

**EXPLORING HUMAN RESOURCE CHALLENGES  
BESETTING SCHOOL MANAGERS IN VRYHEID  
DISTRICT IN KWAZULU-NATAL**

by

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**A thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements  
for the degree of**

**DOCTOR OF EDUCATION**

**In the field of**

**EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

**at the**

**University of South Africa**

**PRETORIA**

**Promoter: PROF. MW LUMADI**

**FEBRUARY 2011**

**EXPLORING HUMAN RESOURCE CHALLENGES  
BESETTING SCHOOL MANAGERS IN VRYHEID  
DISTRICT IN KWAZULU-NATAL:  
AN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE**

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I declare that:

**“Exploring human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal: an educational management perspective”** is my own work, and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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**DATE**

**PHUMZILE DEBRA ZWANE**

**STUDENT NUMBER: 3139 814-6**

## DEDICATION

### **IN HONOUR OF:**

My mother Mary Thokozile Zwane (MaVilakazi) for her unwavering support, for inspiring me to achieve and providing opportunities to do so and my late father Absolom Dippi Zwane.

It is further dedicated to Pastors Esau Maduna and Pastor Sipho Ngubeni who never ceased to pray for me. To my late brothers Penwell Vusumuzi Zwane, Derrick Bheki Zwane and Duncan Zamukulunga “Buccanneer Zwane” who is the source of my success and strength. His dream was that I have to study to the best of my ability. God Almighty, have fulfilled his dream. A special word of dedication goes to my youngest brother Edwin Makhosini Zwane who went missing.

This work is finally dedicated to all brethren at Emondlo and Vryheid Assemblies of God Movement and all those in Northern Natal region who never cease to pray for me. All school managers in schools whose challenges in schools were my inspiration to look for answers to lessen or end these challenges for them. To my family members, my son Sabelo Mhlonishwa Mafika Shabalala-Zwane, S’bongiseni “Se” S’khulile Shabalala-Zwane and S’phamandla Thusi; the joys of my life. My hope is that you receive better education than I have found now.

***GLORY BE TO GOD ALMIGHTY, LORD JESUS CHRIST AND THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR WISDOM AND PERSEVERANCE. JEREMIA 29:11.***

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writing of this thesis has been a collaborative effort. This study could not have been without the assistance of the following people and my heartfelt thanks go out to them:

- ❖ To God my creator, through Jesus Christ for His grace and infinite blessings who gave me this wisdom, knowledge and understanding to do my studies with success and for providing me with courage and strength to complete this study.
- ❖ My honourable Prof MW Lumadi, whose fatherly professional guidance and constant encouragement helped me through this study. I appreciate his expert guidance, patience, professionalism and giving of his precious time throughout this study. I thank you so much for your love, tireless assistance, understanding, patience and motivation. I thank you for your firm support during difficult times, for helping me in many respects and for willingly being my sounding board. I'll never forget your endless effort and words of encouragement without complaints during most difficult times. May God abundantly bless you.
- ❖ A special debt is owed to my editor, Jaco Wolmarans, for language editing and expert advice, his time and invaluable contributions without which this study would not have been possible.
- ❖ Vryheid District inspectors and school managers for sacrificing their precious time and for their invaluable contributions, without which this study would not have been possible.

- ❖ A word of thanks go to my family members Thembi, Thabile, Bheki, Khanyisile, Sabelo, S bongiseni, Bongani, Linda, Xolile, Phumlani, Ponky, Nkululeko, Busi, Mxolisi, S'thembiso, Thabisile, Mandla, Mpunga, Gugu, Mfundo, Thokozani, S'phamandla, Uyabongeka, Ntando, Swazi, Nqobile, Sphume, Queen, S'khulile., Themba, Babongile, and Sibusiso
  
- ❖ My sisters Maureen Phumzile Langa, Patricia Masibisi Zwane, Phumele Magwaza and Nelisiwe Mahlangu for their endless efforts and words of encouragement without complaints during difficult times.
  
- ❖ Beauty Nomhle Nxumalo, Nokwazi Adelaide Mtshali, my dearest friends, for their continuous encouragement.
  
- ❖ A word of thanks go to the College Rector Mr. Phakama Langa for his motivation and support, friends and colleagues at Mthashana Further Education and Training (FET) College at Vryheid Central Office who gave me support in many respects. Thanks a million.
  
- ❖ Lastly, no one can calculate the gratitude the family members deserve when one member is studying; I thank my family very much for the understanding, love and support, especially when the studies started to encroach on family arrangements.

## **SUMMARY AND KEY TERMS**

This study investigated human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district in Zululand region in KwaZulu-Natal: an educational management perspective. The target population consisted of school managers in the service of KwaZulu-Natal Province, Zululand Region in Vryheid district in the Department of Education.

For educators to perform satisfactorily, their skills, abilities and motives to perform duties must match their job requirements. Managers must recruit and select qualified and dedicated staff members for the effectiveness of the school depends on the effectiveness of the staff.

The challenges of school managers are to attract, recruit, retain, motivate and develop the staff. They should not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone. They have to redress the past imbalances when appointing the staff. They work under stressful conditions with different types of people, all with their own beliefs, values, cultures and work ethics. Educators with best results are promoted to senior positions where they are sometimes not utilised.

Learners are becoming more uncontrollable, rude, violent and undisciplined. some are promoted and others. Endless strikes, turnover, absenteeism,

redeployment, late coming, over-crowded classrooms, many changes, poor performance; hostility is very common in schools. The growing numbers of educators, who die, retire, promoted and resigning each year, resulting in the shortage of experienced educators to substitute them. The lack of reliable resources or help within the Department of Education. .

A qualitative explanatory and descriptive approach has been adopted in the present research to investigate school managers' challenges.

The research findings of the investigation confirmed that numerous challenges exist in schools and that school managers require training and intervention strategies to help them cope with the changes in the education system in South Africa. The limitations and recommendations were discussed.

## **KEY TERMS**

### **Human Resource Management**

**School management;**

**Challenge;**

**Culture;**

**Equity;**

**Diversity;**

**School,**

**Quality education;**

**Principal;**

**Discipline.**

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACRONYM	HEADING
AA	Affirmative action
BA	Bachelor of Arts
B.Sc	Bachelor of Science
CASS	Continuous Assessment
COLTS	Culture of learning and teaching services
DP	Deputy Principal
DEd	Doctor of Education
DoE	Department of Education
DP	Deputy Principal
EEA	The Employment Equity Act
ELSEN	Learners with Special Educational Needs
GET	General Education and Training band
HOD	Head of Department
HRC	Human Rights Commission
HRM	Human Resource Management
JPS	Junior Primary School
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal

<b>ACRONYM</b>	<b>HEADING</b>
<b>LSEN</b>	<b>Learners with Special Educational Needs</b>
<b>Med</b>	<b>Master of Education</b>
<b>NCV</b>	<b>National Certificate (Vocational)</b>
<b>NDoE</b>	<b>National Department of Education</b>
<b>NQF</b>	<b>National Qualification Framework</b>
<b>OBA</b>	<b>Outcomes-Based Assessment</b>
<b>OBE</b>	<b>Outcomes-Based Education</b>
<b>PDoE</b>	<b>Provincial Department of Education</b>
<b>RNCS</b>	<b>Revised National Curriculum Statement</b>
<b>S.A.</b>	<b>South Africa</b>
<b>SABPP</b>	<b>South African Board for Personnel Practice</b>
<b>SASA</b>	<b>South African Schools Act</b>
<b>SGB</b>	<b>School Governing Body</b>
<b>SMT</b>	<b>School Management Team</b>
<b>UNESCO</b>	<b>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</b>

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# CHAPTER ONE

## BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

*Chapter one provides an orientation on a study exploring human resource challenges that beset school managers in schools in the Vryheid district of KwaZulu-Natal. Background information about the study is provided. That is followed by the significance of the study, problem statement, aim, method of research and delimitation of the study. Concepts are defined and the program of the study is also outlined.*

### 1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Education success requires not only capital and technological improvements, but also changes in the way human relations are managed. The profitability and efficiency do not only depend on getting people going, but also on serving people. Public relations constitute an important and integral part of the school manager's responsibilities.

Many changes occurring in education have triple effect on schools. They are normally triggered by strategic intervention, for example the new curriculum for schools. Changes in school design, structure culture have a major effect on interpersonal relationships, attitudes and behaviour (Heystek, Nieman, van

Rooyen, Mosage and Bipath, 2008:32). It is to acknowledge that people must be treated as having value, and having lives and feelings that must be considered in the management of an organisation (Cole, 2003:32).

The effectiveness of a school depends on the effectiveness of the staff. Without a high quality labour force, a school is destined to have mediocre performance. For this reason, the external recruitment of human resources is a critical human resource function. Recruiting and selecting qualified and dedicated staff members involves a variety of human resource activities, including long term planning, interviewing and testing (Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert & Hatfield, 2006:9) .

Once the educators are appointed in a school, it is important that they are introduced to the organisation, their tasks, superiors and co-workers. This is known as induction, socialisation or orientation. Besides the external recruitment of educators, the internal movement of the educators by means of promotions and transfers is also important (Grobler et al., 2006:9).

According to Moloi (2005:32), human resource functions in schools are:

- affirmative action and employment equity;
- compensation and benefit issues;
- staff development;
- disciplinary procedures; and

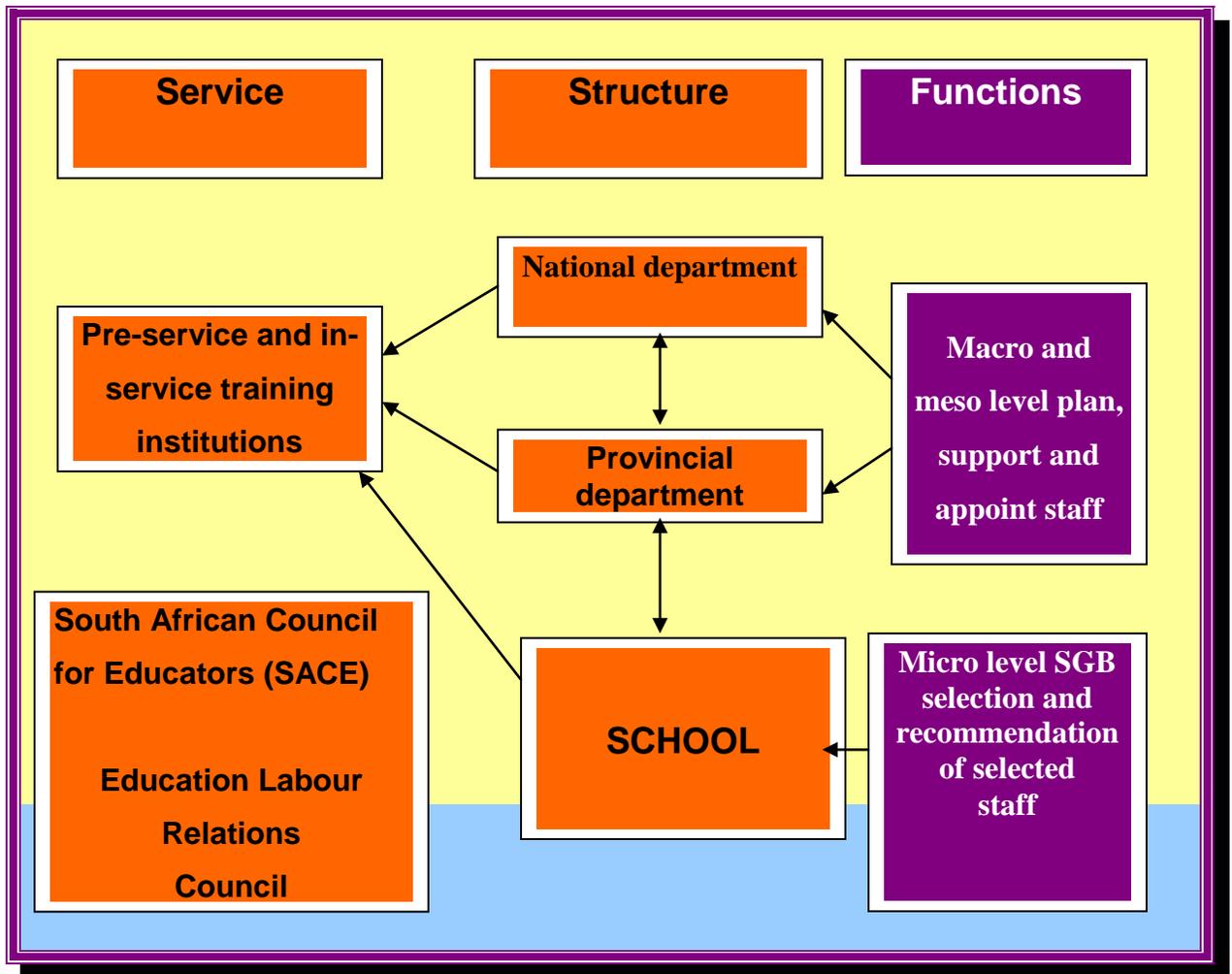
- performance appraisals.

School Governing Bodies (SGBs) have the responsibility of following the determined policies and procedures for the appointment of educators. The SGB is the local level decision maker which understands the local context and the needs of the specific vacancy at the school, in a decentralised process.

The parents have the majority vote on the governing body; they collaborate in a relationship of trust with the school manager and the School Management Team (SMT) during the selection process of an educator (English, 2002:2). The concepts of centralisation and decentralisation of power are fundamental to the process of staff appointment.

Centralised decisions are decisions taken at the highest level of the organisation while decentralised decisions are decisions delegated to lower levels of the organisation. In the education system, the centralised level is the national or provincial department of education. At the micro level we find the schools and their governing bodies (Heystek, Roos and Middlewood, 2005:43).

The South African Schools Act (SASA) states that the governing body can make a recommendation about the best candidate, but the final decision is made at the Provincial Department of Education (PDoE). Selecting and appointing the best qualified educator for a specific post is one of the most important starting points to quality education.



**Figure 1.1: Staff Provision**

**Adapted from: Heystek, Nieman, van Rooyen, Mosoge and Bipath, 2008:102**

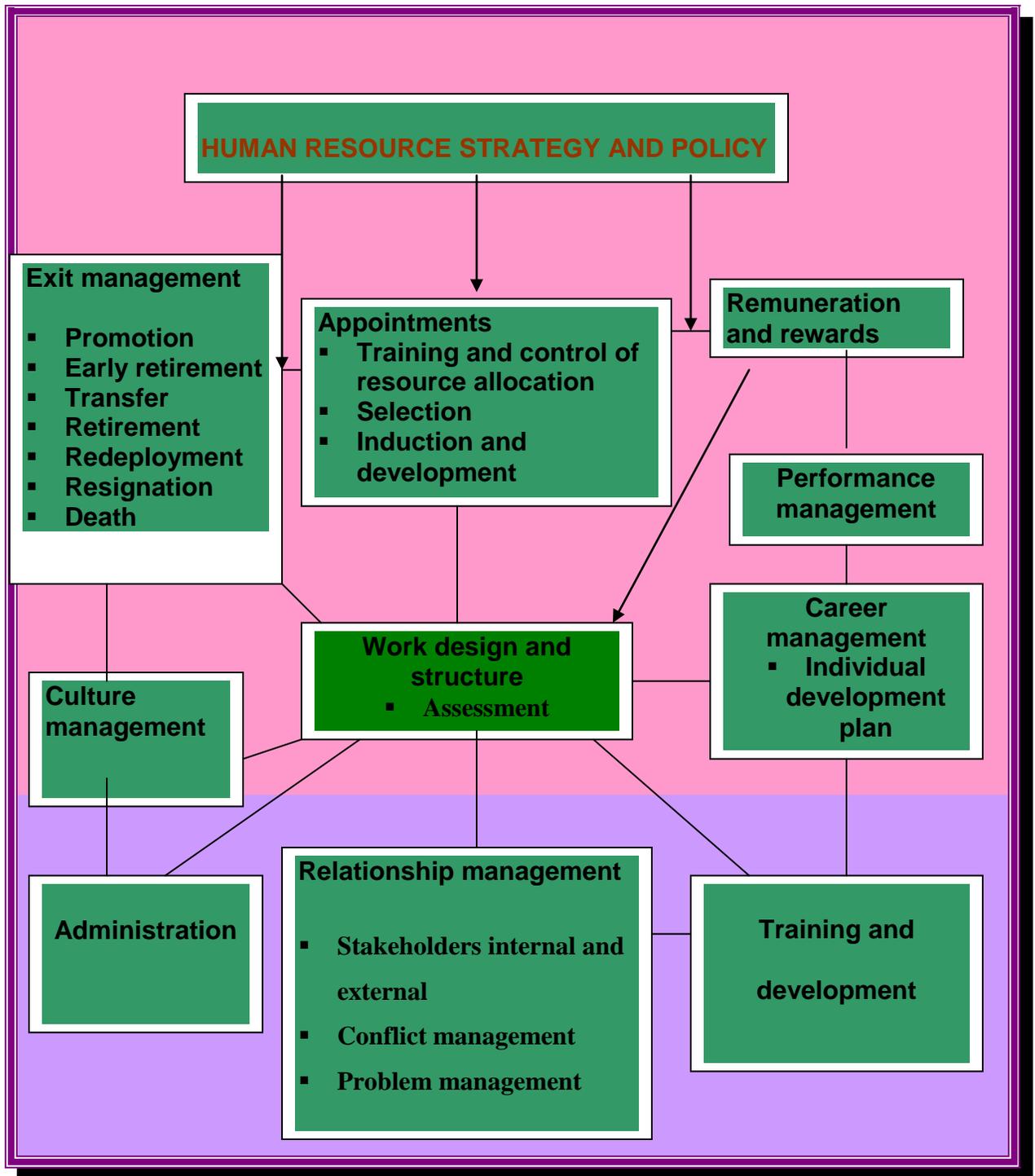
Heystek et al. (2008:102) are of the opinion that the provision of staff is a planning function. The planning starts at school level when every school provides the correct statistics to the meso level which is the provincial department; these include number of learners, number of educators and subject areas. All provinces in South Africa send the statistics to the National Department of Education (NDoE), which must ensure that there is a national plan for the provision of the correct number of

educators with the appropriate abilities, qualifications and learning area expertise for the country.

