlights the gravity of the current education situation in South Africa. Of over 1.6 million learners who entered Grade 1 in 1995, 66% dropped out before reaching Grade 12. Only 21.1% obtained a Senior Certificate, and only 5% (85,830) obtained a Senior Certificate endorsement (the statutory requirement for entry to degree study). The national target of a 20% participation rate in higher education was too difficult to reach. The high dropout rate was reported to be taking place in both primary and high school learners.

Macgregor (2007) emphasises the problem of high dropout rates in the higher institutions. According to her, 40% of South African students attending university in 2007, dropped out. Lack of finance emerged as the major impediment for students. While South Africa has a highly successful National Student Financial Aid Scheme, which supports about 120,000 of 735,000 university students, loans and bursaries do not cover the full costs of study and it leaves the students struggling to meet living and other expenses. Financial difficulties compelled most of the students who dropped out to take up a part time or full time employment. It was also found that amongst students who dropped out from the seven universities, on average 70% came from low-income families. This proportion rose to 82% at the historically disadvantaged University of Fort Hare. Low family income generally equates with lack of formal education.

3.6 Policies and Provisions Made in the South African Schooling System to Address Learner Underachievement

3.6.1 Whole-School Evaluation

The National Policy on Whole-School Evaluation (Government Gazette Vol.433, No. 22512 2001) aims at improving the overall quality of education in South African Schools. It seeks to ensure that all children are given an equal opportunity to make the best use of their capabilities. Its main purpose is to facilitate the improvement of school performance through approaches characterised by partnership, collaboration, mentoring and guidance. The Policy also contains a built-in mechanism for reporting findings and providing feedback to the school and to various stakeholders on the level of performance achieved by schools.

The Policy is supported by national guidelines, criteria for evaluation, and instruments that have to be used by trained and accredited supervisors in order to ensure consistency in the evaluation of schools.

The principal aims of this Policy are integral to supporting documents, guidelines and criteria. They are to:

a)   Moderate externally, on a sampling basis, the results of self-evaluation carried out by the schools.

b)   Evaluate the effectiveness of a school in terms of the national goals, using national criteria.

c)   Increase the level of accountability within the education system.

d)   Strengthen the support given to schools by district professional support services.

e)   Provide feedback to all stakeholders as a means of achieving continuous school improvement.

f)   Identify aspects of excellence within the system that will serve as models of good practice.

g)   Identify the aspects of effective schools and improve the general understanding of what factors create effective schools.

The Policy is based on the following principles:

a) The core mission of schools is to improve the educational achievements of all learners. Whole-school evaluation, therefore, is designed to enable those in schools, supervisors and support services to identify to what extent the school is adding value to learners' prior knowledge, understanding and skills.

b) All members of a school community are responsible for the quality of their own performance. Whole-school evaluation intends to enable the contribution made by staff, learners and other stakeholders to improve their own and the school's performance, to be properly recognised.

c) All evaluation activities must be characterised by openness and collaboration. Therefore, the criteria to be used in evaluating schools must be made public.

d) Whole-school evaluation of a good quality must be standardised and consistent. The guidelines, criteria and instruments must ensure consistency over periods of time and across settings.

e) The evaluation of both qualitative and quantitative data is essential when deciding how well a school is performing. For this reason, whole-school evaluation is concerned with the range of inputs, processes and outcomes. These are associated with, for example, staffing and physical resources, human and physical, the quality of leadership and management, learning and teaching, and the standards achieved by learners.

f) Staff development and training are critical to school improvement. A measure used by whole-school evaluation in judging a school's performance is the amount and quality of in-service training undertaken by staff and its impact on learning and standards of achievement. In this way, whole-school evaluation will make an important contribution to securing well-focused development opportunities for school staff.

g) Schools are inevitably at different stages of development. Many factors contribute to this. A basic principle of this Policy is to seek to understand why schools are where they are and to use the particular circumstances of the school as the main starting point of the evaluation. The Policy recognises that schools in disadvantaged areas, for example, must not be disadvantaged in terms of whole-school evaluation.

The following are the key areas of evaluation:

- Basic functionality of the school

- Leadership, management, and communication

- Governance and relationships

- Quality of teaching and learning, and educator development

- Curriculum provision and resources

- Learner achievement

- School safety, security and discipline

- School infrastructure

- Parents and community

3.6.2 Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

Although IQMS was proposed to develop educators, it was believed that the development of an educator meant the achievement of a learner. A document issued by the Education Labour Relations Council (2003) describes the resolution taken between the Department of Education and the Labour Relations Council. The purpose of the agreement was to implement IQMS. This includes Development Appraisal, Performance Measurement and Whole School Evaluation. IQMS is based upon the fundamental belief to:

- determine competence;

- assess strength and areas for development;

- provide support and opportunities for development to ensure continued growth;

- promote accountability; and

- monitor an institution's effectiveness.

IQMS is guided by the following principles:

- the recognition of the crucial role of the delivery of quality public education;

- that all learners have equal access to quality education;

- that the system's focus is positive and constructive even where performance needs to improve.

3.6.3 National Strategy for Learner Attainment (NSLA)

The Minister of Education, Ms Naledi Pandor, MP launched the National Strategy for Learner Attainment (NSLA) in 2004 as an overarching or transversal programme directing the focus of the education system in South Africa to raise the level of achievements of all learners (Framework for National Strategy for Learner Attainment 2007).

The strategy covers the following:

a) Improvement of performance across all schools.

b) Raising the performance of schools that have scored an overall pass rate of below 60% in Grade 12.

c) Ensuring higher endorsement rates in better performing and well-resourced schools.

d) Providing special support to teachers and schools offering Grade 12 for the first time.

e) Improving the quality of learner attainment by ensuring increased numbers of learners passing with endorsement and ensuring that no potential endorsement candidates are denied the opportunity of enrolling for endorsement.

f) Improving the numbers and quality of passes in Mathematics, Science and other gateway subjects.

g) Dealing with a performance backflow above 10%.

3.6.4 Monitoring the implementation of the NSLA

The district is responsible for supporting, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the NSLA at the school on an ongoing basis. To ensure that a school is fully functional the districts must intensify their efforts to ensure, amongst others, the following:

- That basic infrastructure in all schools be provided;

- Ensuring that all schools in the foundation phase have 100 books in each classroom

- That all learners have at least one text book per learning area or subject

- That management and leadership support is provided to the school;

- SMT and SGB training

- Subject/Learning Area content training for all teachers

- Subject advisors appointed per subject per district and in accordance with learner numbers in that subject;

- Monitoring and support programmes for schools introducing grade 12 for the first time;

- Scheduled visits to and capacity building of new schools;

- Under-performing schools will be prioritised for high impact monitoring and supported by a multi functional task team representing a diverse range of identified expertise.

3.7 LEARNER ACHIEVEMENT: THE POSITION IN KZN

The position of learner achievement in KZN sounds promising. Addressing the provincial parliament, the MEC of Education, Ina Cronje, reviewed some programmes that might improve learner achievement in the province. Disruption in teaching and learning in the province did not negatively affect learner achievement even though violence was reported in some parts of the province. The following are the programmes facilitated by the MEC:

3.7.1 Women Empowerment

The Department of Education was a male-dominated arena for a number of decades, with women holding few managerial positions. An improvement was seen in 2005/2006 where women were seen occupying higher managerial position.

3.7.2 Infrastructure Development

According to the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, (2008/09), 166 classroom and upgrade projects as well as 80 water and sanitation projects were completed in the 2007/08 financial year. The success in infrastructure development will help to uplift the position of learner achievement within KZN.

3.7.3 Learner-Educator ratio

Overcrowding has been in problem in the province, particularly in the rural areas where in some cases an educator was supposed to face a class of more than 100 learners. The learner-educator ratio was 34.96:1 in KZN prior to 2004. The ratio was reduced to 34.3:1 in 2005 and 32.8:1 in 2006. The learner-educator ratio of 32.3:1 recorded in 2008 is a reflection of the changes that were made during the previous years (School Realities, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008).

3.7.4 Temporary Educators

KwaZulu-Natal Education MEC Ina Cronje inherited the bizarre phenomenon of "temporary" permanent educators when she assumed office in April 2004.

The process of converting temporary educators has been a concerted campaign by the office of MEC since her appointment. Various processes were utilised to grant security of tenure of personnel appointed in schools in the province.

The MEC has also mandated the Department's negotiating team on two important guiding principles:

- to terminate as few temporary educators as possible, and

- to convert as many temporary educators as possible, all within the approved post establishment.

Since April 2004 the number of temporary teachers across all categories excluding substitute teachers has dropped from 16 938 to approximately 3 000 (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education 2007).

3.7.5 Technology in Schools

Technology has advanced to such an extent that it is difficult to keep pace with the rapid changes taking place. It is worrying to find that there are still schools without computers. In 2004, 75% of the schools in KZN had no computers. In 2006, it was ensured that well over 50% of the schools had at least one computer for administrative functions. Through Ministerial awards, 394 computers and 60 printers to the value of R4 million have been presented to schools that performed well in KZN (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education 2006). Disadvantaged schools were presented with laboratories to enhance teaching and learning. Through this programme, much has been achieved in the position of teaching and learning.

3.7.6 Delivery of Learning Teaching Support Material (LTSM)

The system of producing and distributing textbooks and stationary left much to be desired before 2004. A new system was adopted to improve LTSM delivery at schools. The Department achieved almost 100% delivery of textbooks at non-section 21 schools when schools re-opened in January 2008. Ninety five percent (3069 schools of the 3211 schools) received 97.95% of their textbooks at the end of November 2007. The Department has made great improvements in the delivery of Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM).

For the first time non-section 21 schools were given special functions to purchase stationery. Principals were trained on the procurement process and it is pleasing to report that all schools that received stationery allocation did procure stationery successfully. Research on LTSM is being considered by governments across the world as one of the important instruments for promoting equity, redress and quality learning for all in the public education system and it has found resonance in the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education 2008/09).