The appointment of an educator in a specific post in a specific school is not a single or isolated incident. The interview and appointment is the final step in a process of the provision of well-qualified staff members. There must be sufficient educators available at the right time and place for all different learning areas at different post levels for the education system to function effectively (Buchel, 2006:34).

All organisations place a very high priority on its “people” component. Unless its people are in the right places at the right time with the right skills and the right attitudes, it will not be successful. It is not good enough to state that people are the greatest asset; this asset must be managed properly by the school manager if it is to contribute to the school’s bottom line (Fullan & Watson, 2000:460).

The school manager have to keep abreast of changes relating to the issues such as staffing, development, appraisals, rewards, team building and communication. All schools depend on communication. Communication is the glue that binds various elements, co-ordinates activities, allow educators to work together and produce the best results. Heystek et al. (2008:18), are of the opinion about the functioning in schools that the job of a school manager is not an easy one.



**Figure 1.2: A human resource management model**

**Adapted from: Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, 2006:10.**

The school manager's management style must move away from strict authoritarian and toward the more collaborative, making communication more important than

ever. The area of concern in schools is health and safety. To be maximally effective, human resource policies should be in writing and should be communicated to all staff members and learners. The school manager must define the educators' role, explaining the rules, procedures and benefits to encourage participation.

Grobler et al. (2006: 10) further mentioned that for educators to perform satisfactorily, their skills, abilities and motives to perform the job must match the job's requirements. A mismatch may lead to poor performance, absenteeism, turnover and other problems.

The educators not only demand more satisfying and rewarding work but the school manager must also demonstrate that their involvement in decision-making can enhance rather than impair organisational effectiveness (Grobler et al., 2006:9).

Every social organisation such as the school is an embodiment of human beings who interact with one another in one way or another and having specified roles to perform in line with their assigned duties. However, there was a need for effective human resource management so as to avert conflict and equally manage challenges when they inevitably occur.

The quality of a school's human resources represents a critical factor. One of the human resource (HR) challenges of the school manager is how to attract, retain,

motivate, and develop educators with talent. When there is conflict between work and family, the educator's job performance is three times more likely to suffer than the employee (Moloi, 2005:231).

Schools need to become more family-friendly. Absenteeism can be reduced, turnover decreased, efficiency be improved and the school can be more attractive. Family-friendly programmes that can be introduced in schools include information and counselling services, time off, flexible schedules and financial assistance. In schools, a quality management system is of great importance.

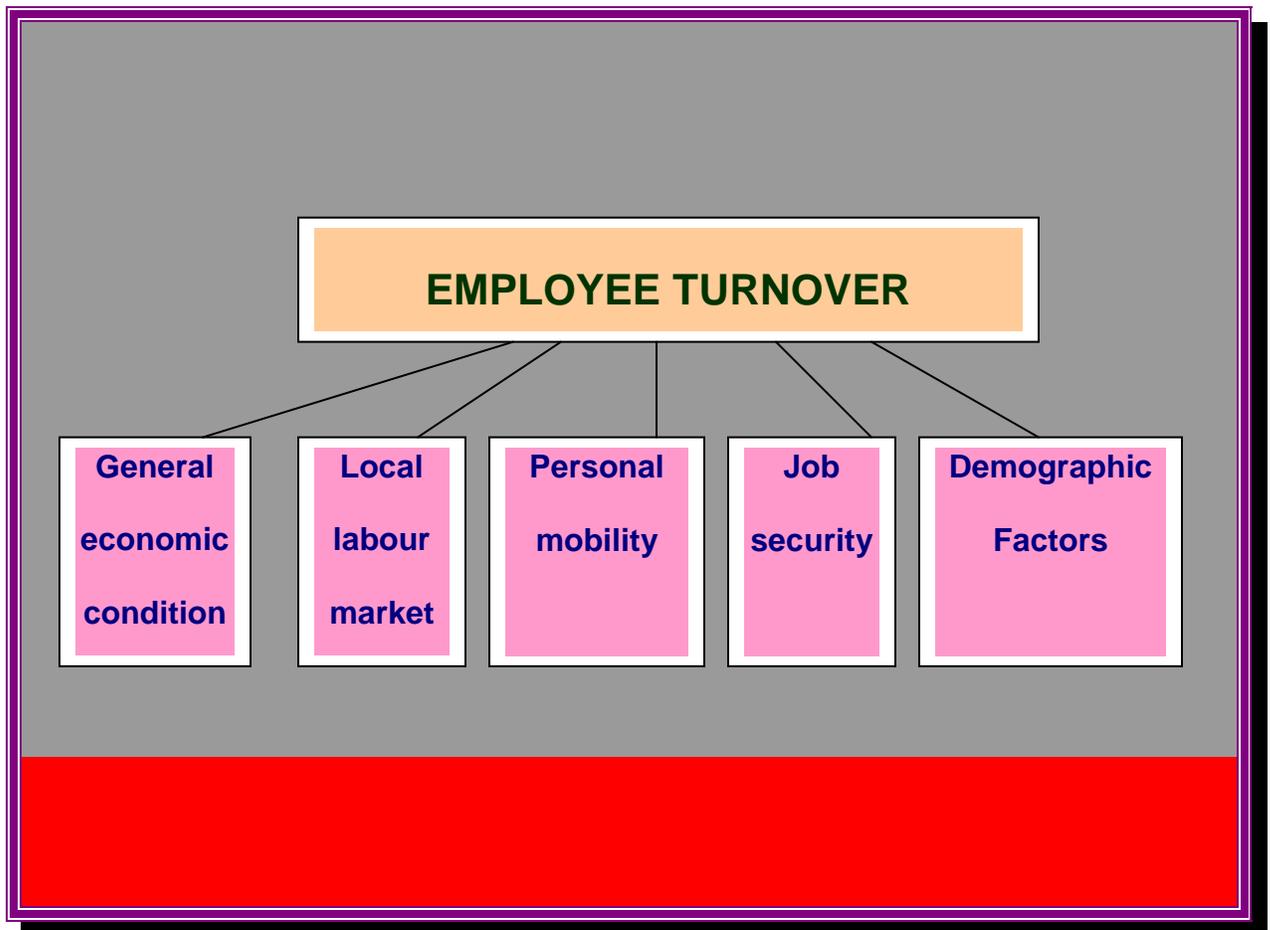
Improved teaching and learning means the survival of the nation. Getting the educators to teach quality education can be a major challenge to school managers. Some staff members dismiss quality efforts as inappropriate to their tasks until they are convinced that such efforts produce important results.

Educators are appointed at school level to the province and finally to the national level. The number of educators in schools is determined by the number of learners enrolled. Challenges in schools should be minimised by the school manager. The staff should not only become aware of their weak points but they must learn to avoid committing them. Communication could minimise many mistakes.

The most common error that exists in many schools is unconscious or conscious bias. Such biases are not related to job performance and may be from personal characteristics such as age, sex, disability, race, seniority or friendship.

### 1.3 TURNOVER

Turnover is the movement of employees out of the organisation. Turnover results from promotion, resignation, transfers out of organisational units, discharges, retirements and deaths (Grobler et al., 2006:125).



**Figure 1.3: Educators' turnover in schools**

**Adapted from: Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, 2006:125.**

Job dissatisfaction was a significant cause of turnover. The selection procedures must place the right person in the right job. There must be proper orientation procedures. There must be communication between the school manager and the staff members.

Most human resource movement takes place through employee promotions, demotions, and transfers. Another form of employee movement involves turnover. A certain amount of turnover is expected, is unavoidable and considered beneficial to the organisation.

New educators may inject new blood into the school by introducing new ideas, new methods and new effective ways of doing things. Turnover may help to rectify poor appointments. Excessive turnover creates an unstable school and increases human resource costs and the school may become ineffective (Foster, 2005:32).

Turnover detrimental to the school is called dysfunctional turnover. Such staff turnover wastes government money when staff members leave. Most educators who leave their schools are those who perceive a low degree of job security in their present jobs, and who may be motivated to seek employment in organisations where they believed a greater degree of security exists (Pretorius, 2001; 55).

Educators who resigned were mostly young educators who were not satisfied with their jobs. Educators with relatively large families and important family responsibilities tend to remain in the schools for a long time. With voluntary turnover, good employees often resign.

### ***1.3.1 Profiles to describe most employees:***

Grobler et al. (2006:125) maintain that:

1.3.1.1 **Turnovers:** educators who are highly dissatisfied at work, free of external pressures to stay and who will resign at the first chance.

1.3.1.2 **Turn-offs:** educators who dislike the job but stay because of pay, benefits or some other extrinsic job rewards.

1.3.1.3 **Turn-ons:** educators who are highly satisfied and motivated at work, but may leave if external pressure becomes significant.

1.3.1.4 **Turn-ons Plus:** educators who are highly motivated at work and satisfied with the local environment; likely to remain and continue to be productive.

#### **1.4 MANAGING DIVERSITY**

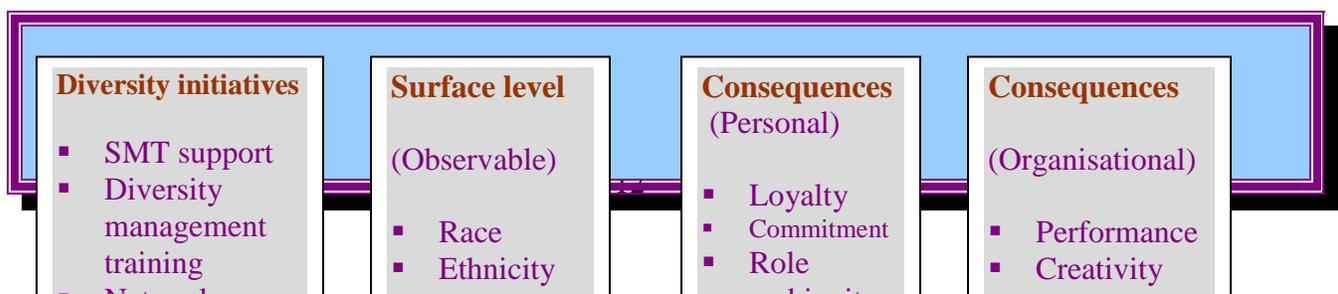
Diversity can be defined as the recognition of a group of people who share common traits. It is the political term for employment equity/affirmative action and involves the recruitment and selection of members from specific ethnic groups and gender – in this case, women. In diversity, the school manager manages individuals sharing a broad range of common traits. It is a fact of contemporary Mode C school life and is becoming increasingly so in the future (Heystek et al., 2008:67).

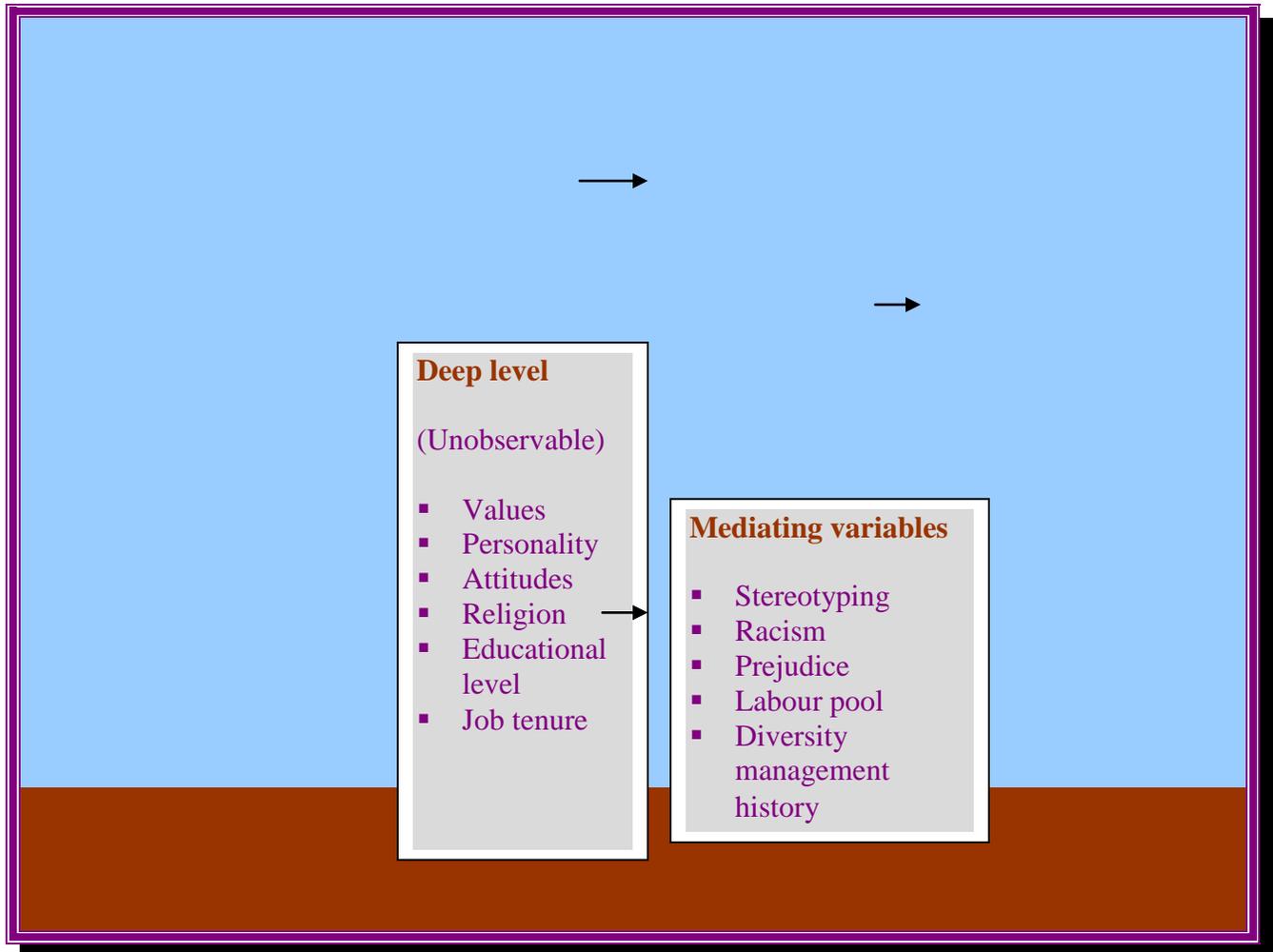
An institution must be clear about its motivation in managing diversity. To comply with the employment equity legislation is not enough. School managers must

recognise the necessity of having a diverse workforce and tapping the potential of that workforce.

Such motivation should be articulated in the school's mission statements or strategic plans (Cole, 2003:33). Managing diversity is not a short-term strategy to correct imbalances in the workplace as with affirmative action. It is a long-term process that demands the school management team's identification and commitment to set in motion mechanisms to access the potential of all employees.

Bernardin (2003:80) says that diversity is divided into primary dimensions and secondary dimensions. Primary dimensions are inborn human differences that exert a major impact on employees: age, ethnicity, gender, race, physical abilities and sexual orientation. Secondary dimensions add individuality in our lives. They are education, marital status, military experience, religion, work experience and parental status. Managing diversity is a planned, systematic and comprehensive managerial process for developing a school environment in which all educators, with their similarities and differences, can contribute to the strategic and competitive advantage of the organisation, and where no one is excluded on the basis of factors unrelated to productivity (Heystek et al., 2008:42). Figure 1.4 indicates diversity management. It highlights the diversity initiatives, types of diversity management, mediating variables and consequences of diversity management found within some schools.





**Figure 1.4: Diversity management**

**Adapted from: Molo, 2005:78.**

The school manager needs to utilise all staff members to the maximum and create improved relations and communication between organised labour and management. To meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, South African school managers must access the best and brightest educators and learners. Schools must be able to provide the skills and commitment.

There are many considerable benefits to be gained by managing diversity in schools. Schools that do not want to change are faced with high educator turnover

and higher recruitment costs. Educator conflicts that may result in sabotage or high absenteeism can be expected. Misunderstandings can lead to expensive discrimination litigation.

The term diversity has three major working definitions:

- The politically correct term for employment equity / affirmative action;
- The recruitment and selection of ethnic groups and women; and
- The management of individuals sharing a broad range of common traits.

School managers must motivate and direct the staff. They must be able to understand the organisation and employees' needs and see to it that both are met. If a school manager is to succeed, he or she must recognise the emergence of the diversified workforce and find ways to harness its energies, talents and differences for tomorrow's challenges (Cole, 2003:340).

*The major groups that provide diversity are the following:*

#### **1.4.1 Ethnic groups**

The South African populations comprises of four ethnic groups: blacks/Africans, coloureds, Indians or Asians and whites. More than eleven languages are spoken by these groups. School managers must appoint people from all groups and ensure that the different races are equally and fairly treated. He or she must ensure that they are not discriminated against.

### **1.4.2 Females**

Another challenge is the difficulty of managing a diverse workforce. Although laws are in place to govern this and gains are being made, a 'glass ceiling' for women who aspire to top management still exists (Pretorius, 2001:55).

Notwithstanding changes in government regulations and education, female managers perceive their career opportunities to be fewer than those of their male colleagues. With more single parents and dual-career couples, balancing the demands of home and work has become a great challenge (Very, 2004:67).

Grobler et al. (2006:69) are of the opinion that the availability of female educators in schools results in a decline in the number of male educators in some schools. Some of the school managers still don't appoint women in top management

positions. Females are concentrated in occupations that have been seen as female occupations.

The influx of females in management positions together with the legal, political, social and economic efforts to advantage gender equality in the workplace, has led to increasing numbers of females occupying leadership positions. Yet school managers still face challenges in delegating management duties to females and to appoint them in senior positions.

### **1.4.3 Younger educators**

South Africa has a relatively young population and some of them are unemployed. Most educators employed in schools are young. They behave differently to older educators. Some of them are not well disciplined. School managers need to cater for young educators' individual needs. Some of them are young and highly qualified. Some of them have an "I don't care attitude" and school managers should understand, utilise and respect them as their colleagues (Dixon, 2001:13).

Some young educators dress the way they like. Old school managers know the dress code for educators but things are changing. Most of them drink and come to school under the influence of alcohol. Others drink at school. Both males and females behave differently from older educators. School managers need to treat them fairly without any discrimination (Dugmore, 2006:34).

With democracy in South Africa, management positions in schools are for educators with young blood. They are expected to bring new ideas in schools. The traditional management style is to be changed. As there are so many changes in education, there must be changes in human resource management.

### **1.4.4 People with disabilities**

Common disabilities included limited hearing or sight, limited mobility and mental or emotional deficiencies and those who are wheelchair-bound. Many individuals experience anxiety around workers with disabilities, especially if the disabilities are severe.

The school manager could set the tone for proper treatment of educators with disabilities. This is important as people with disabilities fall within the so-called “designated group” identified by the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998. School managers need to redress the past imbalances by appointing educators with disabilities in their schools (Very, 2004:51).

Seeking people with potential, school managers were likely to have greater success in employing people with disabilities. To make schools more accessible to the disabled people, schools need to open doors and hallways, to provide designated, accessible parking spaces, provide flashing alarm lights and reposition telephones, water and other essential equipments.

### **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study highlights human resource challenges besetting school managers in the Zululand region in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal (see annexure G for the organogram of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education). The study further explores and notes the human resource problems of school managers in the creation of effective, educationally sound and accountable supportive school structures.

It determines society and the Department of Education’s needs and expectations from school managers. This study aims to suggest solutions to their human resource management challenges. While this study laments the poor state of

discipline in South African schools, it is searching for and suggesting new ways of dealing with school managers' human resource management challenges in schools.

It provides a reliable picture of human resource challenges besetting school managers in school management. This investigation will enable education planners and other relevant bodies to plan and provide for professional school managers' training programmes in school human resource management.

The map of South Africa reflects South Africa's nine provinces: KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, North West, Free State, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape and Western Cape. Vryheid is in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. South Africa is a nation

of diversity with a variety of cultures, languages and religious beliefs. According to Statistics South Africa's mid- 2009 estimates, the country's population stands at 49 320 500 people. Females make up 52% of the population, and males 48%.

Figure 1.5 shows the nine provinces of South Africa. The investigation was in KwaZulu-Natal province in Vryheid district which is in Zululand region. The purpose was to show the area where the research was conducted in South Africa.



Figure 1.5: Map of South Africa

Adapted from: [www.places.co.za](http://www.places.co.za). Accessed on 26 November 2010.

## **1.6 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The problem statement of this study was to explore the human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal. These challenges were explored by responding to the following research questions:

- What are the human resource challenges that school managers beset in managing their schools?
- How do these challenges impact on the management of schools?
- How can school managers address the challenges besetting schooling?

## **1.7 AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of the study was to explore the human resource challenges besetting school managers in the Vryheid district of KwaZulu-Natal.

### **1.7.1 Research objectives**

The objectives of the study were:

- To identify human resource challenges that school managers' beset in managing their schools.
- To explore the impact of these challenges on the successful management of schools.

- To determine strategies that could be used by school managers in addressing the challenges besetting schooling.

## **1.8 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted in the Vryheid district in the Zululand region of KwaZulu-Natal. The study was limited to challenges identified within one month of research in one province of KwaZulu-Natal. Selected school managers and educators employed by the Department of Education were investigated.

The researcher had financial constraints while conducting the research. Travelling for the purpose of conducting interviews was expensive. Funds were required for printing and postage. When people are interviewed, it is customary to provide them with a meal. Money was needed for travelling and for food.

Questionnaires for the interview were hand-delivered, funds were required. The researcher gave the participants incentives to encourage them to participate in the research. Funding was a major challenge in this research. The study was also limited in the following way:

Some schools were not easily accessible in remote rural areas of Vryheid district due to the condition of the roads especially at the time of the study. This study does not mean to suggest that all factors contributing to human resource challenges in school management are experience in every school in the Republic of South Africa. The interpretation of the interviews was impeded by

the fact that some of the respondents were very sensitive and was not addressing certain sensitive issues during interviews.

## VRYHEID



### EXPLORING HUMAN RESOURCE CHALLENGES BESETTING SCHOOL MANAGERS IN VRYHEID DISTRICT IN KWAZULU-NATAL

## VRYHEID

Exploring human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal



Figure 1.6 Vryheid Map

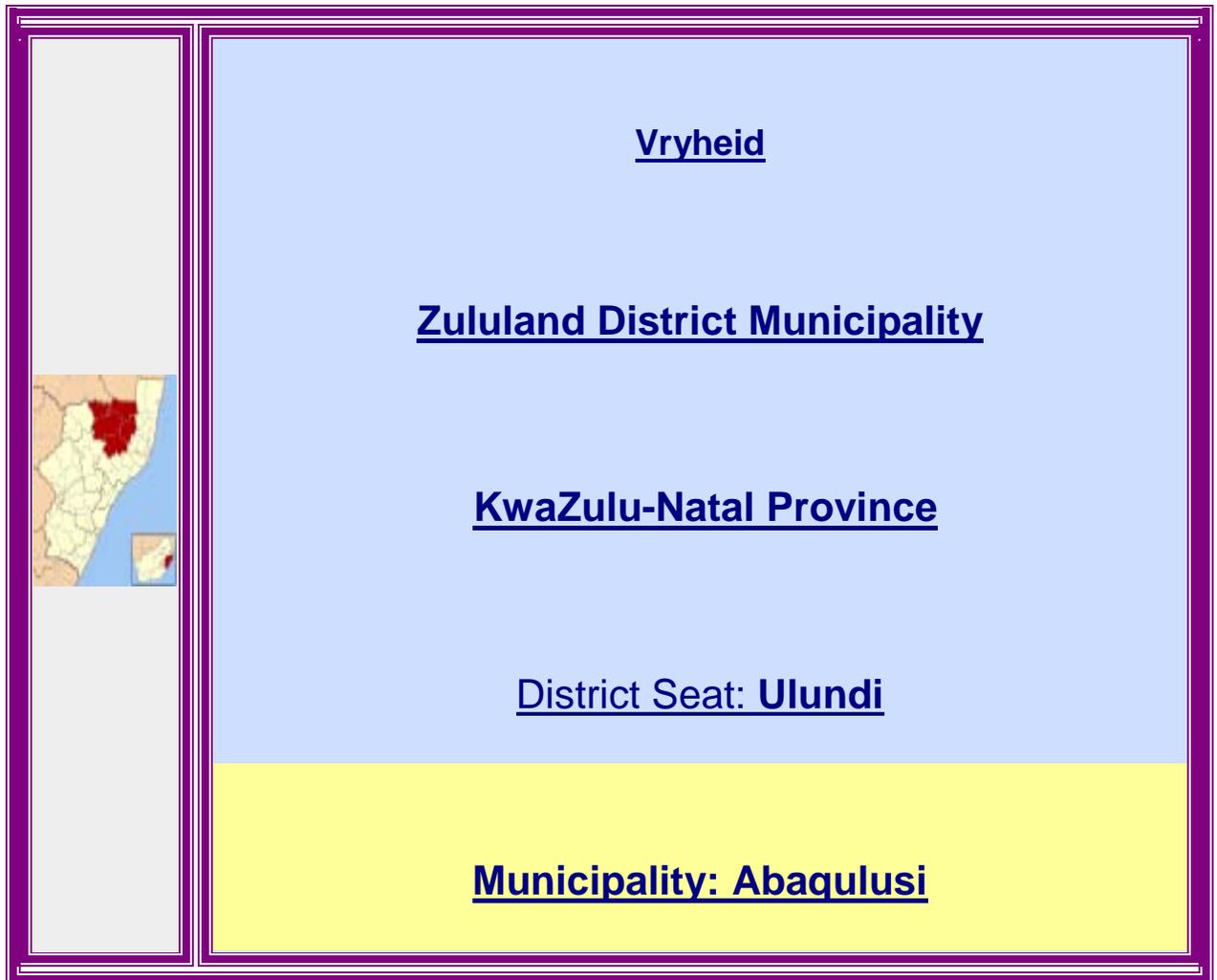
Source: Adapted from [www.places.co.za](http://www.places.co.za) Accessed 13 November 2010.

- **History of Vryheid**

Figure 1.6 is the Vryheid map in KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa showing the area where the study was conducted. Vryheid is in South Africa in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. It is situated in the District Municipality of Zululand. The local municipality is Abaqulusi Municipality. The district seat is Ulundi.

After British and Boer mercenaries had helped King Dinuzulu defeat his rival Uzibhebhu for succession of the Zulu throne, land and farming rights were granted to them along the banks of the Mfolozi River. On August 5, 1884 the mercenaries formed the *Nieuwe Republiek* (New Republic) with Vryheid as its capital.

It was later incorporated into the South African Republic, but at the end of the Second Boer War the town and its surrounding area was absorbed into Natal. Vryheid is located along the Spoornet coal line. It is a coal mining and cattle farming town. Vryheid is Afrikaans for "freedom" or "liberty" ([www.places.co.za](http://www.places.co.za)). Accessed 13 November 2010.



**Figure 1.7: Zululand District**

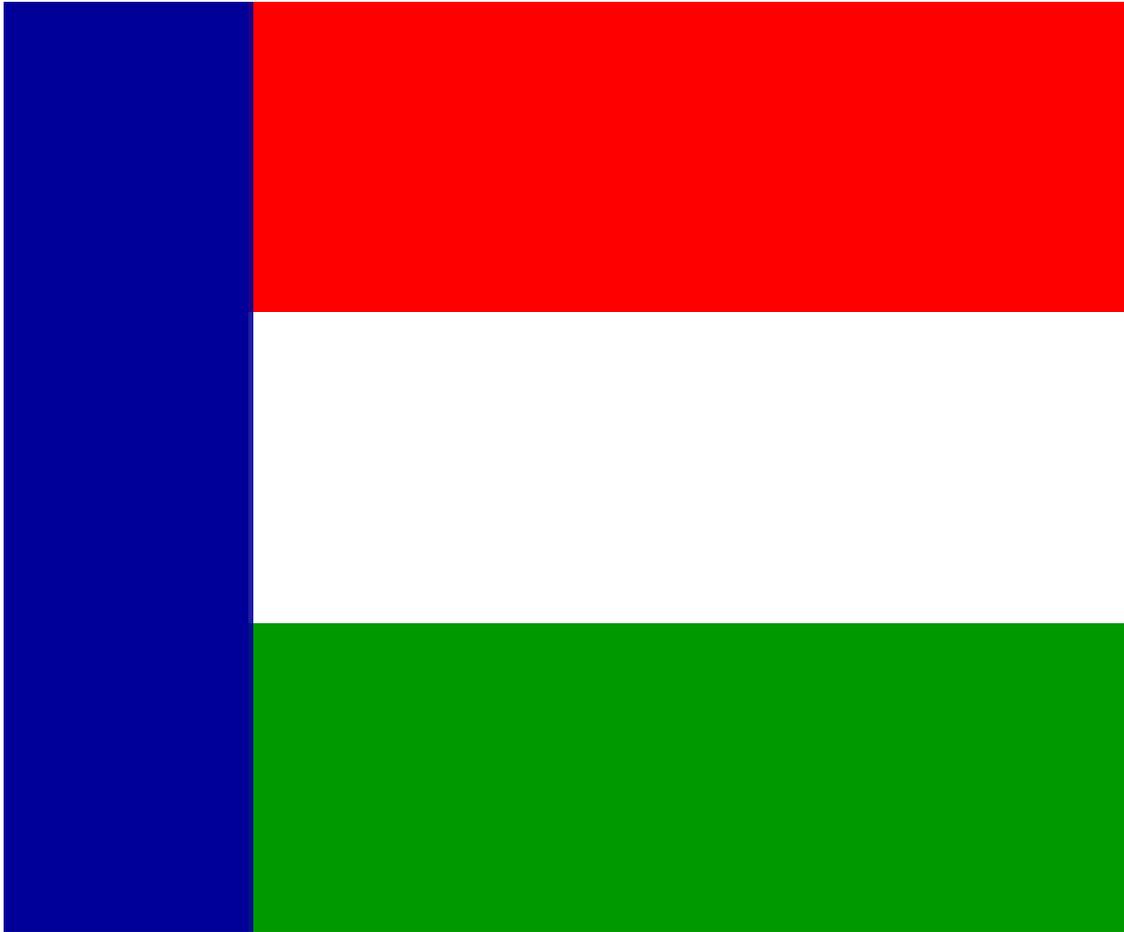
Adapted from: [www.places.co.za](http://www.places.co.za) Accessed on 13 November 2010.

Vryheid district is very big and it is a rural area. There are many schools and extensive funding are needed to explore the human resource challenges and life experiences of the school managers. Current available funding might not be enough to conduct thorough research. A further possible source of error in this study could be the potential bias of the researcher.

<b>VRYHEID</b>	
Coordinates:  <a href="#">27°46'01"S 30°48'00"E</a>	
<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>SOUTH AFRICA</b>
<u>Province</u>	<u>KwaZulu-Natal</u>
<u>District municipality</u>	<u>Zululand</u>
<u>Local municipality</u>	<u>Abaqulusi</u>
<u>Time zone</u>	<u>SAST (UTC+2)</u>

Figure 1.8: Vryheid allocation

Adapted from: [www.places.co.za](http://www.places.co.za) Accessed on 13 November 2010.



**Figure 1.9: Vryheid Flag**

**Adapted from: [www.places.co.za](http://www.places.co.za) Accessed on 13 November 2010.**

The flag consists of four colours, namely blue, red, white and green. The flag for Vryheid is said to be composed of the colours of flags of past administrations.

People do sometimes assign meanings to the colours. Blue, white, red and green reflect the British and Dutch (later Boer) influence. The colours featured prominently in the old South African national Flag (1928-1994) and thus represent the white population (SA Bureau of Standards – Specifications for the National Flag, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).

**KwaZulu-Natal map**

— **Province of South Africa** —

**The Province of KwaZulu-Natal**

**Motto: *Masisukume sakhe* (Let us rise and build)**



**Figure 1.10: Location of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa**  
 Adapted from: [www.kwazulunatal.gov.za](http://www.kwazulunatal.gov.za) Accessed on 3 December 2010.

<u>Country</u>	 <b>South Africa</b>
<b>Natalia Republic</b>	<b>12 October 1839</b>
<b>Colony of Natal</b>	<b>04 May 1843</b>
<b>Natal Province</b>	<b>31 May 1910</b>
<b>KwaZulu-Natal</b>	<b>27 April 1994</b>
<b>Capital</b>	<b>Pietermaritzburg</b>

## History of KwaZulu-Natal

KwaZulu-Natal (pronounced */kwa:zu:lu: ə t a:l/*, also referred to as KZN or Natal) is a province of South Africa. Prior to 1994 the territory now known as KwaZulu-Natal was made up of the province of Natal and the homeland of KwaZulu ([www.places.co.za](http://www.places.co.za) Accessed on 9 November 2010)

KwaZulu is the Kingdom of the Zulu and a land of history. KwaZulu-Natal is the province of fun, colourful coasts, magnificent mountain resorts and game reserves. It speaks of South Africa's historic battlefields and strong cultures. Most of the people in KwaZulu-Natal speak isiZulu as their mother tongue.

KwaZulu-Natal is a nation of diversity, with 49, 32 million people and a variety of cultures, languages and religious beliefs ([http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/za\\_nr.html](http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/za_nr.html) Accessed on 3 September 2010).

According to Statistics South Africa's mid- 2009 estimates, the country's population stands at 49 320 500 people. Females make up 52% of the population, and males 48% ([http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/za\\_nr.html](http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/za_nr.html) Accessed on September 2010).

The Province of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. South Africa has its own flag (See Figure 1.11).



**Figure 1. 11: The South African flag**

**Adapted from: South African Bureau of Standards – Specifications for the National Flag, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition: Accessed on 10 November 2010).**

- **The South African flag**

The South African flag is the only national flag to contain six colours which are blue, red, yellow, green, black and white as part of its primary design (excluding those flags which contain various colour shades as part of the detail of coats of arms or other charges etc.).

The flag is the merge of the two flags of past administrations and was adopted on 27 April 1994. The colours of the South African flag do not really have symbolic meanings in themselves. The design in turn, represents converging paths, the merging of both the past and the present.

The green pall (Y shape) is commonly interpreted to mean the unification of the various ethnic groups and the moving forward into a new united South Africa. (South African Bureau of Standards – Specifications for the National Flag, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Accessed on 10 November 2010).

## **1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Qualitative research approach was used in this study. It was used for the following reasons: it implies a direct concern with feelings, experiences and views as lived, felt, undergone or expressed. This method depends on naturalistic inquiry to establish the natural flow of events at schools and how participants interpret them (Lupi & Tong, 2001:164).

Quantitative research focused on quantifying data and drawing conclusions from that (Naidoo, 2006:5). This study is descriptive in that data from school managers, deputy principals, heads of departments and educators was gathered and described. It is exploratory because the challenges besetting school managers were explored within an identified area which is Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal.

For the purpose of this study, this type of method allowed the researcher to remain receptive to new ideas, issues and undercurrents emerging from the study. This was especially relevant to the subject of the present study, which was still being developed, with the result that there was a considerable likelihood that new

developments relating to the challenges beset by school managers in schools emerged during the process.

A qualitative research design was used to gain information and understanding of challenges besetting managers and educators in schools. It was the researcher's opinion that such a design was the most effective for this research, considering that the topic is a practical issue in South Africa. The learner population in South African schools is increasing rapidly and this method employs naturalistic inquiry to establish the natural flow of events at schools and how participants interpret such events (Achilles, Finn & Pate-Bain, 2002:25).

The qualitative research methodology chosen for this study is descriptive and explanatory. It gives a clear explanation of the challenges besetting school managers and educators in Vryheid district schools. According to Lupi and Tong (2001:164), descriptive research takes the form of case study, survey studies, developmental studies and qualitative studies.

This study concentrated on the qualitative form since its aim was to elucidate what the participants themselves had to say with regard to the challenges they beset in schools in their natural settings. In this regard, it was imperative that a methodological perspective was adopted that allowed the findings to develop from the data rather than from preconceived, rigidly structured and highly quantified

techniques that pigeonhole the empirical social world into the operational definition that the researcher has constructed.