3.7.7 Implementation of a no–fee schools policy

In January 2006, the "no-fee" schools policy was implemented, following the national policy directive issued by the Minister of Education. The policy was intended to benefit learners in

the poorest 60% of schools by the year 2009, to improve access to learning opportunities, particularly to indigent communities, and to assist the Department in meeting the Constitutional obligations of providing access to adequate basic education. The Department began implementing the policy in 20% of the poorest schools at the beginning of the 2006/07 school year, benefiting 1342 schools. In 2007 an additional 1999 schools were added to give a total 3 341 schools, constituting 56% of schools as direct beneficiaries of the "No-Fee" school policy. In 2008, the number had increased by 41, resulting in an overall coverage of 3382 schools constituting 57%. This impacted on 1,170,965 learners which cost R908,073,870. The province is planning to fund schools at the target rate of R775.00 for quintile 1 schools and R711.00 for quintile 2 schools in 2008/09, representing a higher threshold level of funding. With the additional funding it is envisaged that the Department will reach its target of 60% of schools by the year 2009 (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education 2008/09).

3.8 LEARNER PERFORMANCE IN SENIOR CERTIFICATE

Learner performance in KZN in the Senior Certificate showed signs of decline from 2003 to 2006 despite various efforts made by the provincial government. The tables below show learner performance in KZN from 2001-2007.

Table 12: KZN learner performance in the Senior Certificate: (2003-2006)

Academic Year	Candidates who wrote	Candidates who passed	Candidates who passed without Endorsement	Candidates who passed with Endorsement
2001	93 340	25 620	42 923	15 697
2002	97 489	68 973	51 337	17 636
2003	97 367	75 077	55 190	19 887
2004	110 635	81 830	60 880	20 950
2005	120 397	84 842	63 837	21 005
2006	125 777	82 460	63 344	19 116
2007	148 093	94 421	72 978	21 443

Table 13: KZN learner performance in the Senior Certificate: percentages (2001-2007)

Academic year	Pass (%)	Candidates who passed without Endorsement (%)	Candidates who passed with Endorsement (%)
2001	62.8	46.0	16.8
2002	70.8	52.7	18.1
2003	77.2	56.8	20.5
2004	74.0	55.0	18.9
2005	70.5	53.0	17.4
2006	65.7	50.5	15.2
2007	63.8	49.3	14.5

Source: KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

3.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, learner underachievement in the South African system of education was discussed with special reference to schooling in KZN. Effects of contextual factors on rural schooling were investigated.

4 CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the methodological procedures adopted to acquire the data required on learner underachievement in rural schooling in KwaZulu Natal. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2005) a research design describes how the study was conducted. It summarises the procedures for conducting the study, including when, from whom, and under what conditions the data is obtained.

The researcher conducted the study according to a literature study and an empirical investigation. The literature study comprised the study of relevant books, journal articles, newspaper reports, official government policies and legislation as obtained in print and through the Internet. Other published and unpublished reports on the subject matter were consulted as a means of collecting secondary data. The literature study provided the theoretical framework for the empirical inquiry.

4.1.1 Approach

A qualitative research design was used for the empirical inquiry. According to this approach, the researcher can use observation, interviews and document analysis, or a combination of these, to provide an in-depth understanding of what is studied (McMillan and Schumacher 2000). According to Mouton (2001: 55-57), research methodology helps the researcher to focus on the research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used. Polit et al. (2000) state that methodology in research is a controlled investigation into the ways of obtaining, organising and analysing data. Leedy and Ormrod (2004) describe qualitative research as involving questions about phenomenon with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomenon from the point of view of the participants themselves.

This study aims to describe and explain learner achievement using observation and interviews as a method of data collection and interpreting the feedback from the participants. It makes specific use of the words of a small sample of learners. By using a qualitative approach, an attempt is made to understand the factors responsible for underachievement in Grade 11 learners.

4.1.2 Selection of schools

McMillan and Schumacher (2005) state that a sample is the group of subjects or participants from whom the data is collected. Four secondary schools in rural KZN were sampled is this study. The common criteria for selection were:

i.   That all schools had a matriculation pass rate of less than 60% and formed part of the "Team 60" schools, a term applied to schools which an overall matriculation pass rate below 60% at the end of the academic year. These schools are rated as underperforming schools and should receive special attention from the Department of Education, for example, untimely visits by Department Officers (National and Provincial), material support, management support, curriculum support, assessment moderation and assessment monitoring.

ii.   That all the schools be situated in the Hlazakazi Ward in the Umzinyathi District of the Ukhahlamba Region and be administered by the KZN Provincial Department of Education.

4.1.3 Characteristics of Participating Schools

Characteristics such as the enrolment number of learners, the number of educators, payment of school fees, availability of electricity, phones, faxes and e-mails, access roads, sports grounds, laboratories, fencing, libraries, clean water, the existence of unsafe structures and safety and security were considered. These characteristics were considered as a base line as they influence the performance of learners. Table 14 tabulates these characteristics.

Table 14: Characteristics of Participating Schools

SCHOOLS	Enrolment of learners	Teaching staff	School fees	Electricity	Phone and Fax	e-mail	Sports ground	Laboratory	Security fencing	Access roads	Libraries	Running water	Unsafe structures	Security @ School
A	500	17	E	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y
B	336	13	E	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y

| C | 540 | 17 | E | Y | Y | N | Y | N | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | Y |
| D | 387 | 16 | E | Y | N | N | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | N | N |

Codes: E = Exempted from payment of schools fees; Y = Yes; N = No

School A:

School A consists of 500 learners with a staff of 17 educators. The school is exempted from paying school fees. The school does have a security fence with only one entrance and exit point. It is located near the main tarred road to Nquthu Township, is fairly resourced and electrified. There is neither a landline telephone, e-mail nor fax connection. The following sports facilities are available:

- soccer playing field,

- netball court,

- volleyball court,

- rugby field, and

- cricket ground.

Specialist rooms such as a library and a laboratory are not available. There is one tap for piped water, which at times becomes scarce, two pit latrines for female and male learners respectively and one for educators. During extreme weather conditions (heavy rains and wind), some of the building structures can collapse due to their instability and this poses a risk to staff and learners. This has required repairs of and renovations to the school.

School B:

School B consists of 336 learners with 13 educators and is also a no fee school. Because the school is near to a heritage site, it receives a subsidised income from tourists who assist this needy school. There is an electricity connection at the school but no telephone, fax or e-mail connection. The following sports facilities are available:

- soccer playing field,

- netball court,

- volleyball court,

- rugby field, and

- cricket ground.

There is neither a library nor laboratory in the school. It is surrounded by a high security fence with one access point. The school is connected to the main dusty road by a gravel road fit for one-way traffic to and from the nearest town. Three hundred and thirty six learners and 10 educators are serviced by one tap of running water. The school hall at a neighbouring school is used by the school for supervised studies and by community members for meetings and other social functions. There are two security guards who are both untrained and unarmed; one for night shift and one for day shift.

School C:

Five hundred and forty learners are enrolled at school C and there are 17 educators. The school is exempted from paying school fees according to criteria set by the Department of Education KZN (cf paragraph 2.5.1.1). The school is in a deep rural area and the only access is via a badly maintained gravel road. In spite of its location, however, it is well supported by well-resourced structures such as a primary health care centre, a tribal court and a satellite police station. The school structures are at no risk as the premises is surrounded by high security fence which provides safety and security to learners and educators. In addition, two untrained and unarmed guards patrol the area, one during the day and the other at night. At present, these men are paid from the school fund.

The school has educational resources falling into the Learning and Teaching' Support Materials (LTSM) category and additional infrastructures, such as a strong room, laboratory, and library are available. Computers are available but they do not have access to the Internet or e-mail. There are two water taps and two pit latrines for female and male learners respectively. One further toilet is for the use of the educators.

The following sports facilities are available:

- soccer ground,

- netball court,

- volleyball court,

- rugby field, and

- tennis court.

School D:

School D has 387 learners and 16 educators and the learners are exempted from paying school fees. The school has electricity and a security fence around it. There are no telephone, fax or email connections. The following sports facilities are available:

- soccer ground,

- netball field,

- Volleyball court,

- Cricket field,

- Rugby field, and

- Tennis court.

There is neither a library nor a laboratory at the school. The school is connected by a small dusty path to the gravel road and there are no security guards. The safety, security and protection of learners, educators and the entire school property are the responsibility of the community members. All four pit toilets used by learners and educators were built by donors. There is no water available and the only source is from the stream adjacent to the school.

4.1.4 Selection of Participants

Judgment sampling was used to select the participants. Judgment sampling is based on the premise that a researcher's knowledge about the population can be used to handpick the cases

to be included in the sample (Polit et al. 2000). The section that follows discusses the participants selected for this study.

4.1.4.1 Learners

Grade 11 classes were chosen because in this grade, the educator is still in a position to assess the learner's performance and he/she can verify if a learner has achieved all the outcomes required for Grade 12. Current Grade 11 learners are the senior class of the following academic year and there is still a chance for them to be developed and prepared for the final examinations of Grade twelve.

Relevant information of the learners from School A is given in Table 15.

Table 15: Characteristics of learners from school A

Learner's name (pseudonym)	Gender	Age	Grade(s) repeated	Subjects failed	No of learners per register classroom
Ntombi	F	21	10 & 11	Geography, Life Sciences Maths, English	GRADE 11 A - 63
Sbusiso	M	20	10 & 11	Geography, Life Sciences, History English	GRADE 11 B - 43
Gcina	F	21	10 & 11	Geography, Life Sciences, Maths, English	GRADE 11 C - 57
Vusi	M	20	10 & 11	Geography, Life Sciences, English, Maths	TOTAL: 163

Relevant information of the learners from School B is given in Table 16.

Table 16: Characteristics of learners from school B

Learner's name (pseudonym)	Gender	Age	Grade(s) repeated	Subjects failed	No of learners per register classroom
Thando	F	21	9 &11	Acc, Maths, Life Sciences, English	GRADE 11 A - 96
Bheki	M	20	9 &11	Business Studies ,Acc, Life Sciences, Maths, English	GRADE 11 B - 21
Funani	F	20	9 &11	BE, Acc, Life Sciences, Maths, English	
Themba	M	20	9 &11	Business Studies, Acc, Life Sciences, Maths, English	TOTAL:117

Relevant information of the learners from School C is given in Table 17.

Table 17: Characteristics of learners from school C

Learner's name (pseudonym)	Gender	Age	Grade(s) repeated	Subjects failed	No of learners per register classroom
Fikile	F	21	4, 8 &11	English, Maths, Physical Sciences	GRADE 11 A - 63
Ntombi	F	21	9 &11	English, Acc, Business Studies,	GRADE 11 B - 67
Thobeka	F	22	5, 9 &11	English, Maths, Physics	
Bafana	M	20	8 &11	English, Maths, Physics	TOTAL: 130

Relevant information of the learners from School D is given in Table 18.