Alt (2003:4) says that it is the unique demands of the problem which indicate the method rather than the method which delimits the problem. A qualitative method implies a direct concern with feelings, experiences and views as lived or felt or undergone. Qualitative research therefore has the aim of elucidating experiences and views that are as near as possible to how the participants live or express themselves (Harris & Kumra, 2000:2).

According to Achilles, Finn and Pate-Bain (2002:25), qualitative methodology is useful in the generation of categories for understanding human phenomena and the investigation of the interpretation and meaning that people give to events that they experience. The problem identified in this study demands that participants be allowed to freely express their feelings, views and opinions. Banks (2001:14 -15) comments that an openness to value systems in other cultures helps people to begin the process of questioning personal assumptions.

Data collection strategies included an ethnographic interview and participant observation, which was applied to investigate the problem statement and aims of this study. The researcher used questionnaires with interview questions. Interviews were conducted by the researcher using a tape recorder to accurately record all

information.

Achilles et al. (2002:24), state that the purpose of data collection interviews is to capture the varying perspectives of participants with respect to standardised questions that are formulated to be minimally intrusive. The researcher prepared questions in an interview schedule that left a room for further, unplanned questions that were required to clarify certain responses.

According to Coetzee (2003 24), interviews used as a data collection strategy can be perceived as data collection devices that attempt to capture the varying perspectives of participants to standardised questions that intend to be minimally interventional.

The researcher prepared questions in an interview schedule allowing further, unplanned questions asked in order to clarify certain responses.

The researcher observed all participants in order to link and compare findings made from the literature study, and ethnographic interviews conducted as part of participant observation.

Artefact collection, which was a non-interactive strategy for obtaining ethnographic data with little or no reciprocity between the researcher and the participants, was used. For this study, artefact collection included participants' experiences, knowledge, actions and values. Shiluvale (2001:264) adds that people need to know the reporting lines.

The researcher investigated personal and official documents, such as minutes of meetings, circulars, stock registers, attendance registers and admission registers by using qualitative research methodology. The researcher was included in the situation under investigation and to obtain information-rich descriptions from the participants.

The interviews were conducted in a natural setting of the interviewees. The main aim of the interviews was to get the in-depth descriptions and understanding of human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district.

## **1.10 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

It became apparent that there are many concepts related to human resource challenges besetting school managers. Due to the complexity and various meanings attached to the aspects described in this study, it was essential to clarify these concepts.

### **1.10.1 Human Resource Management**

Human Resource management (HRM) is the strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organisation's most valued assets – the people working there who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement to the vision, mission and the objectives of the school (Bestwell, 2004:50).

The terms “human resource management“ and “human resources” have largely replaced the term “personnel management” as a description of the processes involved in managing people, developing their capacities, utilising, maintaining and compensating their services in tune with the job and organisational requirement (Heystek et al., 2008:2).

How budgets are created in schools was a process that revealed the manager’s beliefs. Human resource management is a process of bringing people and organisations together. The role of the human resource manager is shifting from that of a protector and screener to that of a director. The task of human resource management reveals both a practical and a strategic role.

This is within every aspect of employer-employee expectations, recruitment leadership development training, remuneration communication, performance, safety and welfare (Bottery, 2004:32). The field takes positive views of workers, assuming that virtually all employees wish to contribute to quality education and that the main obstacles to their endeavours are lack of knowledge, insufficient training and failures of process (Morgan & Spanish, 2004:350).

For this study, all forms of diversity must be incorporated into a school’s culture and values. In human resources, legislation prohibits any form of unfair discrimination, and requires compliance with human rights principles like redress and equal

opportunities. Human relations approaches are aimed at keeping the workforce happy by assuming that people would work hard if they were happy.

According to the researcher, this is when the critical role of people and people leadership ultimately becomes the responsibility of the school manager – the role of the school manager being to set values, norms and standards for behaviour, and to communicate expectations that influence the way in which individuals, groups and teams interact with one another and co-operate to achieve organisational goals.

### **1.10.2 Challenge**

Fox (2001:203) refers to the concept challenge as a call to engage in a contest, fight or competition or a call to confrontation. It is the calling for work effort and the use of one's talent. Muleya (2007:13), defines the concept of challenge as a demanding or stimulating situation.

Mabitla (2006:39) defines it as a question or statement demanding an explanation. The concept challenge is thus defined, for purposes of this study, as a "difficult task" or something that stands in the way of success of school managers without being obviously insurmountable. It is the problem that equals one's capacity to tackle issues. The term includes problems, tasks, perceptions and stereotypes confronting school managers in schools as hurdles to managing their schools effectively (Bono, 2005:3).

### **1.10.3 Culture**

The term 'culture' has been defined in many different ways. According to Matsepe (2005:20), culture should not be considered to qualify a particular group of people, nor should it be integrated as a code or system of acceptable behaviour. Culture refers to the ways in which one perceives, believes, evaluates operates and behaves.

In some situations, the concept of "culture" acquires a "behavioural" connotation, that it, it concentrates on how people act. For this study, culture refers to what a person has to know, do, or believe in, in order to behave in a socially acceptable manner (Lamina, 2001:100).

According to Heystek et al. (2008:63), school, which is the culture of an organisation, is seen as an important variable determining the academic achievement of learners. The performance of educators is positively or negatively affected by the prevailing school culture.

School culture is the ethos of a school as reflected in the shared norms, symbols and traditions (Booyesen, 2001:39). Culture differs from school to school. The school manager and heads of departments are ideally placed to foster educators' professional development.

Culture is best described by Cele (2005:230) as procedures, norms, expectations and values of staff members in a school. It is also the way we get things done in an organisation. In this study, the culture of the school holds the key to improving the quality of learners' learning. It is the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs shared by members of an organisation that operate unconsciously.

Bruckner (2005:79) states that it is a basic 'taken-for-granted' view of itself and its environment. Cultures are not fixed, immutable and inert, but created by their participants or, if it is not created, are 'open to modification' to use.

Okumbo (2001:45) states that culture is a generally shared knowledge about school practices and the assumptions that underlie them – and that deeply affects classroom and staffroom processes throughout the whole school. The quality of the school culture is related not only to enhance educator performance in the classroom, but also to higher levels of educator self-esteem (Nthite, 2005:5).

South African school managers operate in cultural contexts different from their own. They have to adapt their leadership styles for the culture within which they operate, and this may have a profound effect on their successes as leaders (Bush & Heystek et al., 2006:67).

Schools have become increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse. In the opinion of the researcher, culture refers to the values and customs acquired to meet the demands of a perceived environment. The values and customs have been passed down from generations and have formed an identifiable pattern or heritage.

#### **1.10.4 Gender equity**

Gender equity in South Africa is intended to advance gender equality and women's empowerment or reduce discrimination and inequalities based on sex (The Constitution). It is a social order in which women share the same opportunities and the same constraints as men on full participation in both the economic and domestic realism. Equalism is a name often given to forms of egalitarianism (advocacy of equality) concerned with issues of gender or race. It is a system of rules and doctrines which are fair and just (Moloi, 2005:67).

Gender equity reduces social, economic or political power inequalities between women and men or compensate for past discrimination. It also develops or strengthens gender equality or anti-discrimination, or develops or strengthens gender equality or anti-discrimination policies, legislation or institutions. This approach requires analysing gender inequalities either separately or as an integral part of agencies' standard procedures (The Constitution).

Thus equalism is another name of gender egalitarianism, sexual egalitarianism, and/or racial egalitarianism. Central to equalism is the belief that society must be colour blind and sex or gender blind. Equity occurs when the organisation resorts to general principles of fairness and justice whenever existing law is inadequate

Gender equity was intended to advance gender equality and women's empowerment or reduce discrimination and inequalities based on sex, race and colour. Gender equity requires that efforts be made to broaden women's equitable participation at all levels of decision making (Heystek et al., 2008:32).

#### **1.10.5 Diversity**

Fullan and Watson (2000:463) state that diversity does not only include racial, ethnic and gender identities, but also factors such as sexual orientation, generation, social class, physical ability, family and religion, as well as regional, professional, political and other personal afflictions. In South Africa diversity is a given, and should not be seen as a dividing factor, but rather as a source of innovation, new ideas and perspectives.

Diversity issues in this study are related to race, gender, age, disabilities, religion, job title, physical appearance, sexual orientation, competency, trading experience and personal habits and are explored in these links (Pretorius, 2001 55). In South Africa, population has become increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse. Sensitivity to cultural diversity becomes increasingly important as school managers

had to deal with an increasingly diverse staff (Molho, 2007:4).

School managers not only had to deal with global challenges, but also with leading the intra-national diversity within the country and the school. By promoting team work, school managers created situations where people got to know others who are different from them (Bernardin, 2003:80). When diversity in an organisation is a reality, it is important that people start to value differences.

This added to their own knowledge and understanding of life, and act as a source of new and exciting experiences (Kunene, 2005:21). School managers as leaders had to create a culture that had a diversity-sensitive orientation. Staff members should be encouraged to evaluate themselves and to confront ethnic, cultural and gender stereotypes they might hold (Cole, 2003:32).

All aspects of diversity should be recognised and emphasised such as race, gender and religion, without reinforcing traditional biases and stereotypes. People should realise the importance of knowing themselves as people, with an implicit understanding of diversity and its related prejudices and inequalities (Welch, 2004:37). Diversity sensitisation among the people in the school might be a priority, and success could be achieved by sensitisation workshops and training events.

Diversity audits and focus group (Athiemoolam, 2004:243) investigations enable the school manager to define and examine the needs of his or her staff members, thus allowing the staff to participate throughout the whole process. The empowerment of the staff to cope with diversity has to be facilitated by the school manager. Staff members have to become involved in activities that are designed to change attitudes (Kunene, 2005:6).

A confluence and merging of interests is necessary to create synergy among the staff. Diverse people have to work together, and institutions should take care that the tension and conflict resulting from differences do not destroy the harmony and unity that all institutions seek to achieve (Foster, 2005:124).

Heystek et al. (2008:34) concludes that valuing differences is the essence of synergy, which implies that the focus should be the encouragement and leading of a diverse group and not merely the accommodation of diversity. Diversity of cultures is mostly linked to ethnic groups and different language groups.

Within South Africa's diversity, there is also a dominant culture with many sub-cultures. This makes human resource management complicated because all forms of diversity must be incorporated into a school's culture and values (Heystek et al., 2008:6).

### **1.10.6 School**

McCauley (2001:325) states that a school is a place managed by a school manager where learners get formal education. They are taught in totality: mentally, physically and spiritually. According to Coetzee (2003:92), schools are the building blocks for the transformation of the education system. It is in schools that the culture of teaching and learning must be recreated.

For purposes of this study, school refers to junior primary, senior primary, secondary, primary and special schools. This is a place for social and professional gathering for the purpose of teaching and learning on professional level. It is important for SGBs to comply with the legislation and to be sensitive regarding issues of equity and redress (Bono, 2005:2).

### **1.10.7 Quality education**

According to Kassiem (2006:4), quality education means providing quality education, not any education. Education, regardless of quality, is not the goal. A myth exists that access must come before quality or can occur simultaneously. A debate continues about what a quality education is. Quality education has essential characteristics that can be implemented in many culturally appropriate forms. It depends largely on the quality of teaching and teacher effort.

According to Heystek et al. (2008:133), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) definition of quality education supports a

rights-based approach to all educational endeavours. Education is a human right, and therefore quality education supports all of the human rights.

Quality education is based on the four pillars of education for all - learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and with others, and learning to be. Quality education's advance in education depends largely on the qualifications and ability of the teaching staff in general and on the human, pedagogical and technical qualities of the individual educators (Barbian, 2003:45).

If there is no quality education in a school, it is possible to hold a school manager and governing body accountable for not achieving and maintaining quality education because the power to appoint the staff is in their hands (Brown, 2004:6). When the staff do experience to be managed, when the locus of control is external, they tend to lose the motivation that will have influence on the quality of their performance.

#### **1.10.8 School manager**

Rampard (2004:23) describes the school principal as a manager of a school and a school leader. He or she is the person who is accountable for quality education. As the powers of education are centralised, the school manager acts as the governor of the school. Bottery (2004:43) mentions that the school manager is the highest ranking administrator who supervises the staff.

According to Bono (2005:4), the school manager is empowered by law as an accounting officer for the overall control of school's resources and assets. The responsibilities and authority are delegated by the Head of Education to execute duties in the school. As a manager of the school, the principal is an instrumental leader and ought to play a crucial role in influencing the school's academic achievement (Bryman, 2001:8). Human Resource Management is the term used to describe formal systems devised for the management of/within an organisation.

As a leader, the school manager has the task of directing and coordinating task-relevant group activities at the school. Darden (2000;9) is of the opinion that the principal is a manager with administrative tasks such as record keeping, completing forms, requisitioning of books and stationery and completing school returns. De Groof and Lauwens (2001:58) confirm that the school manager is responsible for the overall operation of the school

#### **1.10.9 Discipline**

Discipline is a training that develops self-control, orderly conduct, character, orderliness and efficiency. It is a strict control to enforce obedience. Discipline is training expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behaviour. It is training that produces moral or mental improvement. Sustained great results in schools depend upon building a culture of self disciplined by people who take disciplined actions (Heystek et al., 2008:60).

Good-to-great schools build a consistent system with clear constraints, but they also give educators freedom and responsibility within the framework of the system. School managers must hire self-disciplined staff that don't have to be managed, and then they manage the system, not the staff. They need to have the discipline of thought to confront the brutal facts of reality and still maintain faith that they are on the track to greatness.

Staff members need to take disciplined actions that keep them on that track (Matsebe, 2005:56). School managers need to employ responsible, self-disciplined people. The staff must possess the discipline to do whatever it takes to become the best within carefully selected areas and then seek continual improvement (Moloi, 2005:342).

While staff members would like to be the best, some school managers lack the discipline to determine, with humility, what they can be the best at. School management needs emotionally intelligent school managers who have built an enduring culture of discipline, powered by self-disciplined staff and learners, who act in the school's best interests without strict dictates from leadership (Choorana, 2004:54).

#### **1.10.10 Educational Management**

Gibb (2001:324) says that educational management is the process of working with and through individuals, groups and other sources including human resources, physical resources and financial resources in a school to accomplish educational goals. According to Kruger and Van Deventer (2000:1) educational management is an interactive, interrelated process of school managers who are managing teaching and learning in schools.

Educational management entails the performance by the principal, assisted by the School Management Team (SMT), of a series of tasks or activities in the management of the school in all its facets (Everard & Morris, 1990:5). The school management team is accountable for everything that happens within the school.

The principal as a school manager must ensure that his school as a whole is functioning effectively and achieving its vision of promoting academic achievement. One of the principal's management tasks is to be a leader of the school (Gilford, 2001:4).

Educational management is the application of general management theory, principles and skills in the education environment. In this study educational management occurs when school managers efficiently use the resources available to them (Johnson & Christensen, 2000:19). The focus of educational management

is on the creation and promotion of a culture of quality learning and teaching through effective management and effective value-driven education.

### **1.11 PROGRAMME OF THE STUDY**

Chapter One provided an orientation of the study. Human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal were explored.

Chapter Two contain a literature review of the nature of the challenges besetting school managers.

Chapter Three focused on the school manager's role in recruiting and appointing staff members. Chapter four focused on research methodology design and data was analysed. The qualitative research design, method of the study, data collection and data analysis processes were described and discussed. Chapter five is the research analysis and the research findings. Chapter six is about the conclusion and recommendations.

### **1.12 SYNTHESIS**

Human resource management does not merely handle recruitment and discharging, but should maximise the use of the schools' human resources. The basic mission of HRM will always be to acquire, develop, and retain talent, align the employees and to make the educators and school managers to be excellent contributors in schools.

The paramount principle of human resources was that human resources are the most important assets of an organisation and organisations cannot be successful without effectively managing human resources. The structure of the thesis is illustrated in Figure 1.11.

*Chapter Two focused on the review of literature.*

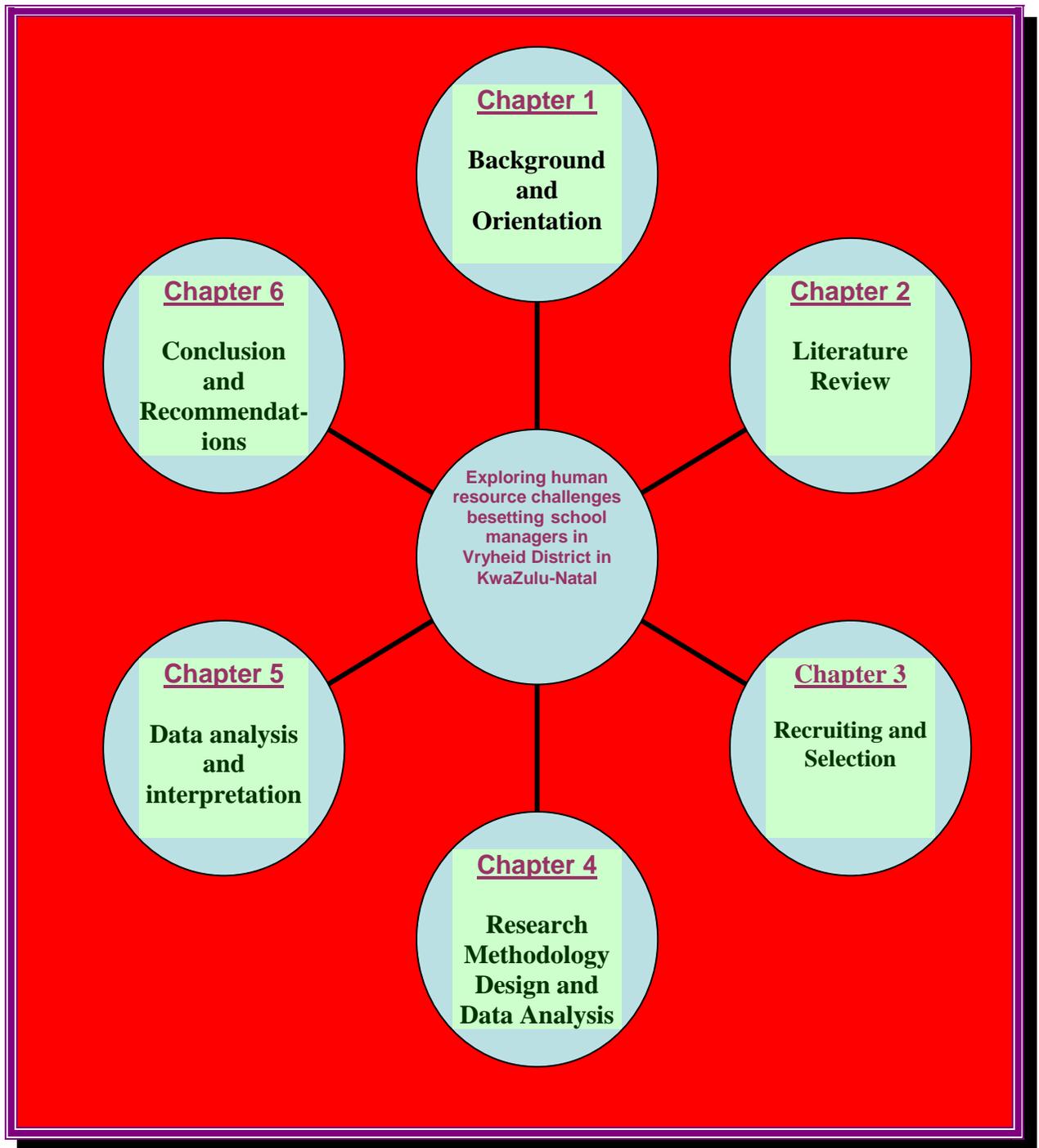


Figure 1.11: Structure of the thesis

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### INTRODUCTION

Chapter One orientated the reader about the study. That included, among others, the identification of the problem statement, the aim and method of research.