Table 18: Characteristics of learners from school D

Learner's name (pseudonym)	Gender	Age	Grade(s) repeated	Subjects failed	No of learners per register classroom
Khumbu	F	21	2, 9 &11	English, Acc, Business Studies,	GRADE 11 A:28
Bhekani	M	20	9 &11	English, Geography, History,	GRADE 11 B:34
Ntombi	F	21	9 &11	English, Maths, Physics	
Busi	F	21	1, 9 &11	English, Acc, Business Studies,	TOTAL:62

68

Learners from all schools were chosen to be representative of both genders. All learners from all schools were above 20 years of age and all were repeating Grade 11 and were experiencing academic difficulties in English, Maths, Geography, Accounting and Physical Sciences.

4.1.4.2 Educators

Four focus group interviews took place, one in each school. Educators who took part in the study were between the age of 23 and 46. Most academic subjects were taught by the educators in question and all taught at least two subjects. All focus groups had an academically unqualified educator in. Each focus group comprised four Grade 11 educators and data concerning them is presented in the following tables:

Table 19: Characteristics of educator from school A

Name of educator	Gender	Age	Subjects taught	Number of teaching subjects	Level of education
Cele	Male	28	Maths &Science	2	Unqualified
Duma	Female	45	Geography	2	Qualified
Ndlovu	Male	36	Accounting	3	Qualified
Zulu	Female	23	Life Sciences (Biology)	3	Qualified

Table 20: Characteristics of educators from school B

Name of educator	Gender	Age	Subjects taught	Number of teaching subjects	Level of education
Khumalo	Male	30	History, Life Orientation	2	Unqualified
Ngema	Female	46	Isizulu	3	Unqualified
Zuma	Male	23	Accounting	3	Qualified
Phosa	Female	31	Life Sciences (Biology)	2	Qualified

Table 21: Characteristics of educators from school C

Name of educator	Gender	Age	Subjects taught	Number of teaching subjects	Level of education
Ndebele	Male	28	English, Life Orientation	3	Unqualified
Buthelezi	Female	45	Isizulu	3	Qualified
Ndlovu	Male	36	Accounting	3	Qualified

Ngwenya	Female	23	B. Economics	3	Qualified

Table 22: Characteristics of educators from school D

Name of educator	Gender	Age	Subjects taught	Number of teaching subjects	Level of education
Zungu	Male	28	Maths & Science	2	Unqualified
Phele	Female	45	Geography	3	Qualified
Dagada	Male	36	Life Sciences	3	Qualified
Bhele	Female	23	History, Technology	3	Qualified

4.1.4.3 Principals

Four focus group interviews took place, one in each school. Three schools have male principals and on school head is female. All principals teach at least one subject in their schools and all are academically qualified. In addition to the four educators, each focus group included the principal of the school. Their information is presented in Table 23 below.

Table 23: Characteristics of principals from schools A, B, C and D

	Name of educator	Gender	Age	Subject teaching	Number of subject teaching	Level of education
A	Khoza	Male	N/A	English	1	Qualified
B	Mbeu	Male	N/A	Business Studies	1	Qualified
C	Ndlovu	Male	N/A	Business Studies	1	Qualified
D	Khumalo	Female	N/A	isiZulu	1	Qualified

4.1.4.4 Parents

Four parents, one from each school, were included in the focus groups. They were selected to be representative of gender i.e. two males and two females and they were between the 43 and 60 years of age. Three were unemployed and the fourth was a pensioner. Three parents were illiterate and one was literate. Each parent had more than one child attending the school. Their information is tabulated below.

Table 24: Characteristics of parents from school A, B, C, and D

School	Gender	Age	Employed / Unemployed	Level of education	Number of children in school
A	Male	52	Unemployed	Literate	3
B	Female	43	Unemployed	Illiterate	4
C	Male	55	Unemployed	Illiterate	3
D	Female	60	Pensioner	Illiterate	2

4.1.4.5 School Governing Bodies (SGBs)

One focus group interview of the SGB took place at each school. The focus groups comprised members of the SGB, was gender representative and the members were between the ages of 48 and 54. Three of the members were unemployed and one was employed. The information is represented in Table 25.

Table 25: Characteristics of SGB from school A, B, C, and D

School	Gender	Age	Employed / Unemployed	Number of children in schools
A	Male	54	Unemployed	2
B	Female	48	Employed	1
C	Male	51	Unemployed	2
D	Female	52	Unemployed	2

4.1.5 Data Collection

Data refers to information about a sample and collection refers to the gathering of information. In order for the research to be effective, the best applicable data collection instruments needed to be used and had to yield sufficient usable data. For the purpose of this study, the following data collection methods were used:

4.1.6 Observation

Continuous observations were made when the researcher visited the schools to collect the information and data tabulated above.

4.1.7 Interviews

The main source of data collection was focus group interviews. De Vos, Strydom, Fouché, and Delport (2004) define focus group interviews as a means to better understand how people feel or think about an issue. They further describe the focus group method as particularly useful when one is trying to take a new topic to a population, or if one wants to explore thoughts and feelings and not just behaviour.

A semi-structured format was used to collect data from the participants using an interview schedule (see Appendix A). The interview process was recorded on audio tape in isiZulu and was translated into English. Verbatim transcripts were made.

Polit and Hungler (1995: 647) describe natural setting as a setting for the collection of research data that is natural to those being studied (e.g. homes, places of work, *etc.*). Learners were interviewed in the classroom, and the principal, members of the SGB and parents were interviewed in the principal's office.

4.1.8 Data Analysis and Data Interpretation

Analysis involved the study of narrative data obtained in an ordered and correct manner. Analysis aimed at answering research questions posed. Data quality and the representativeness of the sample were assessed to check whether all interviews and approaches were properly implemented, executed and conducted. The followings steps were taken into consideration when the data was analysed:

4.1.8.1 Managing Data

The management of the data was the first step considered and the researcher filed information into folders and indexed them with cards. The purpose was to keep all relevant information and be able to retrieve it when required. Data collected was recorded on tape and transcribed in order to preserve and increase the efficiency of data analysis. Observation notes formed part of the data analysed (cf paragraph 4.2.2).

4.1.8.2 Reading and Writing Memos

De Vos et al. (2004: 343) say that the researcher must repeatedly read transcripts to become familiar with the data in intimate ways. After managing data, the researcher read the transcripts in their entirety several times, taking particular note of all detail so as to get an overall sense of the interview before breaking it into parts. During the reading process,

the researcher relied on note cards of the data available, edited the few field notes and excluded whatever seemed unmanageable. The writing of memos was used by the researcher as it helped to avoid long sentences.

4.1.8.3 Describing, Classifying and Interpreting

Describing, classifying and interpreting the data represent the heart of the qualitative data analysis (De Vos et al. 2004: 343).

During interpersonal interactions, the researcher combined and analysed information and then gathered and graded it according to its qualitative gradients. The researcher elicited responses from the participants. At this stage interpersonal interpretations were developed based on the findings of the study. The researcher took categories into consideration, for example, levels of understanding, the financial and cultural background, levels of education, *etc.* of the interviewees.

4.2 CREDIBILITY, VALIDITY, AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

4.2.1 Validity

McMillan and Schumacher (2005: 134) define validity as the degree to which scientific explanations of phenomenon match reality. This refers to the truthfulness of findings and conclusions. Explanations about observed phenomenon approximate what is reality or truth, and the degree to which explanations are accurate is important.

4.2.2 The Trustworthiness of the Research

McMillan and Schumacher (2005: 374) state that the researcher should select trustworthy evidence for pattern seeking by qualitatively assessing solicited versus unsolicited data, subtle influences among the people present in the setting, specific versus vague statements, and the accuracy of the sources. The following factors can be used to determine the trustworthiness of the research:

- *Credibility:* According to McMillan and Schumacher (2005: 434), the research process suggests criteria for judging the credibility of historical research and oral history studies. According to the authors, the reader should judge a study in terms of the logical relationship between its problem statement, sources, facts, generalisations and casual explanations.

- *Transferability:* McMillan and Schumacher (2205: 9) refer to transferability as the extension of findings or assertion where others can use the information to understand similar situations and can apply the information in subsequent research. Transferability of findings can be transferred to the education authorities to give improvement and solutions to the problems experienced by the participants.

- *Dependability*: According to Lincoln and Guba (1985: 317) dependability can be described as the reliability of the information collected that can assist other stakeholders to understand the communities and their problems better. This is the alternative to reliability, in which the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for study, as well as changes in the design created by an increasingly refined understanding of setting.

- *Confirmability:* Lincoln and Guba (1985: 318) also state that confirmability stresses the need to ask whether the findings of the study can be confirmed by another. By doing so, they remove evaluation from some inherited characteristic of the researcher (objectivity) and place it squarely on the data. This ensures that the information collected has no subjectivity.

4.2.3 Ethical Issues

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2004), ethical issues refer to honesty between professional colleagues. Ethical issues play a very prominent part of the study to ensure the validity of its outcomes.

4.3 LIMITATION OF RESEARCH

The study was limited to a small sample and no attempt is made at generalization. According to this research study, limitations are the shortcomings, restrictions and weaknesses of the research findings.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The methods and research design for data collection in the research were discussed. The research tools allowed for flexibility in data collection, analysis and presentation. The next chapter focuses on the research findings and provides meaningful explanations in terms of the criteria of the study.

5 CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Mouton, (2005: 108) refers to data analyses as an understanding of various constitutive elements that a researcher uses in the study by breaking data into manageable themes, patterns and relationships. The researcher began by identifying a large body of information that constitutes data findings to be analysed and discussed so as to discover its implications with regard to education policies. It is during data analyses where common and diverse factors are conscientiously classified, scrutinised and interpreted in search of meaningful description. Principals' management and leadership styles, the role of the school governing bodies, the involvement of parents, educators' levels of competencies and skills, attitudes of learners to learning, school resources and school infrastructure were considered in terms of their contribution to learner underachievement.

5.2 FINDINGS: LEARNERS' EXPERIENCE OF SCHOOLING AND UNDERACHIEVEMENT

The following factors have a significant bearing on learner underachievement: learner discipline, the attitudes of the educators towards learners, curriculum issues, learner commitment to homework and study for tests, learners' perception of parental involvement, and factors in the learners' external environment.

5.2.1 Learner Disciplinary Issues

The lack of discipline at schools is a common problem identified by the participants and is certainly a fundamental cause of learner underachievement. Schools, as institutions have to have basic regulations of governance, control and direction of its members, and without disciplinary regulations, the purpose of a school cannot be effectively achieved (Mwamwenda 1989: 222). A learner from school A pointed out "the use of illegal substances is one other cause for repeating a Grade 11 class." The rest of the learners from the same school supported this observation. For example, a learner from school A went on to say, "There are learners who come to school in possession of intoxicating substances like dagga and liquor, and as such educators apprehend them." Furthermore, a learner from the same school referred to the negative life lived by learners under the influence of intoxicating substances; they become violent, generate negative attitudes to learning and engage in bullying and sexual harassment. They are also frequently absent from school.

The learners from school B acknowledged the issue of family problems that exists in their

homes and the inevitable factor of peer pressure as the main causes of their failure to progress to the next class. A learner said, "with parents feuding, a student can hardly focus on doing homework thoroughly; and as for peer-pressure, one can easily be led astray with negative friends during homework hours of the day." Supporting that fact, a learner from the same school indicated that educators resort to sending learners outside the classroom as a means of maintaining order and discipline and that that resulted in them missing some lessons.

Staying away from school was one incident reported by participating learners from school C. "We usually bunk classes and dodge school for 2 – 3 days per week without a valid reason," said one learner. In addition, a learner from the same school admitted, "I mostly miss lessons without any valid reasons." A learner from school D said, "domestic responsibilities in a form of household chores are a cause of absenteeism." Punctuality was another issue affecting school performance. Two other participating learners from the same school indicated that when gates are closed, they are compelled to go back home or enter during break times, which results in missing teaching and learning contact time.

Based on the findings from all the participating schools, it is clear that there are fundamental differences in the cause of bad discipline among learners and that their backgrounds play a role.

5.2.2 Results on Curriculum Issues

Another issue identified by the participating learners is the range of difficulty of Learning Areas. For example, a learner from school D said, "I experience learning difficulties in learning areas such as Commerce, Mathematics, Science and Technology." Three participants from the same school agreed with the statement. Participants from school B raised the issue of subject selections as a problem in their school. Two learners from school A indicated that the unavailability of libraries makes it difficult for them to conduct research and further their studies in schools. Lack of qualified educators was also raised as a factor. A learner from school C emphasised, "the issues of lack of professionally qualified educators is a challenge as these educators are under resourced – we are taught by our former students, especially in maths and science subjects."

Continuous Assessment was regarded as a contributing aspect to learner underachievement. One learner from school A had the following to say "The

administration and management of CASS lack fairness and justice; for example, if we did not submit the required number of tasks we are not normally given second chance to prove ourselves." Furthermore the participants mutually agreed that there are times when they find themselves running short of written tasks to be completed during the academic year due to various reasons such as absenteeism.

5.2.3 Study Time Table and Exam Preparation

Participants acknowledged the manner in which they use the study timetable for exam preparations. A learner from school C said "We do not have enough time to do homework due to various reasons such as walking long distances to schools and being over-burdened with domestic responsibilities such as herding live stocks, collecting fire wood, cooking and washing." Asked how many kilometres the students walk per day, four participants from the same school gave the followings distance details that they believe has an impact on their performance (Table 5.1):

Table 26: Perceived distance walked to school

Learners' Name (pseudonyms)	Kilometres walk (single trip)
Mazibuko Sibusiso	28
Xaba Bheki	18
Khumalo Moses	20
Sibisi Tiny	25
Dladla Portia	10

The participants of school D highlighted the system they preferred for the preparation for tests and examinations. One learner indicated, "I study two days before writing a test or examination". To add on that, two learners from the same school identified group work as an efficient method of preparing for tests and examinations. However, this method was found by another learner from the same school to be unproductive. The learner stated, "Not everyone in a group is keen to study, resulting in occasional disturbances." Finally, a learner from the same school established that the school should provide a means to assist learners in the management of homework and study in order to curve poor performance.

5.2.4 Family responsibilities on learner education attainment

The participants from school A identified the involvement of parents in their education as of great importance considering the fact that parents and educators complement each other. The parent is a home-educator and the educator is a school-parent. In contribution to their acknowledgement, a learner from the same insisted "my mother can not read nor write, but my father has attained some education, however; he does not offer any help." Subsequently, in cooperation, the learners acknowledge the role parents can play in the education of their children despite their having little education.

There is an old saying that "it takes a village to raise a child." In cognisance of this, parents must not only recite such life-guiding phrases, but also start living the meaning in them to the full. The participants from school B identified the faction fights in rural communities as a fact that epitomises parental irresponsibility within the community, since children not only witness the negativity, but also are academically affected by such gruesome acts. One learner from the same school commented, "There is prevalence of faction fights as a disruptive factor in our studies." Furthermore, two participants identified the root cause for these faction fights as stock theft and the wrangling for leadership inside the communities. They continued to say that residents of the neighbouring villages steal each other's livestock and in the process, they defend themselves. In most cases, young boys are often sent to the mountains to hide for their safety. To summarise, all participants in that school gave the impact of faction fights and its resulting trauma as an important contributing factor to academic underachievement.

5.3 FINDINGS: EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCE OF SCHOOLING AND UNDERACHIEVEMENT

Information gathered from the educators of the schools is an important part of establishing the contributory factors of learners' underachievement. The following are the factors highlighted by the educators:

5.3.1 Social Factors

The participating educators identified HIV/AIDS and poverty as the main contributory factors in learners' underperformance in KZN rural schools. Participating educators from school C acknowledged that a significant number of educators have been affected by HIV/AIDS and, as a result, many educators are themselves absent from school because of HIV/AIDS related sicknesses. The statements by the educators were supported by Pons

and Deale (2001: 20) who state that the pandemic will affect every workplace with prolonged staff illness absenteeism and death affecting productivity. Another educator from the same school pointed out "poor health resulting from HIV/AIDS has a negative impact in my school as shortages of educators and absenteeism is alarming." Furthermore, two other participants from the same school mentioned nutrition as another social factor that contributes to learners' underachievement. A participant said, "It becomes easier said than done to teach a child who is famished as some learners are fed less than one meal per day because learners who are hungry lack meditation and ultimately under-perform." Ultimately, participants believed that most of rural school learners are malnourished which affects their cognitive abilities.

An educator from school B emphasised that the feeding schemes in various rural schools are essential as most of the learners go to school on empty stomachs. She stated "Feeding scheme minimised the rate of absenteeism." Thereafter, two participants from the same school indicated that the feeding scheme was fundamentally implemented to take care of the Foundation Phase (Grade 0-3), since such learners are the most vulnerable due to their age. However, since all students, though from different educational phases come from the same environment and same background of poverty they believe that they are also eligible for the nutrition programme.

5.3.2 The Impact of the National Curriculum Statement on Educators

One other factor that contributes to learners underachieving, according to the participating educators of school C, is that of the limitations of the new education system (NCS). These limitations or constrains include, amongst others, the promotion and progression system tabled by OBE that resulted in learners being promoted to next class even if unqualified. Two participating educators from the same school mentioned, "there was no sufficient consultation made when NCS was implemented, educators were not sufficiently trained, and they were not clear what was expected from them." Furthermore, the limitations of the new education system, such as lenient promotion and progression requirements, are factors. "As educators we are even reluctant to complete the end-of-year promotion schedules for learners who did not pass to avoid being reprimanded by department officials." In addition, a Grade 11 educator from school B referred to the influence that the introduction of the NCS has had on the performance of learners. "Half of my class has a problem with basic punctuation, simple spelling and sentence construction." Furthermore,

an educator from the same school blamed the level of education learners receive in the Foundation Phase: "The Department of Education intensifies supervision in the secondary level whilst ignoring the supervision in the lower classes." The same was said in school C and D. Three participants from school A indicated the fact that learners are not receiving proper education from the lower grades before they get to high schools. There is poor monitoring and evaluation at the primary level.

The lack of resources was indicated by educators as another serious contributory factor towards learners' underperformance in KZN rural schools. One educator from school A stated, "Deep rural schools of KZN lack important resources which support teaching and learning." In addition, participants emphasised the problems of resource shortages. Concerning physical resources, an educator from school B indicated that there is a backlog in the building of classrooms. In addition, educators from the same school indicated that there is an alarming rate of a lack of learning resources such as textbooks, stationery, libraries and laboratories. They also identified the high shortage of educators and support personnel in rural schools.

The issue of long distances walked by learners on a daily basis identified above came up from the educators' perspective. According to school A, the long distance travelled by the majority of learners, to and from school, in KZN rural schools affects the performance of children. "This causes a high rate of late arrival, homework not being done and poor performance in tests and examinations," he said. Furthermore, two educators from the same school indicated that these learners come to school tired, which eventually causes a lack of concentration and poor response to teaching and learning. In the end, all participants acknowledged that the proposal by the Minister of Safety and Security in KZN, Bheki Cele of providing bicycles to the learners who travel long distances each day was affectionately welcomed, but that there was no indication of its execution and that lack of implementation had a negative impact on both learners and rural communities in KZN.

5.3.3 The Abolishment of Corporal Punishment

The abolishment of corporal punishment was regarded as a contributory factor to learners' underperformance. One educator from school D indicated, "Learners have the tendency of leaving school before normal time without permission." One educator from the school also said, "We shut the school gates to combat such behaviour, but learners use thoroughfares that they have created off fences to break through." To add on that, an educator from the

same school indicated that the closing of gates during school hours is not so feasible because of the thoroughfares, and eventually educators are likely to teach three quarters of the class. Such a scenario is another cause of academic underperformance. To support that, most participants acknowledged that such behaviour is triggered by their knowledge of the abolishment of corporal punishment. With these measures in action, educators lost the morale of a culture of teaching and learning. The educators blamed learners for the lack of discipline in favour of conducting corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure.