*Chapter Two focuses on the literature survey of identified human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid District in KwaZulu-Natal. These stem from the categories of tuition and administrative challenges. The chapter ends up with synthesis.*

The school manager occupies a special position in the school and his or her influence in creating a culture of teaching and learning is decisive for the effective functioning of all facets of school life. The school manager is both a professional leader and a manager of the school, and his or her management and leadership style also affects human resource management and, therefore, the learner performance.

#### **2.1.1 Human resource challenges**

The human resource aspect includes issues concerning all members of staff – both educators and non-teaching staff. For the school to function effectively, the school manager needs to understand his or her internal strength and ability to properly

communicate a vision and mission of the school to staff members. Newly appointed staff must be inducted. The standard and the goals must be clearly defined.

The degree to which the school manager sets goals and strategies to transform the school is to a large extent influenced by his or her historical success in implementing changes, which is learning from past mistakes. The manager should be aware that unrealistic past goals, poor communication to staff members, and lack of commitment from leadership may undermine his or her effort to transform the school (Fullan & Watson, 2000:460).

Grobler et al. (2006:45) maintains that to transform the school into a learning organisation, the school manager should become deeply involved in human resource development. The school manager must invest in the staff, train them up and develop them, in order to tap their creative talents. According to Grobler et al. (2006:46), the basic areas that concern the human elements are:

- human resource development;
- informal interpersonal relations and dynamics;
- conditions of employment, and
- managing diversity.

As a school manager, he or she should ensure that conditions for the personal and professional development of educators are built into the core processes of the school. This is important because organisational and individual learning are central

to the learning organisation, ensuring that the individual staff member develops within the work situation.

One of the tasks of the school manager is to become the custodian of trust and, as such, to enter into a psychological contract with the staff creating the deepest possible commitment and building performance on sound relationships. The focus of the school manager must be on results and achievement, not on power and control (Welch, 2004:40).

The main aim was to foster a strategic partnership with all members of the staff. Very (2004:143) advised school managers saying: *“Leaders should be hard headed when it comes to results but soft hearted when it comes to people. As a leader, the manager should try to touch the hearts and minds of the staff.”* (English, 2002:120).

Human resource management presented a number of challenges. School managers are challenged to redefine and rethink their roles as managers in schools and to examine critically the interaction between themselves, the educators, the learners and their parents, as well as the quality of education they deliver (Moloi, 2005:5).

## **21.2 Sexual harassment as a challenge**

Sexual harassment was one of the most controversial, complex and widespread human resource problems in some schools. Sexual harassment is unwelcome

sexual attention. It is a violent behaviour where it sometimes ends as attempted or actual rape. It is an unwanted conduct of a sexual nature.

Grobler et al. (2006:34) are of the opinion that school managers must be aware that women who have experienced sexual harassment choose not to report it. The primary reasons include the following:

- The fear of losing their job;
- The need for a future job reference;
- The possibility of being considered the trouble maker;
- The assumption that nothing will change if harassment was reported;
- Concern about being accused of inviting the harassment; and
- A reluctance to draw public attention to private lives (Grobler et al., 2006:88).

Sexual harassment was sometimes used to blackmail others into promotion as a reward for sexual favours. The '*quid pro quo*' form of sexual harassment describes a situation in which a person in a management position offers job benefits in exchange for sexual favours. The employee was forced into choosing between acceding to the sexual demands or losing employment benefits. This was an abuse of power. The majority of victims are female.

Wet and Walford (2006:4) suggest that the school manager should give the staff members leaving the institution an opportunity during the exit interviews to state the

reason why they are leaving the school. Oral complaints to management must be allowed. The staff must be allowed to lodge grievances. In schools, school managers must draw up a good sexual harassment prevention policy and provide effective sexual harassment training.

The school can draft a good sexual harassment policy including:

- a zero tolerance sexual harassment statement;
- definition of sexual harassment;
- examples of prohibited conducts;
- duties and responsibilities;
- sexual harassment complaint procedures, and
- investigating procedures.

School managers had to be trained to recognise and deal with sexual harassment issues. They needed to know the types of conduct that constitutes sexual harassment. They needed to offer guidance on how to avoid and on how to handle being the target of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment can result in psychological, emotional and physical problems. Educators working in such a state enjoy less favourable working conditions than their colleagues. The hostile work environment is a 'can't take it any more' scenario. It is a case where the manager, a co-worker or even a customer can be the perpetrator (Heystek et al., 2008:235).

## **2.2 THE SCHOOL AS AN ORGANISATION**

Fullan and Watson (2000:470) describe a learning organisation as an organisation that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future and achieve what it truly desires. It is a group of people learning from the experience and best practices of others (Moloi, 2005:2).

According to Brown (2004:7), members in an organisation work together in a planned way to achieve a common purpose. Individual members contribute their skills and intellectual resources to achieve the goals of that institution. A school as an organisation needs to maximise human resource management by nurturing and tapping the collective wisdom of the entire workforce – school manager, educators and non-teaching staff – through its strategic direction and shared values. Employment and human resource management is to be based on ability, objectivity and fairness.

Heystek et al. (2008:168) are of the opinion that in order to meet the demands of global shifts and to compete globally, organisations need to marshal individual talents, imaginations, spirit, intelligence and creativity, and to merge this with institutional talents to create intelligent organisations that are arenas of flux and transformation.

From the National Department of Education perspective, a school is a sub-unit of the unit which is the Department of Education. The department of education unit has a human resource department dealing with the broader issues like policies, while

the sub-units have to deal with the daily operational issues (Heystek et al., 2008:11). Sub-units therefore require a specific approach, philosophy and methodology to ensure that staff members are satisfied and motivated so that they achieve the organisational goals of the unit. A school as a sub-unit should be more focused on people leadership.

The inter-human relationship was the Department of Education which was the umbrella unit. The DoE focuses more on the policy development and the broader management and administration of people in the organisation according to national political goals (English, 2002:130).

Heystek et al. (2008:11) are of the opinion that there is no conclusive agreement about the actual status of a school as an organisation. It varies from the perspective that a school is just a community (Cai & Fink, 2002:52). Schools comply with most organisational features, criteria and traits.

Cele (2005:229) says that a school may have all the characteristics of an organisation, but that each school is also a sub-unit of the bigger unit, which may be the National Department of Education or Provincial Department of Education. In the South African context, staff appointments can be linked directly to the understanding of the school as an organisation (Bush & Heystek et al., 2006:14).

Heystek et al. (2008:11), revealed that there are two arguments regarding the uncertain position of a school as an organisation. The first argument was that if every school is an organisation in its own right, then each school must comply with

legislation and policies regarding redress and equity appointment criteria.

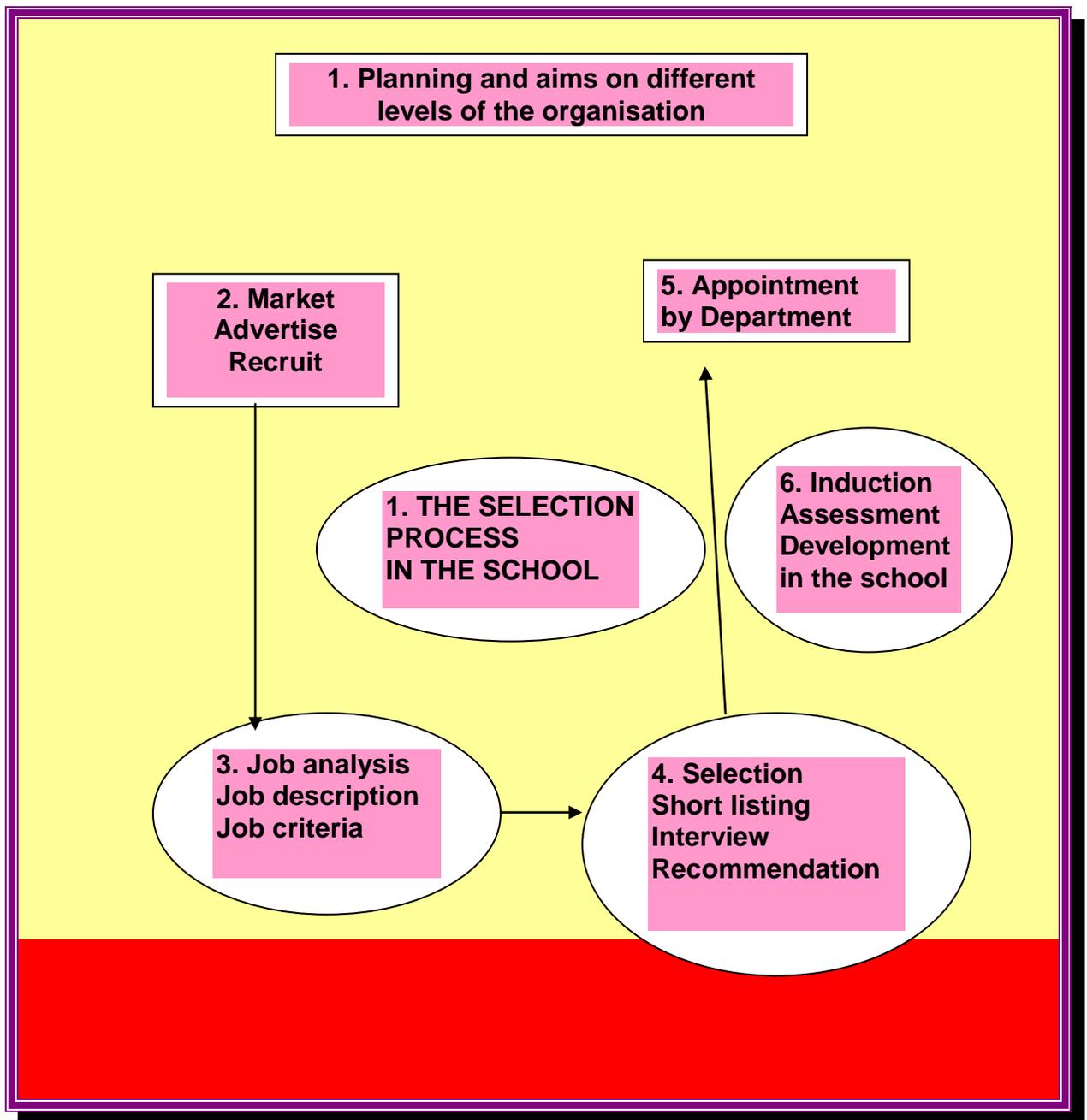


Figure 2.1: The talent management process

Adapted from Roos, in Heystek, Roos and Middlewood, 2005:13.

This could imply that the staff composition of each school must be representative of the population composition of South Africa. Currently, this is not the case, but government is moving towards this.

The school as an organisation must emphasise talent and ensure that the staff members are satisfied and experience better performance from the educators over the longer term. Schools with hard approaches emphasise assessment rather than ensuring they have staff with appropriate talents for the job.

It is important for schools to adopt a softer, people-orientated approach when appointing educators (Grobler et al., 2006:265). Having the right person at the right time for a school with a specific culture and goals is more important than appointing the best academically qualified person, and using assessment to sustain quality education.

The school must embark on a careful process of selection to get the best person suitable for the post available. The best educator may be the one with best academic qualifications, with a proven record of good academic results. The selection committee should decide on the criteria before the recruitment starts (Very, 2004:189).

According to Moloï (2005:10), a school that is an organisation expects its members to act as learning agents for the organisation, responding to changes in the internal and external environment of the organisation by detecting and correcting errors in organisational theory-in-use, and embedding the results of their enquiry in private

images and shared maps of organisation. Viewing the school as an organisation is a potentially powerful concept of learning organisations.

A school is an organisation because it consists of a group of people - the school manager, educators, learners, non-teaching staff and parents, gathered together for a common purpose to educate learners. A school as organisation must have stakeholders who appoint best staff and manage them to work together, spend more time planning together and work together in a sufficiently planned way to be called an organisation.

According to Heystek et al., (2008:8) education leadership take place within an international context, currently dominated by neo-liberalism and managerialism. The DoE need to appoint extra educators and to determine quality and standards of education. Managerialism emphasises the performance through measurable outcomes and quality education by means of control.

The school fits into the metaphor of an organisation if school activities are arranged in a coherent form to facilitate educative actions of the school manager, educators and learners. The second argument is that if the National Department of Education or the Provincial Department of Education is the organisation, this organisation has to comply with the representivity requirements. Therefore, it is necessary and compulsory for each school's staff composition to comply with the national situation (Heystek et al., 2008:11).

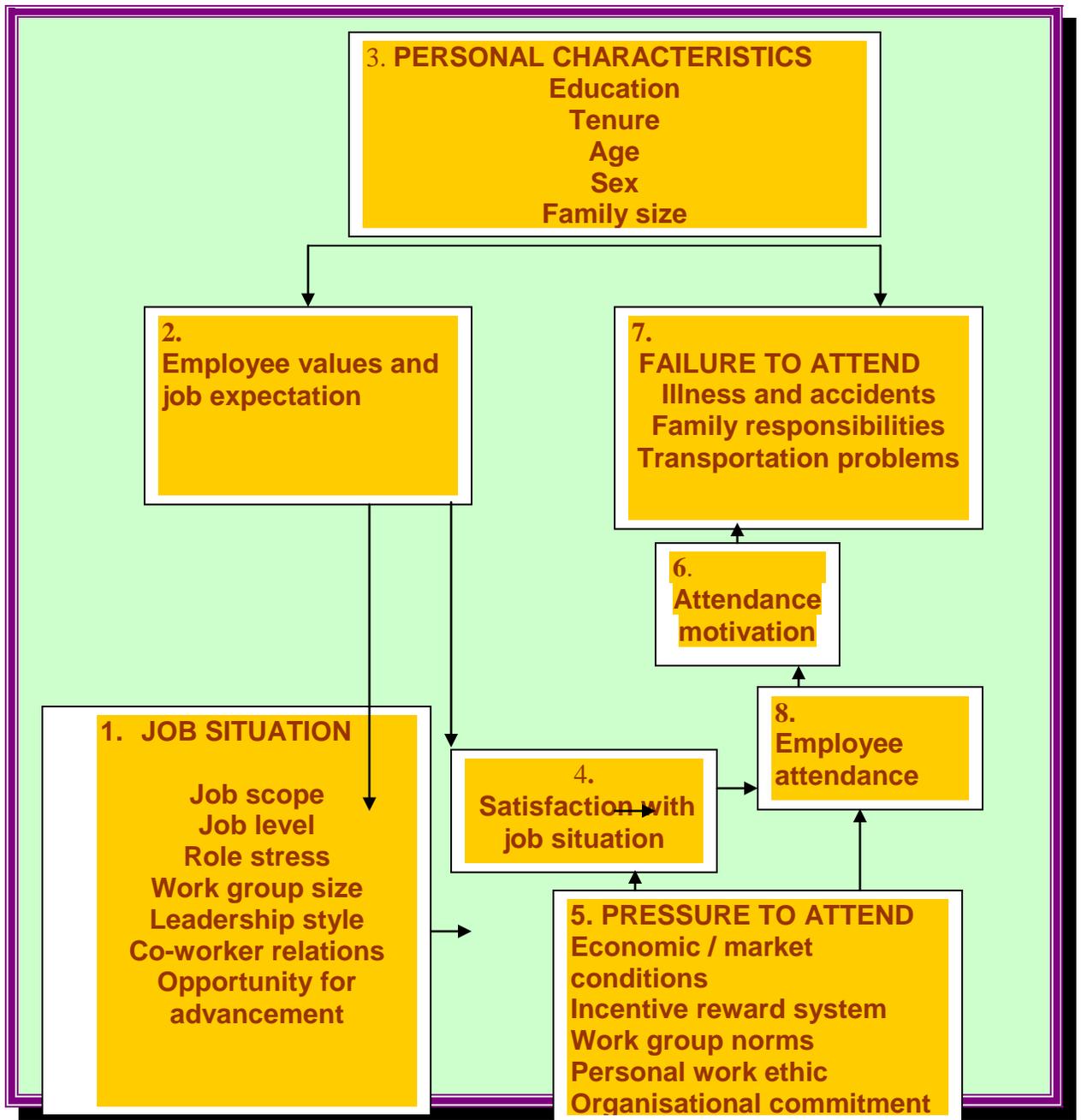


Figure 2.2: Factors contributing to absenteeism

Adapted from: Harrison, 2000:23.

### **.2.3 ABSENTEEISM**

Grobler et al. (2006:122) state that people with all their problems and promises will always be the most important resource for any organisation, regardless of how sophisticated and advanced technology becomes the of the responsibilities of the school manager in a school is to identify and to resolve human resource problems that claim much of his or her time and effort.

According to Grobler et al., (2006:123), the failure to show up for work creates problems of widely varying degrees for managers and administrators. If many staff members are absent from work, havoc may result. Excessive educator and learner absenteeism can significantly drain productivity, creating innumerable problems for supervisors and the educators who work regularly.

Although absenteeism was one of the school managers' problems, it was impossible to isolate the variables that influence employee decisions to attend work (Figure 2.2). Research had shown that the following factors contribute to absenteeism in schools. The most pressing human resource problems included absenteeism, turnover, job dissatisfaction and perceived unfairness.

Excessive educator and learner absenteeism can significantly drain productivity, creating innumerable problems for supervisors and the educators who work regularly in South African schools.

### **2.3.1 Reducing absenteeism**

Control of absenteeism in large schools normally involved multiple strategies that address both the motivation and ability of the educators and learners to attend school. Specific strategies for enhancing motivation included a proper match between the educator and job enrichment, rewards for good attendance, people-oriented supervision and clear attendance standards.

Foster (2005:3) states that *strategies for enhancing the ability to attend work include:*

- creating a safe and healthy work environment;
- providing day care facilities at the workplace;
- creating staff development programmes to assist the troubled educators;
- providing programmes to reduce job stress; and
- providing recreational and exercise facilities.

*Some causes of absenteeism*

1. no written absenteeism policy,
2. inconsistent enforcement, and
3. the lack of absence documentation (Pretorius, 2001:54).

Pretorius (2001:54) further revealed that the control measures of absenteeism in schools include:

- a written policy statement;
- distinguish between absenteeism and other forms of misconduct;
- explicit absenteeism standards and a definition of excessive absenteeism;
- allowing the educators to improve their records through good attendance.

### **2.3.2 Code of conduct**

The Code of Conduct covers a broad range of commitment to high quality professional behaviour in relation to learners, parents, the community, colleagues, the profession itself, the employer and the council (Heystek et al., 2008:103).

- **For educators**

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) was given a new statutory basis with the passing of the South African Council of Educators Act of 2000.

*The objectives of the Act are:*

- To provide for the registration of educators
- To promote the professional development of educators
- To set, maintain and protect ethical and professional standards for educators by means of the functioning of the Council (DoE, 2005:3).

Because of the statutory basis of SACE that compels educators to register and thus subject themselves to a code of conduct, disciplinary processes and professional development opportunities, the Council has an important role to play in the management of the educator component of human resources in education. Its role is very powerful because it is an example of a self-regulated occupational or professional group (Department of Education Pretoria, 2005:3).

- **For learners**

An important statutory source of duties for learners is the code of conduct to be drawn up by the governing body of every public school. A governing body had to adopt a code of conduct after consultation with the learners, parents and educators at a school. The aim of the code of conduct is to establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment dedicated to the maintenance of the quality of the learning process (Dlodlo, 2004:1).

According to SASA, a learner is obliged to comply with the code of conduct but may not comply if a provision of it violates a constitutional right. The school manager may have to decide on a balancing of constitutional rights against the demands of a disciplined school environment. The code of conduct must contain provisions regarding safeguarding of interests in disciplinary proceedings.

There are also specific provisions on suspension and expulsion from a public school which imply the rights for the learners concerned. The rules in the code of conduct

must meet various legal requirements (English, 2002:120). The code of conduct must be applied by school managers at schools where the culture of learning is absent.

Without a code of conduct, a school can be disrupted very easily and such a code means little unless learners voluntarily subject themselves to it and are eager to develop and act in accordance with a culture of learning (Moloi, 2005:126).

## **2.4 THE SCHOOL AS A UNIQUE ORGANISATION**

The human resource function within each organisation is unique to that organisation. The activities included in human resource vary from organisation to organisation. Schools may be regarded as organisations but they do not display the same values and attitudes as organisations in the business sector, public organisations such as police or hospital services. Other organisations function within specific value frameworks or structures, but do not necessarily convey basic values as is the case with education (Moloi, 2005:88).

Heystek et al. (2008:12) clearly state that schools are used to convey values to people. Schools are there to inculcate basic values, so that when the children grow up and become employees in private or public organisations, they live and work according to the values they had learnt at school. The curriculum taught at school must meet the demands of that particular community.

When students complete schooling, it is believed that they have already absorbed basic values at schools from the school managers and the staff so that in private or public organisations they can practice and build on those basic values in terms of the specific service delivered (Heystek et al., 2008:12).

Heystek et al. (2008:12) concur with Athiemoolam (2004:32) that another aspect that contributes to the uniqueness of the schools as organisations, is that schools work in, and for, specific communities. Parents are represented by the school governing body. They pay school fees so most schools are strongly community-based. In no-fee schools, parents are also actively involved in their children's education. Schools form the core of the community (Moloi, 2005:76).

A school is the only public entity that is governed by the school governing body, who are non-professional members of the organisation. They have the authority to control the school funds. The governing body is entrusted with the governance of the school. The presence of the school governing body in a school makes it unique because SGBs have a great influence in the quality of education in a school (SASA Act 84 of 1996).

The SGBs have the power to conduct interviews and to recommend and to make decisions in the appointment of school managers and educators. They have influence in the policies and the budget of the school. The Department of Education expects the school managers and educators appointed by the SGB to have acceptable nationally-determined norms and values so that they can transmit those values to the learners in their classes (Heystek et al., 2008:12).

In South African schools, issues of value, dominance and power are important issues that have to be taken into account when working with people. Many political changes have taken place, and the history of separation on grounds of racial and ethnic groupings is fresh in memory. The nationally accepted values are the values of the dominant group in the country who want to inculcate their values in all people in the country (The Bill of Rights).

Educators in the curriculum are expected to serve as modes of transmission of national values. The school is a unique organisation because a school provides the organisational environment for systematic, formalised teaching and learning. It is an organisation that engenders co-operative relations among adults who share common purposes (Grobler et al., 2008:34).

Therefore, schools form a structure that binds people, like learners, parents and educators to each other. Like all other organisations, schools have boundaries. Their clients form part of their internal and external environment. This indicates the uniqueness of the school. Moloji (2008:36) states that the profession of education requires school managers to turn their schools into learning organisations.

Shonosani (2006:234) is of the opinion that learning should be purposefully undertaken by the school manager and educators in a collective effort to engage in a continuous process of co-coordinating their activities and utilising resources to accomplish the mission of teaching and learning. The school is a unique learning

organisation if it is driven by the school culture, processes of work, a flexible structure and the staff members' attitudes, skills and competencies.

Although schools do not have efficient funding to financially compensate high-achieving educators, their competition and performance requirements are similar to those that are expected in business. A school can only be better than the next school if the teaching and non-teaching staff make a difference. The manager must appoint the most suitable person. The school manager must also retain them and develop them further to maintain or even to improve quality teaching and learning.

## **2.5 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS IN EDUCATION**

With respect to education, Monks (2002:32) considers that educational administration is carried out at three structural levels. These elements or levels relate to the national level, regional level and local strata of education within a given social, economic and political environment. *Structural levels are* macro level, meso level, and micro level.

*Figure 2.3 shows the school's human resource management from school level to provincial level and finally to National level.*

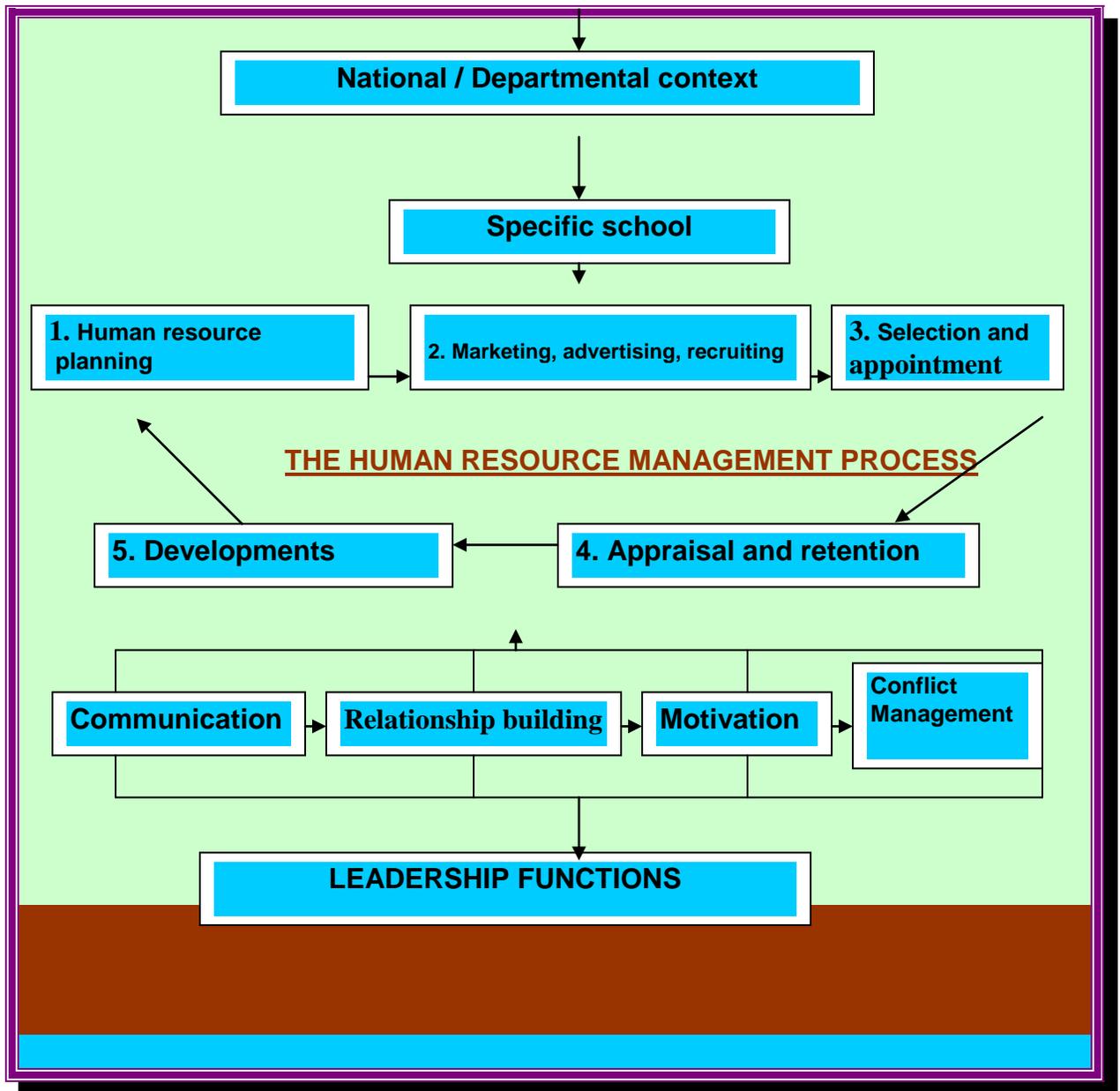


Figure 2.3: Human resource management processes in education

Adapted from: Heystek, Nieman, van Rooyen, Mosoge and Bipath, 2008:13.

Human resource management is educational administration carried out by people who are members of that organisation. It is a social process. It is seen as the

hierarchy of super-ordinate relationships within a social system. Functionally, this hierarchy of relationships is the focus for allocating and integrating roles and functions in order to achieve the goals of the system (Moloi & Bush, 2007:34).

Operationally, the administration takes effect in situations involving person-to-person interaction (Monks, 2002:45). According to Heystek et al., (2008:13), at the macro level and meso level, there are officials specialising in the human resource functions. These functions usually concern legislation, policy formulation and the overview of the human resource management process.

- ***Micro level:***

Schools get the best people to apply for the posts, to go through the process of short-listing, interviewing, appointment, induction, assessment and the development of the educators, to achieve the aims of schooling. At school level, human resource management becomes increasingly important. The school manager, who is the leader, must lead people to perform according to vision and standards that are determined outside the school by people of higher hierarchy (Dixon, 2001:43).

- ***Macro level:***

Macro level consists of the National Department of Education in Pretoria and the Provincial Department of Education in all nine Provinces in South Africa. The

provinces are KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Western Cape, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Free State, Limpopo and North West. Staff allocations per

school are planned at the macro level and sometimes have personal and interpersonal impact on staff members (Grobler et al., 2002:34).

- ***Meso-level:***

Regional offices, District offices, Circuit offices, Branch levels and Wards. In all levels, there are officials specialising in human resource functions. Human resource functions usually concern legislation, policy formulation and the overview of the human resource management process. At **micro** level schools are managed by the school managers (Fullan & Watson, 2000:460).

Hartle (2006:5), states that schools as public organisations are controlled by government departments, which are in turn controlled by politicians. Schools are indirectly working for, and within, a particular political framework. This makes schools in South Africa vulnerable to political changes.

In schools, political change has had an influence on staff management. For example, the appointment of staff has to comply with non-discriminatory legislation, redress, equity and a new curriculum. Political factors influence decision-making; school managers have to comply with political demands when managing their staff (Cole, 2003:33).

School managers have to meet the political demands not to appoint the staff who do not meet the demands of the community's specific requirements. They are not given an opportunity to appoint the type of people they think will best serve their learners and community.

Pretorius (2001:57) is of the opinion that there are sometimes implications for school managers if the allocation of funds is not enough. It sometimes leads to staff reduction or redeployment. School managers are to get the best educators to apply for vacant posts (Pretorius, 2001:57).

They have to go through the process of selecting the best applicant. School governing bodies and the interviewing committee appoint educators and the non-teaching staff. School managers and the school management team assess and develop the educators to achieve the aims of schooling (Harris, 2006:6).

At school level, the school manager who is the leader must lead people to perform according to the vision and standards that are determined outside the school, by people at higher levels in the hierarchy. In the current governance and management system of South African schools, micro-level leadership issues have become the shared responsibility of the school management team and the school governing body, with the school manager as a member of both (DoE, 2005:2).

Schools are public and non-profit organisations and their aims of human resource management differ from those of business. School managers are expected to perform and to produce high quality education with ever-shrinking resources in the

form of limited government funding and staff provision (Heystek et al., 288:14).

According to the researcher, it is the age of participation in school management. Structures required are those that promote participation and flow. One problem with hierarchical schools in South Africa is that their emphasis is on authority and this creates division between those at the top and other below them, as well as between people of the same level. In most cases the sense that everyone is working together for a common purpose is lacking.

Harber (2003:50) states that the rapid changes in education require quick and effective communication. Hierarchical management makes things difficult because messages have to pass through many levels. Bottom-up communication is hindered.

As a result, the problems of the educators are rarely heard by the school manager and generally remain unresolved. Hierarchical management sometimes results in the school manager feeling isolated because he or she is separated from the rest of the school being managed (Cole, 2003:33 & Moloi, 2005:23).

The Education Law Amendment Act of August 2007 (RSA2007) emphasises that school managers represent the Department of Education at school. They are not in the service of the community. Some communities want the school to work for them. The school manager must have a strong relationship with the community as part of

effective leadership and quality education. School Managers need to create positive school culture to achieve excellence.

Figure 2.4 reflects how education is administered in South African schools from schools to provinces and to National level in Pretoria.

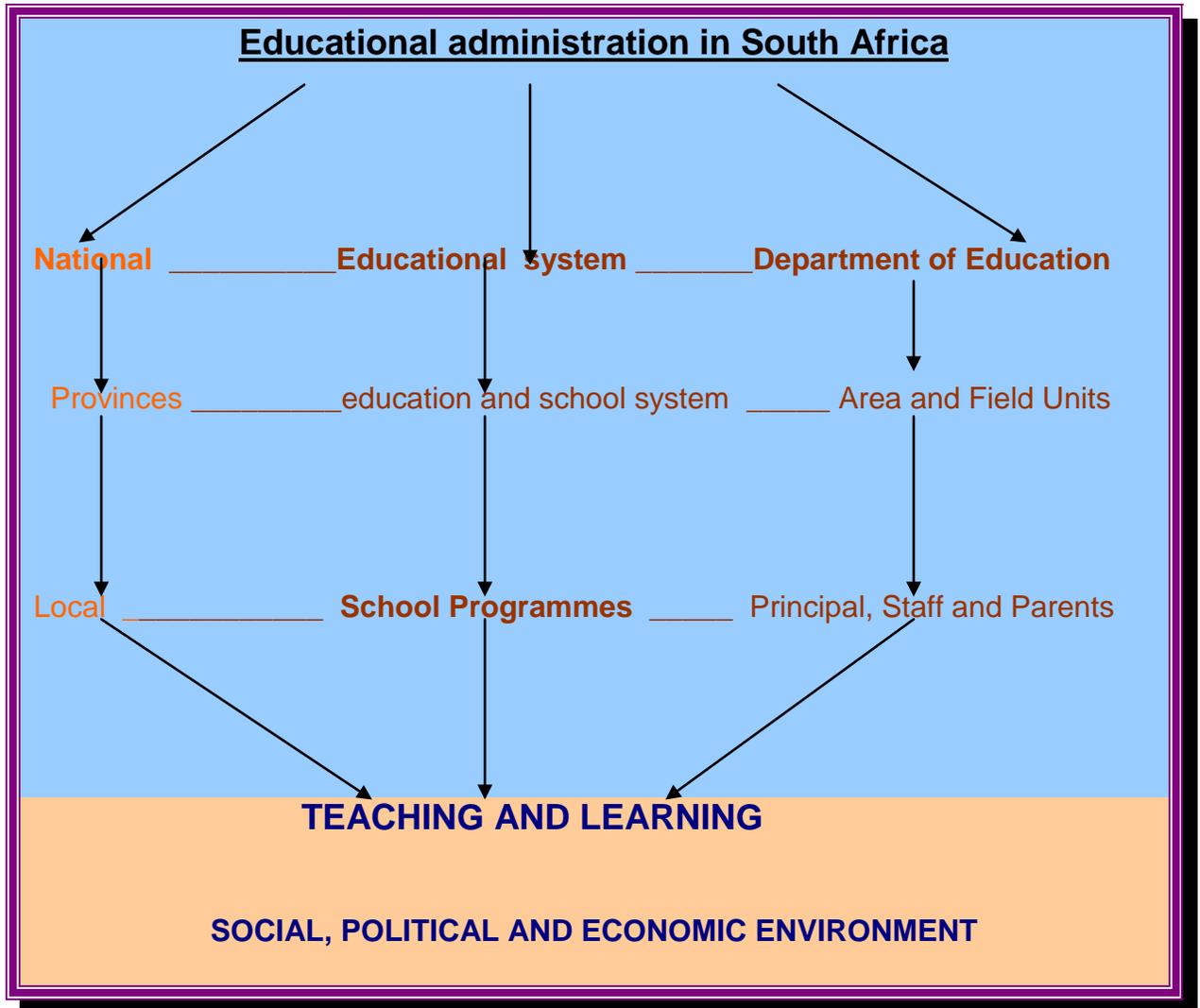


Figure 2.4: Representation of educational administration

Adapted from: Moloji and Bush, 2007:18.