5.4 FINDINGS: PRINCIPALS' EXPERIENCE OF SCHOOLING AND UNDERACHIEVEMENT

The school principals also formed part of the study to find out what were the contributing factors of learners' underachievement. These were the factors highlighted by the principals:

5.4.1 Social Issues affecting education

Like other participants, principals of the participating schools have identified poverty as one of the contributing factor to the learners' underachievement in KZN rural schools. The principal of school B said that the statistical figure of poverty is striking in his school: "75% of my learners' parents are unemployed and 55% rely on grants." He further mentioned that he finds the educators themselves are in a situation where they are compelled to pay learners school fees from our own pockets to alleviate poverty.

The principal from school A referred to teenage pregnancy as a social issue and determining factor in the underperformance of learners at schools. The principal further indicated that, according to the statistics taken from my school, 16 learners left school due to pregnancy and another complaint from the staff is that learners who are sexually active are not committed to their school work." Similarly, the principal of school B highlighted the problems related to pregnancy as culminating in poor concentration during teaching and learning, sicknesses and fatigue. Moreover, the root of high pregnancy rate was identified as stimulated by poverty and the lack of information about birth control mechanisms by most of the principals. As mentioned earlier on, a principal from school D mentioned the impact of teenage pregnancy. She indicated, "Learners absent themselves from school due to complications related to their pregnancy and this eventually causes underachievement." In addition, she indicated the role played by the Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Bill of 2008 as a cause for high numbers of pregnancy in the

schools. According to the participant, this Act projected that children at age of 12 have the right to carry out abortion in the absence of their parents. She continues to say pregnant learners end up disadvantaged, as there are no qualified health practitioners to assist them at schools.

Illiteracy amongst the parents concerning social issues that affect learner underperformance was mentioned by the principal from school A as a contributing factor to learners' underachievement. A principal said that parents in the rural communities have a problem with an inferiority complex as they consider their learner children well informed, in comparison with them, to such an extent that they are unable to support them with their schoolwork. He further stated that parents regard educators as extensively educated people and unapproachable to discuss any school matters with. As a result, parents do not participate in the education of their children. Lack of parental supervision was indicated as one of the causes of learners' underachievement in KZN rural schools as highlighted by principal of school B. He indicated that many children of school-going age are staying alone without parental supervision and this has a negative effect on their studies.

According to Stark and Holly (1999: 10), everyone likes to be hugged or touched by someone they care for, but there are kinds of touching that are not good. When someone hugs you too hard and it really hurts, that is abuse. This phrase of statement was supported the principal of school D. She pointed out sexual abuse as a one of the contributory factors of learner underachievement. Many learners are subjected to this form of abuse, be it from other learners, educators or elderly community members. "Our learners are abused particularly by those who are closely related to them," she declared.

Certain social issues such as the violence at schools was described as a disturbing element in the teaching and learning. The principal from school B revealed, "Learning and teaching cannot be conducted effectively and efficiently in an environment full of violence as it traumatises educators and learners." In addition to this he mentioned the negative impact of using illegal substances by pointing out that learners become uncontrollable if they are under the influence of drugs. They carry dangerous weapons to schools and lose their respect of educators and fellow learners. In this atmosphere, learning and teaching becomes impractical.

The principal from school C regarded the education transformation from National Education (NATED) 550 (traditional education system) into the OBE system as having caused a lot of anxiety among education stakeholders such as educators, parents and the learners. He added that "The transition from the old curriculum to the new curriculum was not properly planned as it was characterised by continuous changes in the curriculum statement: For example - the changing of Specific Outcomes into Learning Outcomes and Development Outcomes, the reduction of the number of Specific Outcomes from 66 to 23, etc." The principal from school B highlighted the effect that OBE has had on their daily teaching and learning: "OBE brought about a workload that resulted in the shift, more than an infringement, of focus from teaching to administration – thereby diluting an educator's prowess of information delivery and robbing one of one's job-description as an individual."

Promotion and progression at schools is another element regarded as one of the main causes of learner underachievement. The principal of school D stated, "The new education system in South Africa has a defect on learner achievement as far as promotion and progression is concerned. Promotion requirements are too lenient in such a way that it reduces the standard and quality of education." She continued to say that the education system provided that the condoning of learners should be based on age and number of years in the phase. She further pointed out that "if a learner did not make up ten percent of knowledge area in each subject; but the age and number of years in the phase meets the criteria, he/she qualifies for condoning, which means progression to the next grade." All principals acknowledged such unnecessary condoning of learners, the mandate of which is given to the Ward Managers, to condone learners to the next grade as a big contribution to the high failure rates in Grades 11 and 12.

The principal from school A indicated a general lack of culture of teaching and learning in the education system of South Africa as a contributing factor to learner underperformance. "This problem is caused by the negative attitude of learners towards learning, poor commitment on the part of educators, lack of resources, decline of educator morale, late coming, violence, disrespect of teachers, and possession of illegal substances such as drugs, etc." he declared. The principal from school B supported the fact that lack of teaching and learning war against the schools' aim to promote a learning ethos and that it has contributed to learner underperformance. Learners in many schools have not embraced the culture of learning.

The learning environment was also mentioned as a factor as it is not conducive to teaching and learning. Also, it is not vibrant and stimulating as it lacks modern technology. Classrooms are over-crowded and as a result, educators are unable to meet individual learner attention needs. The principals of schools A and B indicated that lack of resources such as laboratories and libraries contribute to poor learner performance in KZN rural schools. One principal said: "There are learners who do not have access to media such as television, radio and newspapers and as such they find it difficult to conduct some learning activities." In addition, the principal of school C indicated that The KZN Department of Education's programme to supply newspapers to some rural schools was discontinued without official notice, which seriously hampers the disadvantaged.

5.4.2 National Department of Education Policies on School Governance

The Post Provision Model (1996) is regarded as a contributing factor in the under-performance of both educators and learners. Post Provision Model is a National Education policy first drafted by former Minister of Education Prof Kader Asmal for allocation of educators' posts to schools based on the principle that available posts be distributed amongst schools proportionally to their number of weighted learners. A Principal from school A mentioned, "This model is, but nominal as opposed to being pragmatic since it overlooks the daily problems that we, as educators, are confronted with." The principal from the same school admitted that PPM does not yield academic productivity as it is too abstract a policy for most school environments where the number of learners vs. educators may not be in good proportions as the model propounds. In the end educators become overloaded and end up compromising the quality of education that they offer to the learners.

The principal from school B indicated the "Last in Fist Out" (LIFO) policy as a contributing factor towards learner underperformance. The principal said, "This policy regards the curriculum needs of the schools and redeploys surplus educators." Because of this principle, the principal indicated "educators who teach skills subjects which are in demand in the country end up leaving the institutions." In addition, a participant pointed out that the enrolment of learners at schools is not a definite constant. Because PPM determines the number of educators to be deployed in a certain school, The Redeployment and Redistribution Policy, which says LIFO, comes into practice. Furthermore, the participants specified that most educational institutions remain dysfunctional because

Maths and Science Educators have been redeployed to other schools. This policy of LIFO disadvantages many educational institutions in KZN rural schools.

Another factor responsible for the learners' underachievement, indicated by the principal from school C, is the lack of incentives and unfavourable working conditions in rural schools and this leads to the migration of educators. The principal had this to say, "When educators from the rural districts leave schools for greener pastures it becomes impossible to replace those educators due to a small percentage of people who are qualified educators or prospective educators." A principal from school D indicated, "The consequences of the non-substitution of emigrated educators has a negative impact on teaching and learning because some learners are left without educators." All principals acknowledged the fact that transfers create serious problems in the KZN rural schools because it denies the right of learners to education as learners are left without educators to teach them. The principals further indicated that the movement of qualified educators from rural to urban schools is aggravated by the lack of basic amenities and also the issue of factional fights within KZN rural areas.

Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) was indicated by a principal from school A as having impacted on the performance of learners in schools. According to the principal, OSD had been formulated two years ago (2007), but not yet implemented. Policies include rural allowances that provide that educators who fall in the Quintile 1 and 2 categories will get rural allowances as part of their salaries. A principal stated, "Because of the lack of incentives, educators end up teaching without motivation." Lack of service delivery (Learning and Teaching Support Services) from the Provincial and the District Offices was indicated by the same principal as a contributing factor towards underachievement of learners in KZN rural schools. A principal mentioned, "The Provincial and the District education offices are not adhering to the time frame stipulated in the Government Gazette in terms of making resources available at schools. Schooling in the KZN province starts with very little learning resources such as audio visual material, books and stationery. As a result of all these problems of lack of service delivery, learning and teaching does not start on time at the beginning of the school year." To support the statement, principals of participating schools acknowledged that the delay of service delivery consumes teaching and learning times and this has an adverse effect on learner performance.

Finally, a principal from school B highlighted the failure to adhere to turnaround strategies

as another contributing factor towards the underperformance of learners in the KZN province. Turnaround strategies are those approaches drawn-up by the Department of Education and schools on how schools can make their learners perform better. These turnaround plans are particularly designed for those schools that obtain below a 60 percent matric pass rate and are commonly known as 'Team 60." All four principals admitted that the turnaround could lead to good progress and maybe even eradicate the dilemma of learner under achievement." (See an appendix D)

5.5 FINDINGS: PARENTS' EXPERIENCE OF SCHOOLING AND UNDERACHIEVEMENT

Parents of the learners also formed part of the study to find out the contributing factors of learners' underachievement. These were the factors highlighted by the parents:

5.5.1 The Issue of Parental Involvement

According to Hallowell (2002: 2), parents and teachers can greatly increase the happiness of their children and students. A parent from school A mentioned, "Regular visitation is of importance to me as it ensures that I am on the track with my child's progress in school. This way, not only do I get feed-backs from educators about my child's academic where-about, but I also get to make and maintain relations with my child's educator(s) making it easier for communication to be facilitated between and among us as the key elders in a learner's life." Thereafter, a parent from school B said "Although it is a necessity to keep track of my child's schoolwork, it is impractical on my part due to the fact that I and my spouse work some piece jobs in remote places and, as a result we only come home occasionally." A parent from school C referred to the long distance between home and school. The parent highlighted that "I had to adjust with the distance from the village to school to monitor the children's progress." She said that life in the villages is too laborious and that it is practically impossible to visit the school and engage in home chores on the same day. Also there is often a lack of cooperation between them and their children and as a result they are often not informed of most schooling activities, summonses and events. A parent of school D indicated their children are troublemakers. A parent confirmed that the only time they visit school is when they have been summoned as a result of something concerning their child. Other than that, they receive very little information, if any at all, from the school.