Some of the most important signals of what school managers care about are sent during staff and community meetings and in other activities devoted in planning and

budgeting. Some managers believed that one should not allow one's emotions to become too involved in the decision process.

## **2.6 CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

Conflict is defined by Heystek et al. (2008:87) as a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect, something that the first party cares about.

The school manager as a leader must not avoid confrontation even when constructive confrontation is exactly what is needed. An aggressive approach does not work either. Having to work fast, under stressful conditions and with different types of people – all with their own beliefs, values, cultures and work ethics – can cause conflict in relationships. Unresolved conflicts in schools can have dire consequences such as low productivity, employee anger and hostility, increased costs and absenteeism (Heystek et al., 2005:87).

When the school manager is managing conflict well, it can lead to new ideas, improved team work and commitment. That can help the leader to understand the people with whom he or she works. When the school manager understands the root causes of conflict, they can be effective in using the conflict as a springboard to greater production and higher achievement (Guttman, 2003:1).

According to the researcher, conflict can be constructive and destructive. It is destructive when it leads to a win-lose situation in which one side wins at the other's

expense, and when it destroys people's morale and cooperation. Sometimes conflict can produce irresponsible and regrettable behaviour like personal attacks.

Conflict can keep a school flourishing when it stimulates healthy interaction among the staff members collaborating on a task. It can open discussions about important issues while improving the quality of group work. With constructive conflict, the team spirit is strengthened together with the commitment to a school's vision and mission.

Conflict is part of everyday life in school management and is unavoidable. It is also not always negative. It can have a destructive or constructive influence, depending on the perspective of the party and conflict management skills of the school manager. According to Dixon (2001:231), conflict can be described as differences of opinion of a serious nature. It can also develop where the actions of one person prevent another from achieving his or her goal or if there is unsolicited interference.

According to Very (2004:68), the nice-guy model of leadership doesn't work because the school manager tries to avoid confrontation even when constructive confrontation is exactly what is needed. An aggressive approach doesn't work

either. The school manager who is controlling his or her school, unreceptive to feedback and intimidating, typically carrying luggage that is unsuited to building a

high performance team. Conflict keeps the school alive and flourishing when it results in better solution to a problem improving the quality of teaching and learning.

The school manager must create a challenging and questioning environment, with validity that makes work interesting. School managers faced with excessive conflict should use collaboration, competition avoidance accommodation and compromise to avoid conflict. There should be only the amount of turnover needed to rid the schools of misfits and poor performance (Very, 2004:176).

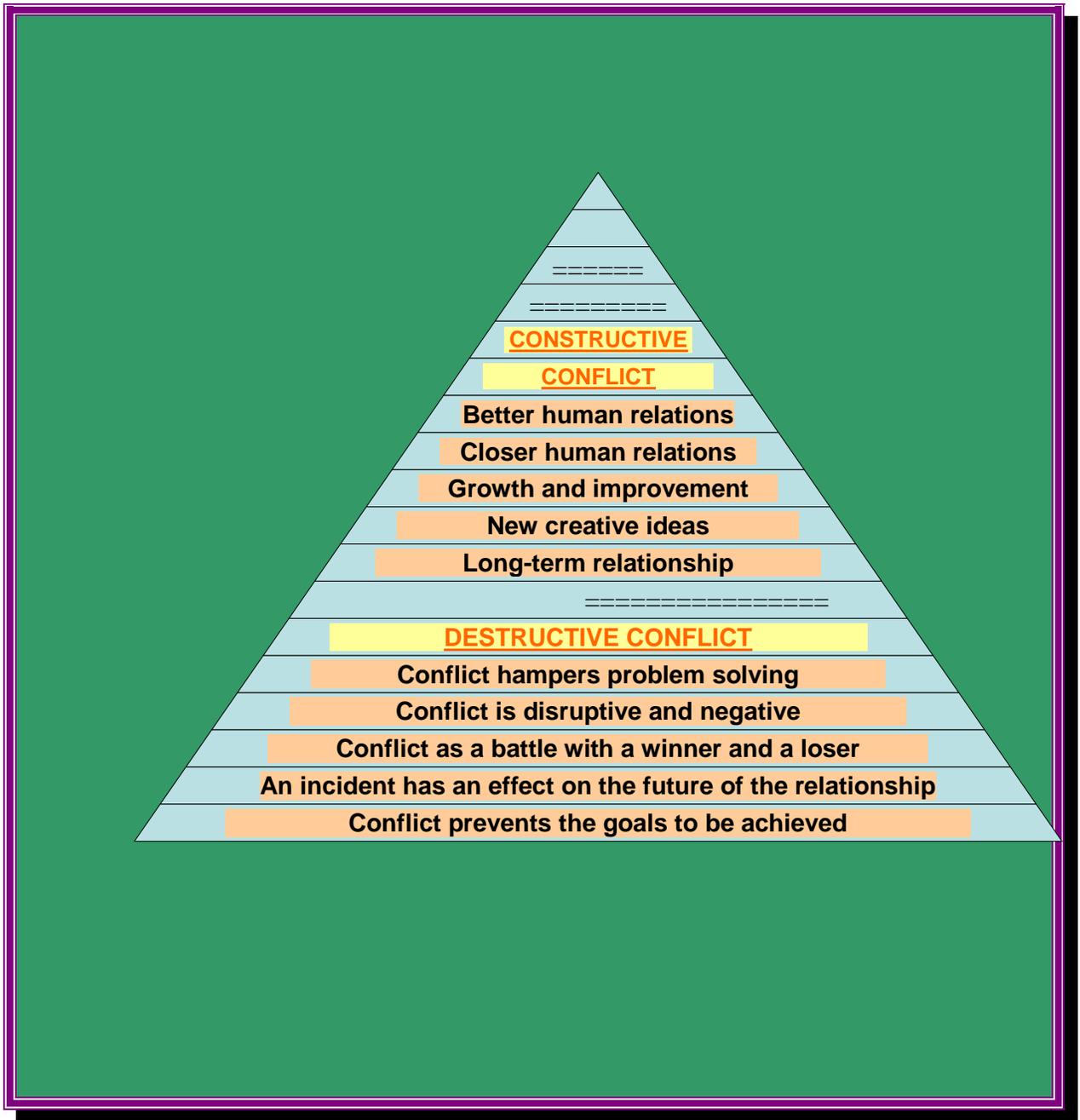
Conflict of the school can be either constructive or destructive of the functioning of the school management team and the staff. Inadequate or excessive levels of conflict can hinder the effectiveness of any school. Figure 2.5 is the comparison between destructive and constructive conflict.

To avoid conflict, school managers must promote team work. The shift from working alone to working in teams requires staff members to co-operate with others, share information, confront differences and sublimate personal interests for the greater good of the team (Holiday, 2002:13).

The staff must be aware of their values, principles and moral purpose in the school. The school manager needs to identify strengths and weaknesses of the staff by using Integrated Quality Management Systems and to draw up Staff development

Plan. The manager must choose the management team members who share the school vision.

To avoid conflict, the school vision must be established with the School Governing Body and the school manager. Staff members need to establish a gap between where the school is and where they want to be. All staff members must be aware of the decisions and changes in their schools.



**Figure 2.5: Destructive and constructive conflict**

Adapted from: Christians, 2001:45.

### **2.6.1 Conflict management skills**

According to Steven L Katz in Heystek et al. (2006:88),

***“Lions are never tamed, and you need strategies to deal with this.”***

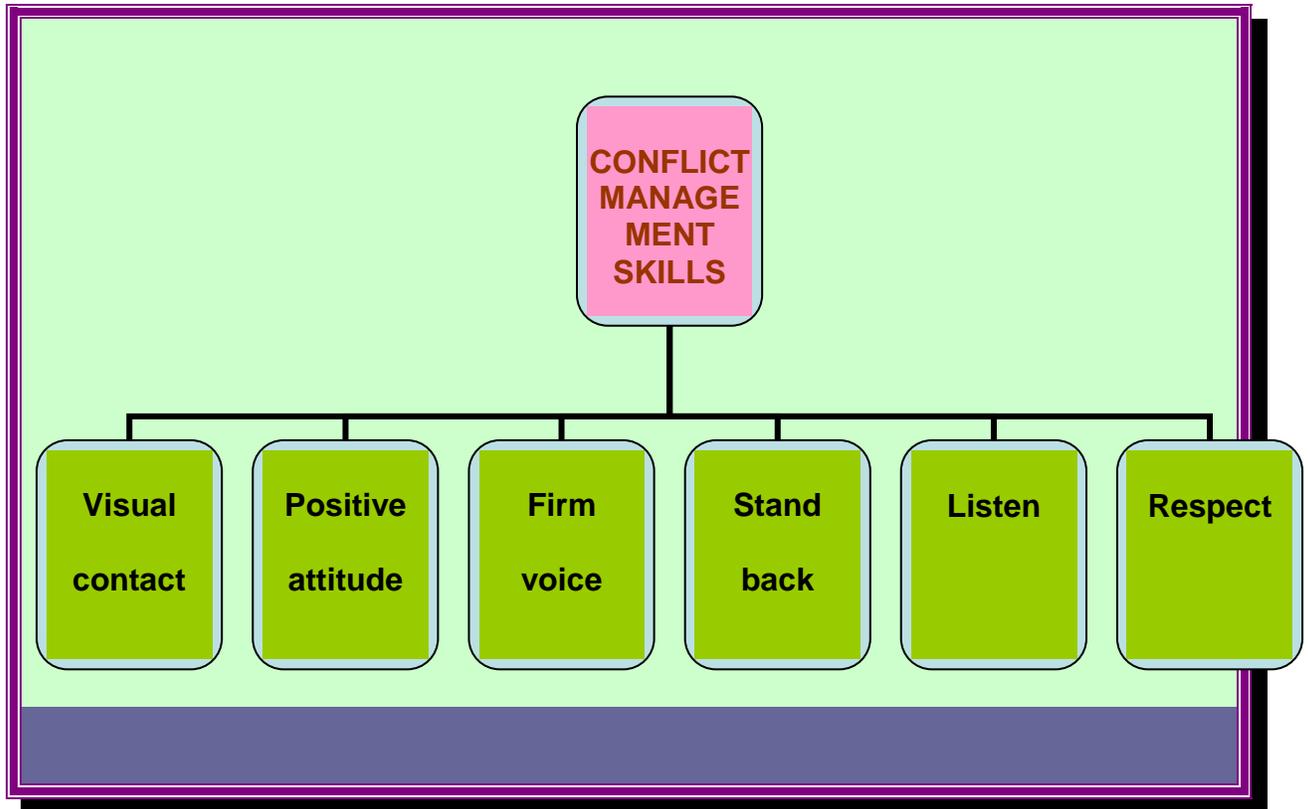
He explains that lion taming is really lion “teaming”. He further explains that lions are people around us with power, responsibility, authority and talent, as well as the people who may simply be occupied with gaining more power and authority. They can be departmental officials, educators, parents, learners and the community.

He further explains that lions roam freely everywhere, throughout life and across all professions. By following the lions in the workplace, the school manager knows how to act.

According to Heystek et al., (2008:88) the basic laws of lion taming apply in schools. The school manager should follow these laws if he or she wants to tame their staff members.

They must:

- Maintain visual contact at all times.
- Keep a positive attitude and a firm, upbeat tone of voice.
- Stand back and give the educators a chance.
- Let the lion roar – after all, he or she is a lion.
- Respect the lion.



**Figure 2.6: Laws of conflict management**

**Adapted from: Heystek et al., 2008:88.**

***Staff member accept the school manager as a lion tamer if:***

- He or she helps them to succeed in new ways.
- Tacitly acknowledge that the school manager can help them in ways they cannot accomplish alone.
- Tacitly acknowledge that the school manager can help them to avoid consequences and keep them out of trouble (Heystek et al., 2008:88).

School managers need to become lion tamers to manage conflict and mould destructive conflict into co-operation. When conflict is at an optimal level, complacency and apathy should be minimised and motivation enhanced – through the creation of a challenging and questioning environment with vitality that makes work interesting. Only turnover should be needed to rid the organisation of misfits and poor performers.

Foster (2005:45) is of the opinion that school managers must use avoidance when:

- i. the issue is trivial,
- ii. more important issues are pressing,
- iii. when he or she perceives no chance of satisfying his or concerns,
- iv. when potential disruption outweighs the benefits of resolution,
- v. to let people cool down and regain perspective; and
- vi. when gathering information supersedes immediate decision (Hofmeyer, 2004:34).

Hyleen (2005:120) reveals that the manager can use competition:

- a. when quick decisive action is vital,
- b. on important issues where unpopular actions need implementation,
- c. on issues vital to the school's welfare,
- d. when he knows who is right, and
- e. against people who take advantage of non-competitive behaviour.

Collaboration can be used:

- a. to find an integrated solution when both sets of concerns are too important to be compromised,
- b. when the objective must be to learn to merge insights from people with different perspectives (Welch, 2004:37),
- c. if the school manager is wrong and needs to allow a better position to be heard; to learn and to show reasonableness,
- d. when issues are more important to others than yourself,
- e. to satisfy others and to maintain co-operation, and
- f. to build social credits for later issues and to minimise challenges.

Harmony and stability are important to allow subordinates to develop by learning from mistakes.

## **2.7 HUMAN RESOURCE CHALLENGES IN SCHOOLS**

*The vision of the National Department of Education is:*

*"Our vision is of South Africa in which all our people have access to life long education and training opportunities, which will in turn contribute towards improving the quality of life and building a peaceful, prosperous and democratic society" (South African Schools Act of 1996).*

The vision of the National Department of Education places huge demands on schools to become effective learning environments to meet the changing needs of learners and parents. School managers need innovative skills to cope with all challenges (Heystek et al., 2005:32). The skills needed are clearly not acquired through wishful thinking. They can be achieved through reflective practice, action learning, and co-operation with parents and greater community (Kunene, 2005:8).

The history of South Africa has for many years been characterised by a political struggle. Education in the 'new' democratic South Africa involves overcoming the legacy of apartheid, which is a challenge in itself as most of today's school managers, educators and school leaders began their careers under the apartheid regime where they were required to pursue their careers in an environment determined by racial separation.

Education in South Africa displays layers of complexity and schools as organisations are no exception. Moloi and Bush (2007:17) in particular, refer to dramatic changes in the South African educational landscape that have since 1994 produced major challenges to people leadership in schools and are perceived as a major training challenge. It has been found that the training of school managers for school management was inadequately done (Welch, 2004:39).

Milner (2003:34) concur with Moloi and Bush (2007:17) ascribe the problems pertaining to education management and leadership training to the fragmented

nature of the previous education system. Effective school managers are supposed to devise means and strategies to empower their educators to adhere to the seven roles of educators.

The department of education has attempted to address human resource problems by introducing the South African Standard for Principals (RSA, 2004), which focuses on six key areas:

- Leading and managing the learning school
- Shaping the direction and development of the school
- Assuring quality and securing accountability
- Developing and empowering self and others
- Managing the school as an organisation
- Working with and for the community (DoE, 2005:3)

School managers are expected to work for a competitive advantage with their human resources. They are expected to try out-performing other schools in the area. Some school managers are faced with a challenge to lead their people in a western-dominated culture when the educators may be more inclined to an African social and supportive “ubuntu” culture (De Groof, 2001:47).

According to the researcher, all school managers want the best educators and the best learners in their schools. They also want the income from parents through school fees. The challenge is that learners whose parents can pay fees are

desirable. Some learners become a liability or a financial loss to the school, instead of an asset.

School managers with limited financial resources, for example in rural areas or lower socio-economic areas where the parents do not have enough money to pay the high school fees needed to remunerate additional educators or to purchase better equipment, cannot outperform their rivals. These schools also do not get sponsors to assist the school with income. For any school, the people are its most important resource for improvement (DNE, 2004:2).

Masondo (2004:11) states that parents want their children to go to the best schools. They are free to go to any best school they can to enrol their children. This happens even if the parents have alternative schools in the vicinity from which to choose. Schools with the best educators have better and higher academic standards and consequently more learners will want to enrol there. There is no sponsorship for the better schools, which are overcrowded (Mayer, 2004:3).

School managers are challenged to redefine and to rethink their roles as managers and to examine critically the interaction between themselves, learners, educators and parents as well as the quality of education delivered in their schools. With the education they get, learners and parents need to improve the quality of their lives. Learners at school must enjoy learning and establish an effective learning organisation (Matomela, 2006:4).

People form the core of any organisation and when changes constantly impact on them, attempts should be made to help them to cope. Many of the changes occurring in education have a ripple effect on school management (DoEKZN, 2004:4).

These changes are normally triggered by strategic intervention, for example the new curriculum for schools. Changes in school design, structure and culture have a major effect on interpersonal relationships, authority relationships and ultimately attitudes and behaviour (Ledwaba, 2002:270).

Changes poses challenges and school managers and their leadership styles have to adapt accordingly.

## **2.8 TRENDS IN SOUTH AFRICAN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

There are remarkable changes in education in South Africa since the inception of the new dispensation in 1994. The country's education system is still confronted with serious challenges in many of the public schools, especially previously disadvantaged schools. The steps taken by the new government to build a new South Africa through reconstruction, transformation and policy intervention initiatives seem not to have made much impact in bringing about real change in the cultures of some schools.