A parent from school A complained about the reports they got from children concerning teachers' absenteeism. The parent had this to say "My child always complains about the rate of teachers' absenteeism and teachers who come to school under the influence of alcohol, something that occasionally takes place during teachers' months end." A literate parent from school B complained about the schoolwork their children are given. The parent had this to say, "I sometimes check the school exercises of my child, only to find that in three months time, only two exercises were written and my children mostly do not come back with the home work from the teachers." A parent from school C indicated the strong substances their children take such as dagga and complained that after being under the influence of such things, their children do not listen to them, do not study and are mostly absent from schools. The human rights exercised without responsibilities were also indicated by parents as a contributing factor towards learner underachievement. A parent indicated that the government gave too many rights to their children and that as a result their learners do respect and understand them. When they accuse them of being wrong, the children complain that their rights are being infringed and that they feel abused.

A parent from school C said that most Parents do not support their children financially and this has resulted in learners not exploring the outside school world such as on school trips and tours. This means that learning by observation and experimentation, which is what is mostly associated with these trips, does not take place. A parent from the same school pointed out that the lack of role models in their areas makes most of children put no value on education.

One sensitive issue was raised by the parent of school D, the issue of a teacher-learner sexual relationship. The parent asserted, "Our children use to spend more times in the cottages of the male teachers after school hours, if not seen with teachers in towns; and for that reason they come back home very late and fail to concentrate in their school work." The sexual relationships between the teacher and learner is regarded as serious misconduct that can lead to expulsion.

5.6 FINDINGS: SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES' (SGB) EXPERIENCE OF SCHOOLING AND UNDERACHIEVEMENT

The School Governing Body members were also involved in the study to determine the factors responsible for the underperformance of learners in the KZN rural schools. The proper functionality and effectiveness of the SGB is seen as vital at school level for better

performance in schools.

The SGB member from school A complained about low parents' attendance during parents meetings. A participant indicated that "Our school has more than 300 learners; but when we call meetings to discuss the issues pertaining to their children's progress, parents do not turn up in high numbers." The issue of parents' reluctance to attend school gatherings was also highlighted by the SGB member of school B as an important issue to be addressed. The member claimed that "When we meet them and ask why they did not turn up for parents' meetings; parents give unfounded excuses such as *I was committed, my child did not show the invitation ...*" Such groundless excuses hamper the education process of our learners.

The subject around educators' absenteeism and the use of alcohol was also a concern from the members of SGB (school C). A participant stated, "Some educators of my school have the tendency of absent themselves from school without valid reasons. There are those who take alcohol in their spare times, mainly on weekends, and as a consequence - they fail to perform to the maximum on Mondays. That in turn damages the education of our children." The SGB member of school C indicated the low morale of their children as the contributory element that results in the low performance of their learners. A participant stated, "Now and then the principal of our school calls a disciplinary hearing of some our learners." A participant mentioned that such misconduct by learners degrades the level of learner performance.

One member of the SGB (school D) indicated the non-attendance by educators caused by strikes as one of the contributing factors towards learner underachievement. The SGB member stated, "Our learners are left without teachers in most of the times due to the industrial action the teachers are found in." A participant went as far as suggesting that the manner in which the government can handle the issue of educators' grievances is by attending to problems as they arise.

Misappropriation and mismanagement of funds by the Principals was one factor indicated by one of the SGM member from school A. "Most schools in rural areas are now qualifying to be in Section 21, and most principals used this opportunity to misappropriate funds allocated for schools for their own benefit, disregarding the needs of the schools." Section 21 schools are those schools that qualify to receive the funds from the Department

of Education directly into the school bank accounts. This means that such schools do not need to wait for any approval to purchase resources from the department, but according to the claims, principals misuse such opportunities. Still from the same school, the SGB member had a problem with the inadequate sense of school ownership from within the community at large and cited problems with vandalism of school property. A participant indicated, "We have the problem of vandalism in our schools. Thugs just come and vandalise our properties using the holes they have opened in the fence to come in." The SGB member continued that they are compelled to use funds allocated for Learner Teaching Support Material (LTSM) to repair damage caused by thugs.

5.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, learners' experience of schooling with reference to disciplinary, curriculum, the method followed by students on examination preparations as well as the role played by parents in the education of their children were discussed. The impact of social, NCS, along with the abolishment of corporal punishment were considered as the contributing factors towards learner underachievement. Principals' experience and considerations of how the education with the KZN rural areas is administered was examined. The role of the parents and SGB in the education of their children was examined to find out if it influences learner underachievement. School management is typically hierarchal, inflexible and devoid of a sense of ownership among parents.

6 CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives an overview of the investigation in the light of the aims of the study formulated in Chapter 1. Background, problem formulation and aims were described in Chapter 1 of this study and they include the needs of rural schools in South Africa, poor nutrition, the inability to attract and retain well-trained educators, health challenges as well as the effect of traditional and cultural customs. Detail was provided on rural schooling in KwaZulu-Natal in the first chapter of this research project (cf 1.1.2). Constituents of the education systems such as contextual factors, aims, policies and legislation, administration and governance, the schooling system and support services with interest in education were in the initial stage of this study (1.1.3). Problem statement (1.2), aims (1.3) and research methodology design (1.4) that included sampling (1.4.1), data collection (1.4.2), data analyses and interpretation (1.4.3) as well as ethical issues (1.4.4) were outlined in this chapter. Limitations of the study (1.5), chapter division (1.6), clarification of terms (1.7) and a brief summary (1.8) of the chapter were described in the first chapter of this study.

Chapter 2 of this study revealed how the concept "rural" was defined by various authors (cf paragraph 2.2). Demographers prefer to define rural when considering the environmental settings, and some associate rural with countryside or open land. Some authors associated rural in terms of the population residing outside the cities.

The consequence of being rural on education was discussed (cf paragraph 2.2.1) and various countries were referred to. The study revealed that problems associated with rural communities in USA include educator absenteeism and the ineffectiveness of staff recruitment. In a rural part of Peru, absenteeism - as in the USA - is also a contributory factor.

Lesotho and Zimbabwe were amongst the countries highlighted in the Southern Africa Development Economic Communities (SADC) region as having problems associated with those rife in rural regions. Problems included the lower number of girls in schools compared to boys, the lack of qualified teachers, under-resourced schools and financial cutbacks. The study discovered that child-exploitation, the high rate of HIV/AIDS and illiteracy are common in Ethiopia. In Ghana, the study revealed that parents in the rural areas do not attend school meetings.

The study established the position of rural education in South Africa since 1994 (cf paragraph 2.3.1). The study also made available the progress (cf paragraph 2.3.2) of South African rural schools conducted by HRSC of 2005.

It was discovered that provisions for rural schooling in KZN are affected by contextual factors (cf paragraph 2.3). These factors included: Geographical Factors (cf paragraph 2.4.1), Demographic Factors (cf paragraph 2.4.2), Political Factors (cf paragraph 2.4.3), Economic factors (cf paragraph 2.4.4), Socio-Cultural Factors (cf paragraph 2.4.5) and Health Factors (cf paragraph 2.4.6) that subsequently have an impact in the underperformance of KZN rural schools.

The system on how education in KZN is administered and organised was detailed (cf paragraph 2.5). The organisation is comprised of policies and legislations regarding rural development (cf paragraph 2.5.1). The following policies were outlined: the No Fee School Policy (cf paragraph 2.5.1.1), National School Nutrition Programme (cf paragraph 2.5.1.2), Compulsory Education Policy (cf paragraph 2.5.1.3), Infrastructure Provision Policy (cf paragraph 2.5.1.4), Tool-making of Excellence Policy (cf paragraph 2.5.1.5), Curriculum Implementation Policy (cf paragraph 2.5.1.6) and Information Communication Technology (cf paragraph 2.5.1.8).

The study also uncovered the hierarchy of administration in schools of KZN (cf Figure 1) with the MEC as its head, then the Superintended General, followed by the Service Delivery Management led by SGM, Service Delivery Management led GM, District Manager, Service Delivery Management led by CES, Superintendent of Education and school at the bottom level and four educational branches of KZN (Figure 2).

The study discovered that rural schools are benefiting from various policies and legislation regarding the development of rural schooling in KZN that include: No fee school policy (cf paragraph 2.5.1.1), National School Nutrition Programme (cf paragraph 2.5.1.2); Compulsory Education Policy (cf paragraph 2.5.1.3); Infrastructure Provision Policy (cf paragraph 2.5.1.4); Tool Centre of Excellence Policy (cf paragraph 2.5.1.5); Curriculum Implementation Policy (cf paragraph 2.5.16); Grading of Schools (cf paragraph 2.5.1.7) and Information Communication Technology (ICT) roll out (cf paragraph 2.5.1.9). The conclusion based on the development of rural schooling was discussed (2.5.1.9). The structure of Administration and Governance of schooling in KZN was explored in the

study (2.5.2) that include services such as Delivery Management, Human Resource and Management Services, Chief Financial Officer and Planning and Support.

The schooling system in KZN (cf paragraph 2.5.3) also formed part of the study and comprised of the following:

- State Schools (cf paragraph 2.5.3.1)

- State-aided Schools (cf paragraph 2.5.3.2)

- Independent Schools (cf paragraph 2.5.3.3)

- Curriculum, (cf paragraph 2.5.3.4)

- Assessment (cf paragraph 2.5.3.5)

- Educator Training (cf paragraph 2.5.3.6)

- Inset Training (cf paragraph 2.5.3.7)

- Social Structures in Partnership in Education (cf paragraph 2.5.3.8).

The study unveiled Medical Services (cf paragraph 2.5.3.8.1) that assist KZN rural communities who do not have money to visit private doctors. The study revealed that schools in rural KZN are dominated by learners of different religious affiliations (cf paragraph 2.5.3.8.2). The issue of violence (policing) in KZN was noted as a contributory factor towards rural schools underachievement (cf paragraph 2.5.3.8.3). A conclusion on provision of schooling in KZN, with special reference to rural schooling, was made (2.6).

Chapter 3 of this study examined learner achievement in South African and KZN schooling systems as an extended literature review. The study established that both learners of National and Provincial governments should start their schooling at Foundation Phase (cf paragraph 3.3.1) with provision of specific assessment guide lines (cf paragraph 3.3.1.1) and the way in which reporting and recording should be conducted (cf paragraph 3.3.1.2). Recorded formal assessment tasks for Grade R-3 (3.3.1.3) were discussed. From Foundation Phase learners proceed to Intermediate Phase (3.3.2), also guided by its principles of assessment (3.3.2.1) and reporting procedures (3.3.2.2). Recorded formal assessment tasks for Grade 4-6 were laid out (3.3.2.3). The study discovered that the last

phase a learner should attend in the secondary level is Senior Phase (3.3.3) with its own assessment (3.3.3.1). Recorded formal assessment tasks for Grade 7-8 (3.3.3.2) and recorded formal assessment tasks for Grade 9 (3.3.3) were recorded. Systems of Progression in Grades R-8 (3.3.3.5) and Promotion at Grade 9 (cf paragraph 3.3.3.5) level were also highlighted as conducted. Condonation at Grade 9 (3.3.3.6) and how learners are exempted were also recorded (3.3.3.7).

Assessment in the Senior Phase from Grade 10-12 were also highlighted (3.3.4.1). Reporting, recording (3.3.4.2) and conditions of supplementary were also recorded (3.3.4.3). Mathematics and reading skills as benchmark (3.4) were recorded. The failure rate in South African schools was discussed (3.5).

Policies and provisions in the South Africa school system to address learner achievement were discussed. They include: Whole-School Evaluation (3.6.1), Integrated Quality Management System (3.6.2) and National Strategy for Learner Attainment (3.6.3).

Programmes that might improve learner achievement in KZN were also discovered. These factors included the following: Women Empowerment (3.7.1), Infrastructure Development (3.7.2), Learner-Educator ratio (3.7.3), Temporary Educators (3.7.4), Technology in Schools (3.7.5), Delivery of Learning Teaching Support Material (LTSM) (3.7.6) and Implementation of a no–fee school (3.7.7). Learner Performance in Senior Certificate (3.8) was recorded and a conclusion on learner achievement in the South African Schooling System was made (3.9).

6.2   SUMMARY OF EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

Chapter 4 presented the research design. Qualitative approach (4.1.1) was used as a strategy to discover factors responsible for learner underachievement in KZN. Purposeful sampling was used in the study as it helped the researcher to select the participants (4.1.2). The characteristics of the Participating Schools (4.1.3) were investigated to find out if they had an impact on the repetition of the grade, particularly Grade 11 on which the studied centred. Characteristics considered included gender, age, years the learner has repeated the grade, and number of learners per class. The study discovered that most of the learners were above school going age. Overcrowding was discovered to be one of the things that impacts on and determines the underachievement of learners in the rural side of KZN as it becomes difficult to provide individual attention. Judgment sampling (4.1.4) was used to select the participants

in this study based on a researcher's knowledge of the population. Learners (4.1.4.1), Educators and Educational Managers (4.1.4.2), as well as parents (4.1.4.3) were selected to form part of the study. Data was collected (4.1.5) using observation (4.1.6) and interviews (4.1.7) as relevant instruments for data collection. Data of this study was analysed and interpreted (4.1.8).

Chapter 5 of this study analysed and interpreted the data obtained during the process of the study. Lack of discipline (5.2.1) was one of the underlying factors responsible for underachievement in rural schools of KZN. Factors such as curriculum issues (5.2.2), how learners prepare themselves for examination (5.2.3) and the responsibilities of families towards the education of their children (5.2.4) were discussed.

Educators' experiences on schooling and underachievement were discussed (5.3) with the following factors being considered: social factors (5.3.1), the impact of NCS on educators (5.3.2), and the impact of abolishment of corporal punishment in schools (5.3.3).

Principals' experience on schooling and underachievement was discussed (5.4), with the following issues being pointed out: social issues affecting education (5.4.1) and National Department of Education policies on education on school governance (5.4.2).

Parents' experience on schooling and underachievement was pointed out (5.5) in the education of their children.

School Governing Bodies' experience on schooling and underachievement was pointed out (5.6). A brief summary of the findings of the study was highlighted (5.7) as the conclusion.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The recommendations that follow are made based on the findings of the empirical enquiry and in the light of the literature study with a view to the improvement of practice.

6.3.1 Recommendation 1: Learners

Based on the findings of the study, learners were found to be lacking in terms of preparedness to learn and ill-disciplined due to involvement in drug abuse and alcohol. Learners were also found to be involved in sexual behaviour at an early stage.

It is now recommended that:

- learners should be educated on the dangers of substance abuse and issues such as HIV/AIDS as well as sexually transmitted diseases;

- learners should form study groups in order to develop the culture of reading;

- Learners should actively involve themselves in the learning process such as doing homework on time, asking questions and responding to questions;

- Learners should not neglect early morning lessons or weekend classes;

- They should choose learning areas that match their abilities; and that

- Career guidance workshops may help learners to remain focused on their chosen field of study and encourage them to work hard and attain better results.

6.3.2 Recommendation 2: Educators

The research findings identified that educators are part of the problem of underachievement of learners. Educators' weaknesses that lead to the underachievement of learners include lack of proper training, poor planning and involvement in substance abuse.

It is therefore recommended that:

- Educators get proper training from the government, through supervision and education in their areas of specialisation;

- Educators must learn to appreciate the new education system (OBE) and implement it effectively;

- They should engage in intervention strategies such as extra classes;

- They must also take initiatives such as planning programmes for content coverage;

- Educators should refrain from using corporal punishment; and that

- Partnership with parents will facilitate the relationships involved in education.

6.3.3 Recommendation 3: Principals

Like other stakeholders, principals also contribute to the underperformance of the learners. This occurs when managerial skills are lacking.

It is recommended that:

- Principals must develop their management skills;

- They should have psychology as a field of study in order to have more insight into human behaviour; and that

- Principals of schools should provide motivation by celebrating the achievements of educators and learners.

6.3.4 Recommendation 4: Parents

Parents often perceive themselves as of no importance in the education of their children and this attitude contributes to underachievement. Parents must involve themselves in the process of the running of the school despite the fact that members of SGBs represent them.

It is recommend that:

- Retired professionals be motivated to be members of the SGB to utilise the experience they gathered during the course of their lives for the benefit of the learners;

- Parents should know and understand the importance of attending school meetings, as this will enable them to have an input in the education of their children; and that

- Parents should be encouraged to motivate their children in their studies at home.

6.3.5 Recommendation 5: School Governing Bodies

Like other stakeholders, the lack of responsibility of SGBs also contributes to the underperformance of learners. Those who are fortunate enough to become members of School Governing Bodies (SGB) should know their responsibilities. Circuit Managers normally train members of the SGB, therefore it is recommended that a Special Task Team should be developed and maintained by the state especially for SGB training, particularly in rural areas.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following recommendations for further research are suggested in order to tackle the problem of underachievement in South African schools, particularly in rural areas like KZN:

- Since teaching, learning, and management are considered to have an impact on the underachievement in rural schools, an improvement in the joint approach to the provision of education in rural schools should be studied and implemented.

- Recruitment in rural schools seems to be a problem, therefore a study should be conducted to determine what the National and Provincial Departments of Education can do that will enhance the rural schools education.

- Literacy in rural schools has a dynamic impact in the achievement of rural schools transformation. A study is recommended to determine what role the Government Policies play in rural schools and rural societies.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This study investigated the learner underachievement in rural schooling with special reference to KZN. The purpose of the study was outlined in the first chapter of the study. It was followed by a literature review to find out what other academics say about rural education. The qualitative method of study was used to gather information that made it simple to analyse the information gathered. Recommendations to stakeholders and future researches were suggested.

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8   APPENDIX A

The interviews for the research were formulated as follows:

Group 1- Learners

What do learners regard as the main causes for repeating of Grade 11?

Which subjects do you find they have they most difficulty to cope?

Describe how you do your homework and studying for tests?

What is being done at school to assist you cope better with your schoolwork in order to improve your results?

How do your parents help you in relation to your schoolwork?

Are they any sufficient learning resources at school? If so how do they help you?

Group 2- Principal

What are the main causes of learner underachievement?

What provisions/improvements have taken place as a result of being underachievement ("Team 60")?

What strategic plans in place to assist you to do away with learner underachievement?

In what way/s are those strategic plans helpful?

Group 3- Grade 11 teacher

What are the main causes of learner underachievement?

What provisions/improvements have taken place as a result of underachievement ("Team 60")?

What special programme/s do you have in place to improve learner performance in your subject?

How effective is your program?

Group 4- SGB member

What do SGB members regard as the main causes for repeating of Grade 11?

In what way/s can the SGB assist the school to improve learners' performance?

What advice will you give to parents to enable them to assist their children cope better with their schoolwork?

In way/s can the SGB motivate educators to be more committed to teaching?

Group 5 -Parents

- Do you visit regularly at school?

- Do you attend school meetings?

- Do you supervise learners' homework?

9 APPENDIX B

ZAMOKWAKHE HIGH SCHOOL

P.O. Box 228
Nquthu
3135
TEL NO:082 315 4162
DATE :15 May 2008

Nquthu Circuit Management Centre

Hlazakazi Ward Manager

Department of Education

NQUTHU

3131

A REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

Dear Sir (Mr Vilakazi)

I would like to request your permission to conduct a research study in your Ward of Hlazakazi between June and August 2008. The Research Title is as follows: LEARNER UNDERACHIEVEMENT IN RURAL SCHOOLING IN KWAZULU-NATAL.

For any information, do not hesitate to contact Professor E Lemmer (advisor), at 012 460 5484/0847004676.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully

Dala NJ

KZN EDUCATION DEPT.
ZAMOKWAKHE
HIGH SCHOOL
P.O. Box 228, Nquthu, 3135

15 MAY 2008

Tel: (034) 271 8132

PRINCIPAL:_____

UKHAHLAMBA REGION

10 APPENDIX C

Ikheli: Address: Adres:	46 a Ann Street / Nondweni Street Dubdee / Next to SAPS Nqutu 3000 / 3135	Isikhwama Seposi: Private Bag: Privaatsak:	P Bag X2045 / P Bag X5504 Dundee / Nqutu 3000 / 3135	Ucingo: Telephone: 034-2122139/0 Telefoon: 034-2710021
JImibuzo: Enquiries: .S.E. VILAKAZI Navrae:		Inkomba: Reference: Verwysing:		Fax : 034-2121664/034-2710066 Usuku: Date:2008/05/20 Datum:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir (Mr Dala N.J.)

With reference to the letter dated 15 May 2008; you are given a permission to conduct your research study to all schools of your choice in Hlazakazi Ward that obtained average percentage below 60% examination achievement in 2007.

Yours faithfully

2 0 MAY 2008

WARD MANAGER : S.E. VILAKAZI

11 APPENDIX D

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

P.O. Box 228
Nquthu
3135
TEL NO:082 315 4162
DATE : 15 May 2008

APPENDIX D

Nquthu Circuit Management Centre

Hlazakazi Ward Manager

Department of Education

Nquthu

3135

REF: SCHOOL

A REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

Dear Sir/Madam
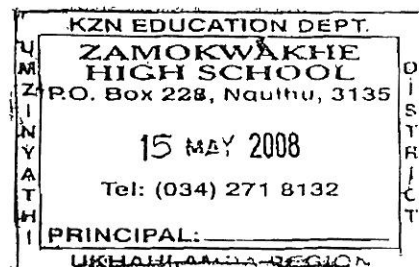
I would like to request your permission to conduct a research study in your school between June and August 2008. The Reseach Tittle is as follows: **LEARNER UNDERACHIEVEMENT IN RURAL SCHOOLING IN KWAZULU-NATAL**. For any information, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Vilakazi (Ward Mnager), at 034 271 0021.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Dala NJ

KZN EDUCATION DEPT.
ZAMOKWAKHE
HIGH SCHOOL
P.O. Box 228, Nquthu, 3135
20 MAY 2009
Tel: (034) 271 8132
PRINCIPAL:
UKHAHLAMBA REGION

UMZINYATHI DISTRICT

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12 APPENDIX E

KEY PERFORMANCE AREA	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME-FRAME
1. Provision of key resources	1. Ensuring every learner doing Grade 11 has got required stationery, setworks and textbooks. 2. Provision of teaching aids 3. Developed Subject Networks, whereby educators share resources with other educators from well performing schools. 4. Recruit suitable qualified educators within PPM	Principal Principal	Mid January annually Mid February annually
2. Teaching and Learning	1. Homework will be given in all examination subjects from Monday to Friday. 2. Homework given will be marked and checked. 3. Time table is available for the following: 4. Morning classes from 07H00 to 08H00 5. After-School Classes from 15H00 TO 16h00 6. -Winter Classes 7. Saturday Classes from 09H00 to 12H00	Educators Educators/SMT Principal	Daily Daily Daily/Weekly
3. Educator Support	1. Educators who are specialists in a subject will be assisting those who are less experienced(new entrance) 2. New and inexperienced educators will be assisted by liaising with Cluster Coordinators, for guidance and support. 3. Every SMT member should come up with a plan for monthly meetings and implement it 4. Networking and Team teaching will be undertaken with the aim of developing an educator in a specific subject.	 SMT	 Monthly
4. Learner Assessment	1. Monthly tests will be set, to check how much have been mastered by learners, within a short period. 2. Term Testing will be encouraged. This will help educators conduct ITEM ANALYSIS, with an aim of identifying items that need		

		more attention, because of learners who performed poorly on those items.		
	3.	Departmental Common Tests will be written		
	4.	Remedial teaching will be given on the basis of items identified as problematic to learners		
	5.	Completion of learning programmes by July		Monthly
	6.	Intensive Revision Programme by August		
	7.	Full Trial Exam Paper will be written at school level, before writing September Common Tests	SMT	
	8.	Cass monitoring will be done		
5. Management and Governance	1.	To instil discipline, Education Convenor, who is an SGB, Parent will work in collaboration with the SMT to address problems that hinder teaching and learning.		End of each quarter
	2.	Term assessment results will be communicated to SGG.		
	3.	SGB Education Convenor will address parents on issues pertaining to teaching and learning.	SMT/SGB	
	4.	Will twin with well-performing schools and network regularly.		
			Principal	End of February annually
6. Institutional Turnaround	1.	Intervention plan complied by all stakeholders.		Through out-year
	2.	Monthly meetings will be conducted to review whether deadlines are met.	SMT	Weekly
	3.	Proper report on the implementation Plan will be given to the Ward Manager		Monthly
			Principal	

7.	Community involvement	1.	Parents meetings will be organised on an ongoing basis.	Principal	
		2.	Pass requirements will be discussed in the detail, to both learners and parents.	Principal	
		3.	Parents Register will be kept to monitor attendance to meetings		
		4.	Mobilising parents or Guidance that they should provide time and space for their children to do school work	Principal	
		5.	Parents will be free to visit school anytime, for learner progress and performance.	Principal	
		6.	Issuing Progress Reports quarterly		
				Principal	
				Principal	
8.	Monitoring	1.	Ensuring that educators and learners are in the classrooms at appropriate time	SMT	JAN – DEC
		2.	SMT will ensure that teaching and learning takes place, issuing control instruments and moving around the classrooms and premises between 8H00 and 15H00 (3.6.3)	SMT	
		3.	Class visits by SMT, at least once a week.		
		4.	Departmental meetings to be held on Fridays in order to discuss problems experienced and sharing ideas.	SMT	
		5.	Assessment Committee will ensure that every assessment is compliance with assessment Policies and Guidelines.		Weekly
		6.	The SDT will ensure that IQMS Process is being implemented and educators are properly developed.	SMT	
				Assessment Committee	
				SDT	
9.	Accountability	1.	Target % is 70 OVERALL	Principal	DEC

TARGET SUBJECTS

SUBJECT	TARGET %
Life Orientation /Economics	100
Business Studies	80
English	80
Mathematics	80
Geography	80
Economics	80
Tourism Studies	80
IsiZulu	80
Accounting	80
Life Science	80
Mathematical Literacy	80
Physical Science	80

District Level Turnaround Strategy (see Table 5.3 below)

Table 5.3

Key performance Area	Activity	Responsibility	Date of submission
1. Provision of critical resources	1.1 Learning and assessment guides in English FAL, Mathematics, Mathematics Literacy, Life Sciences, Physical Science, Economics, Geography, History, and Tourism are developed, printed and distributed to schools	Head Office: Curriculum with Subject Advisors and lead educators	End of first term
	1.2 Video lessons in key areas of Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences, Economics, and Geography are sourced and distributed to school.	Head Office: Curriculum with Subject Advisors and lead educators	End of first term
	1.3 CDs containing analyses of key setworks in English FAL rare sourced and distributed to underperforming schools.	Head Office: Curriculum with English Subject Advisors and lead educators	
		Head Office: HR with Districts	End of fist term
	1.4 Employ Teaching Assistance in critical subjects in underperforming schools with large enrolments	Head Office: Curriculum with a team of High calibre English Educators	
	1.5 Develop and distribute to underperforming schools with a package of mandatory lessons in English FAL		
			Beginning of fourth term
			End of second term
2. Teaching and Learning	2.1 Organise study periods outside of instructional time in schools (afternoons and weekends)	School principal	End of the second months
	2.2 Organise winter schools in strategic locations throughout the province	Head Office: with districts	June
	2.3 Set homework in the subjects from Monday to Thursday of every week, and use it for formative purposes	Educators	Ongoing process
3. Educator support	3.1 Subjects meetings are held monthly to share teaching ideas, discuss common controlled tests, and review learner performance.	HODs	Ongoing process
	3.2 Increased the number of Subject Advisors in key subjects		
	3.3 Provide training on key generic areas of assessment and in specific subjects	Head Office :HR	Beginning of second term
			Ongoing process
		Head Office: Curriculum	

4. Learner assessment	4.1	Controlled tests are set in each school in each school monthly in Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, English, History, Physical Sciences, Geography, Economics, Accounting, Business Studies and Tourism	HODs	Ongoing process
	4.2	Quarterly tests in key subject are set provincially and written by students in grades 11 and 12 learners in the province.		
	4.3	Trial exams are set provincially and written by students in underperforming schools during September.	HODs	Ongoing process
	4.4	Collate assessment items from schools across the province in English FAL Mathematics, Mathematical Literacy, English, History, Physical Sciences, Geography, Economics, Accounting, Business Studies and Tourism and provide these to underperforming schools as item banks in either print of electronic (CD) form.	Head Office: Exams	September
			Head Office: Curriculum, with subject advisors.	End of the third term
5. Management and governance	5.1	SMTs establish systems for monitoring teaching and learning, including coverage of the curriculum, setting of homework and assessments, and learner performance throughout the year.	Principals	February
	5.2	Targeted short courses are offered to principals of underperforming schools.		
	5.3	Selected principals of low performing schools are twinned with principals of high performing schools for mentoring purposes and given time off from their schools during their period.	Head Office: M&G	
			District Managers	End of May
6. Institutional turnaround	6.1	Principals of the schools that obtained a pass of 60% or less develop and submit turnaround plans should be presented to school community meetings and signed off by the principal and the SGB Chair.	Principals and SGBS	20 February
7. Community involvement	7.1	Parents/guardians of learners are informed quarterly on the learners progress	HODs with educators	Ongoing process
	7.2	Schools identify local expertise to assist in specific areas of operation on a voluntary basis.	Principals	Ongoing process
	7.3	School should mobilise parents/guardians and advocate that they provide time and space for their children to do school work.	Principals and SGBs	February March
8. Community involvement	8.1	Ensure that educators and learners are in the	Principals and SGBs	Ongoing process

		classrooms at appropriate times.		
	8.2	Ward Managers regularly monitor the implementation and turnaround plans of schools. Monitoring reports to be submitted to Head Office: SDM on a monthly basis.		Ongoing process
	8.3	Ward managers vocationally base their offices at underperforming schools to enhance monitoring and support.		Ongoing process
9. Accountability	9.1	All schools that obtains a pass rate of 50% or less in the SCE/NCS for two consecutive years is categorised as Special Measures School. Special Measures Schools will receive letters informing them of this status and its implications (15 February)	Head Office:SDM	End of December annually
	9.2	All underperforming schools will set learner achievement targets in regard to the NCS.		
	9.3	Performance targets set for the Ward Managers whose schools are on average underperforming	Ward Managers and principals District Managers	October of preceding year February Annually