In the South Africa of the past, education was a terrain for competing political, economic and ideological interests (Bestwell, 2004:50). The ideology of apartheid dominated South African life and shaped a strongly differentiated social structure,

at the same time perpetuating an attitudinal and physical separation of the country's various population groups (Bottery, 2004:30).

In many cases, school management and leadership were undertaken by unskilled, poorly qualified school managers who did not have the necessary management and leadership skills which resulted in widespread dysfunction in schools. Challenges such as these are rooted in South African education history.

The process of integrating South Africa's education into a single policy framework was a success. A common challenge besetting school managers at this time is that some of the previously disadvantaged schools still do not have enough resources. Most of these schools have to operate in environments that are regarded as disabling. South Africa's programme of reform to meet the basic needs of people, particularly of the historically disadvantaged, is being undertaken when there are stronger demands for social services, yet the state is committed to reducing its spending.

Against this background, a number of issues have brought schools to the forefront of public debate in South Africa. There is, for example, an increasing tendency towards low morale among school manager and educators. In some schools there is an atmosphere of exhaustion, and authority relations between school managers, educators and learners are often disputed and disrupted (Bono, 2005:3).

Some of the major trends affecting human resource management today are the modern labour force, organisational strategy, growth, technology and the changing nature of employment relationships. Trends in people leadership clearly indicate that the “built to last” strategies for organisational effectiveness include sound and rigorous investment in human capital as a critical component of an organisation’s assets (Cele, 2005:226).

Heystek et al. (2008:27) state that the annual report of the South African Board for Personnel Practice (SABPP) provided guidelines for future human resource management and legislation in South Africa: (SABPP Annual Report 1999).

*Guidelines for future human resource management and legislation in South Africa:* all managers of the organisation are regarded as being co-responsible for the human resource dimensions of the organisation;

- there should be a code of professional conduct to ensure that professional standards are met;
- the organisation should be responsible for the quality of the working life of its employees to optimise human potential;
- the people of the organisation are regarded as its most important asset;
- all people in the organisation should aim to add quality and value to the organisation’s performance;
- a strategic management approach to human resources is considered essential and a top management priority;

- people management is one of the sub-systems of the organisation, with the organisation functioning in an ever-changing external environment of which it is itself a sub-system;
- a contingency approach is recommended, implying that there is no single best model to manage human assets, but that of them being managed by other people.
- traditional management issues such as staffing, compensation, training, conditions of the work environment and labour relations, as well as any contemporary topics covering the more proactive, innovative and alternative approaches to the human and employment dimension of work are developed.

Examples of these include the collective aspects related to trade unionism and collective bargaining, as well as other forms of employment relationships, such as temporary and contract work.

*Figure 2.7 shows the role-players in education in South Africa. In the Department of Education, there are two Ministers. The Minister of Higher Education is responsible for Tertiary Institutions and the Minister of Basic Education is responsible for Grade R to Grade twelve.*



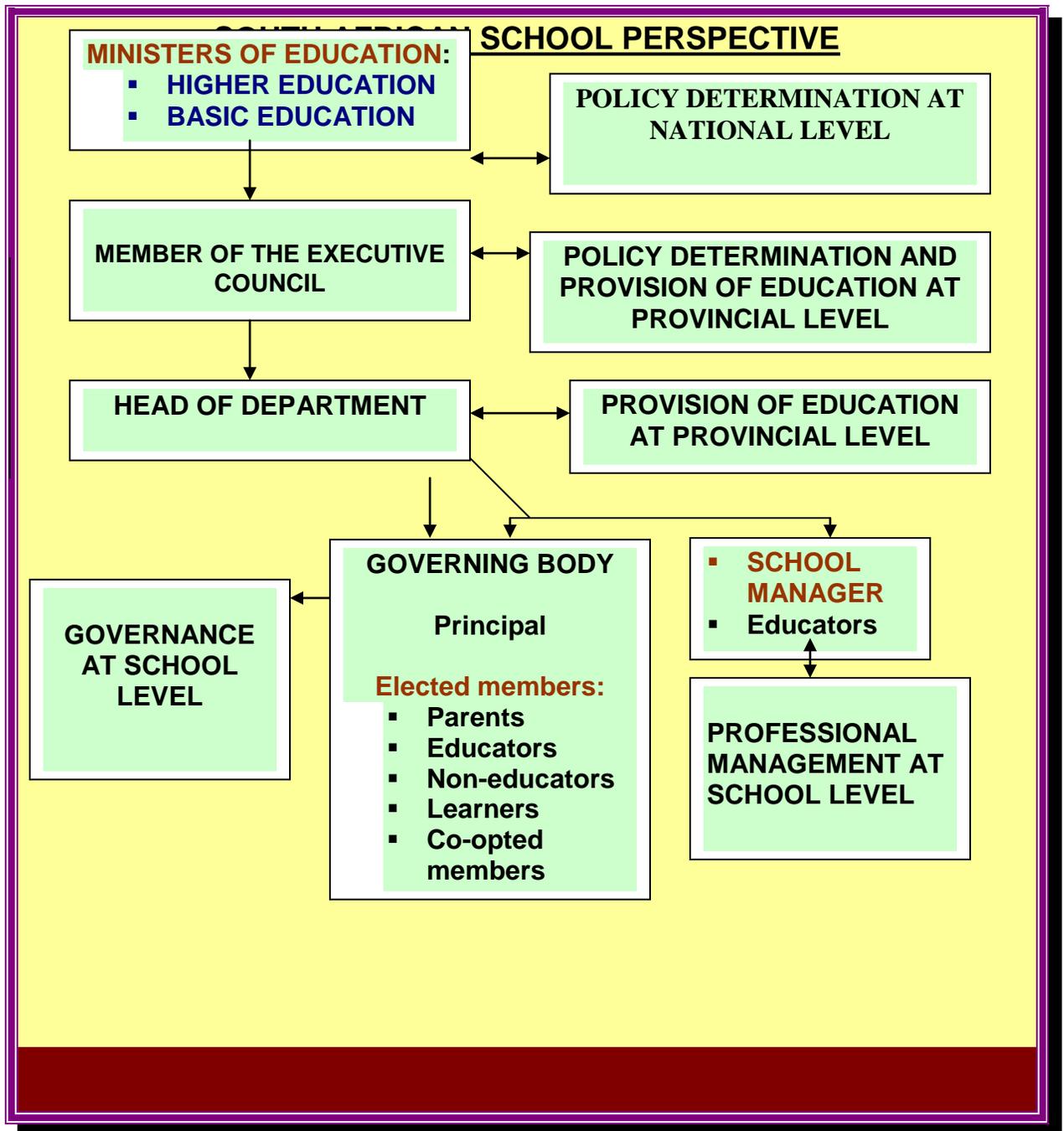


Figure 2.7: Role-players in education in South Africa

Adapted from: Brunton, 2003:234.

***The diagram shows that:***

- In South African schools, the school governing body is part of governance of the school under the authority of the national and provincial structures, namely the Ministers of Higher and Basic education, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) and the Head of Department (HoD).
- The governing body is responsible for the making of policy or the laying down of broad guidelines for planning and decision making in the school.
- All stakeholders are represented as elected members of the school governing body.

From the above trends, it can be inferred that human resource management contains both the good and the bad. The bad dimensions refer to the rational and financial aspects of people management such as psychometric evaluation, measurement of work performance, forecasting and planning.

It becomes clear that the good dimension has to do with human aspects such as decision-making concerning human resources, feelings, attitudes, perceptions and human needs. In the governance and management system of South African schools, micro level leadership issues have become the shared responsibility of the school management team and school governing body, under leadership of the school manager. Schools are public and non-profit organisations and their aims of human resource management differ from those of business (SASA).

Schools as public organisations are controlled by government departments, which are in turn controlled by politicians. In the South African context, political change

has had a definite influence on human resource management. Political factors influence decision-making and school managers have to comply with political demands (DoE, 2005:2).

A school is a juristic person with the legal capacity to perform its functions in terms of the Schools Act. In South African schools, the school manager is responsible for professional management of the school. The South African Schools Act stipulates that the professional management of schools must be undertaken by the school manager, under the authority of the Head of Department and the South African Schools Act).

This means that the school manager has delegated powers to effectively organise and control teaching and learning at the school. However, the HoD has the power to expect co-operation and compliance from the school manager in matters of school management.

The school may buy, sell, hire or own property, enter into contracts, make investments and sue or be sued. However, the school performs all actions through its governing body. The governing body acts on behalf of the school. It has the decision-making powers concerning the school. It may bind the school legally (Burgess, 2002:45).

## **2.9 HUMAN RESOURCE CHALLENGES IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES**

Human resource management structures vary widely from business to business, the type, size, and governing philosophies of the organisation they serve. They also vary from country to country. Most organisations organise HRM around the clusters of people to be helped. They conduct recruiting, administrative, and other duties in a central level.

Foster (2005:47) is of the opinion that different employee development groups for each section are identified. Human resources need to train and develop the staff in different fields. They serve all the divisions of the organisation. Many changes in education have been forcing human resource department to change their perspectives. Human resource retains a central functional relationship in areas where specialised expertise is truly required.

Human resource management differs from one country to the next. The United States of America, Europe and Africa all manage their schools' human resources differently to South Africa.

### **2.9.1 Human resource management in United States of America**

In the United States of America (US), distinct roles for human resource management have been identified. Human resource managers move planning from the conference room to schools. The human resource task is administratively an expert one. This entails being expert in the way the school manager organises quality teaching and learning, and delivering administrative efficiency to ensure that costs are reduced while quality is maintained (Brewster, 2009:2).

He further states that human resource effectiveness presents a challenge when, in one representative's words, some school managers think performance appraisal in schools, job evaluation and monitoring are a waste of time. Some staff members still have a negative view of human resources. They look at it as bad news bearers. Human resources effectiveness in schools appears to be less of an issue in the Asia-Pacific region.

Two of the most populated nations are India and China with many learners. School managers are faced by the challenge of implementing quality education. Most of the classes in some schools are overcrowded. Human resource professionals in the Asia-Pacific region, as elsewhere, need to be sensitive to external conditions as well as to their own organisational needs in order to define and meet the leadership development goals of their schools (Brewster, 2009:2).

### **2.9.2 Human resource management in Europe**

This transformation of people management activities reflects greater emphasis on individual rather than collective employee relations. Europe has experienced an increase in the complexity of the employment process and the growth of an important strategic dimension based on the notion of 'human capital'. Effective people management is very important in Europe (Wolfgang, 2008:23).

In Europe, people management is one of the factors that distinguish the high performing school from others. There has long been a considerable gap between

the Anglo-Saxon and continental approaches to the way schools are organised and operated.

Schools in the United Kingdom and Ireland have a significantly higher proportion of school managers and educators than schools in countries such as Germany, and particularly Italy. As a result, school managers are challenged by educators, learners and parents when managing their schools (Wolcott, 2001:78).

Wolfgang (2008:63), states that school managers always ask:

*“Who do we have to manage in an organisation?”*

Even though the human resource management concept is better developed in the United Kingdom than elsewhere in Europe, not all schools give their school managers a ‘manager’ title as the head of human resources. The emphasis in school management challenges and positions has been a factor in the development of human resource management within the British Isles (Fox, 2001:6).

The United Kingdom has the highest ratio of professionally qualified human resource staff compared to other schools across Europe. For quality teaching and learning, the educational planners implemented staff development programmes.

Under-qualified and unqualified educators are trained according to the needs of the country (Wolfgang, 2008:163).

In Europe, school managers are less likely to be graduates or to have been technically trained. In-house training is also viewed more as a cost than an investment in people. Performance appraisals are common. Recruiting is performed through word of mouth and newspaper advertising. Selection methods are transparent. Some school managers perceive empowering the staff as a threat (Very, 2004:8).

Sometimes promotion is based on time-on-job considerations. Fringe benefits in schools are generous. Certain protected group for example, disabled are given preference. Most educators are hired on probationary basis (Grobler et al., 2008:529).

*Figure 2.8 is the map of Africa. It reflects human resource challenges besetting school managers in schools in Africa.*



Figure 2.8: Map of Africa

Source: [www.places.co.za](http://www.places.co.za) Accessed on 12 August 2010.

### **2.9.3 Human resource management in Africa.**

Human resource management in Africa being surreal is particularly evident with many Western human resource managers. The sheer complexity and diversity found in Africa make the human resource management process one of the more vexing decisions that management may have to undertake when managing schools. African human resource management decisions are complex (Wolfgang, 2008:77).

Thomas (2004:64) is of the opinion that Africa holds many surprises for Western human resource management, not only in the form of the alien nature of the 'rules, regulations and laws' of many African nations but also in the extent to which many African organisations/employees ignore or bend the rules. Wolfgang (2008:79) is of the opinion that a paper must be produced to demonstrate a means of developing a classification scheme from which categories of African countries can evolve into more or less homogeneous groupings.

Wolfgang (2008:78) is of the opinion that these categories can then be used to develop customised human resource management policies, strategies and tactics. The background of human resource management by school managers in African schools is based on the European colonisation of Africa. The history of leadership in African nations since decolonisation influences the leadership styles of school managers in schools (Schell, 2001:4).

The economic and infrastructure development differences in schools determine the quality of education. Qualified educators want to teach in schools in urban areas. It is envisaged that the African human resource management provides the bases for making 'informed' human resource management decisions by Western managers in an African context (Foster, 2000: 267).

Schools in Africa differ. There are those schools with best results and all resources. They are managed effectively by school managers. There are also schools with poor results. The challenge might be with the school manager.

## **2.10 SYNTHESIS**

School managers face many human resource challenges in schools. Unless they work with staff members to set and enforce workable policies and procedures for teachers' and learners' conduct and attendance, school managers are handicapped as school managers and school leaders.

This study revealed that in South Africa, the United States of America, Europe and Africa, school managers face common human resource challenges to exercise firm but sympathetic discipline at all times by remaining consistent when applying the school rules. Authority in schools is intimately linked to how school managers exercise it in their managerial positions.

*Chapter three dealt recruitment and selection.*

## CHAPTER THREE

### RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUALISATION OF THE STUDY

In the previous chapter, identified managerial challenges of school managers in schools were discussed. School managers' human resource challenges in schools were the point of focus. Close scrutiny was made of human resource challenges besetting school managers in tuition and in school administration.

*Chapter three focused on the challenges in the appointment and retention of educators as school managers in schools. Education policy with regard to recruitment and selection in school human resource management is discussed. Appointment and retention of the staff as a challenge to management in schools is also be discussed. The chapter ends up with synthesis.*

#### 3.2 THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT (NO. 55 OF 1998)

The Employment Equity Act (EEA), which was approved by the cabinet on 2 October 1998, aims to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination and implementing affirmative action measures to redress the disadvantaged in employment experienced by designated groups.

Designated groups are Africans, coloureds, Asians, women and people with disabilities to ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels in the workplace.

It stipulates that measures must be designed to ensure that suitably qualified people from designated groups have equal employment opportunities and are equitably represented in all occupational categories and levels in the workplace. This act requires that an employment equity plan be prepared, setting targets bound by dates to transform the present composition of employees to a composition that is more representative of the demographics of the country (Heystek et al., 2008:43).

Grobler et al. (2006:34) states that education in South Africa had been integrated into a single policy framework. Many obstacles and challenges caused by the differentiated social structure of the past have surfaced since then. Some of the inequalities are inherited as the legacy of apartheid.

Other inequalities are perpetuated by the array of education policies in the South African democratic education system that seeks to redress apartheid imbalances by creating new forms of inequalities, such as affirmative action and funding structures for schools (Moloi, 2005:165).

Equality means a state of being equal referring to equal rights. The school manager has to rectify past imbalances by taking necessary actions of redress and empowerment to elevate disadvantaged learners. The manager must afford all educators and learners equal and meaningful educational opportunities, more money, more subjects, more class periods, more equipment, better paid educators, better qualified educators - more of everything and better of everything (Heystek et al., 2006:45).

Nieman in (Heystek et al., 2008:43) recommends that school managers as leaders should facilitate:

- the drafting and implementation of an enquiry policy;
- the creation of a safe environment in which education can flourish;
- the cultivation of a gender-and-race sensitive culture in the school:
  - to effect change in the classroom, elevating the disadvantaged groups from their positions of subordination,
  - to find expression in all school activities, planning and documents, free of all forms of sexism and racism;
- the eradication of all form of harassment in schools by the development of harassment programmes;
- equipping women with the necessary skills to handle harassment, victimisation, intimidation, hate speech and all forms of sexism;

- the review of gender and race imbalances in enrolment, dropout rates, subject choices, career paths and expected performance;
- the establishment of an environment in which all groups can develop to their full potential;
- an awareness of biases in the classroom so that even the hidden curriculum could become gender and race sensitive, free from stereotyping treatment - to ensure that all members are treated equally.

Molho (2007:12) asserts that;

*“Educators must learn if learners are to succeed, and learners must learn if the society is to succeed.”*

With the deprivation and development distortions of the past and our present challenges, it is obvious that some people are still trapped in disabling conditions. Such conditions still prevail and still affect the majority of South Africa’s population.

In South Africa, it is a common observation that teaching is primarily a woman’s profession, while in contrast men predominate in the education management positions. Some school managers seldom delegate activities that could develop management skills to females. Under-representation of females in management positions is common (Moloi, 2005:54).

Some of the reported cases of inequality that occur is making educators attentive of aspects such as the stereotyping, languages, examples, pictures, comparisons and ways of addressing learners. Chapter three of the Employment Equity Act requires managers to take certain affirmative action measures to achieve employment equity.

An important provision in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (No, 108 of 1996), the Bill of Rights, is the equality or non-discrimination clause. The clause provides that everyone is equal before the law and have the right to equal protection and benefit of the law.

Moreover, the Constitution states that no learner may be refused admission to a public school on the grounds that the parent, inter alia, does not subscribe to the mission, goals or objectives of the school or has refused to enter into a contract with the school, which excludes the liability of the school to the parent that arises out of circumstances relating to the education of the learner.

### **3.3 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

Affirmative Action's (AA) main purpose is to end discrimination. It is a temporary intervention designed to achieve and maintain equal employment opportunities without lowering standards and without unduly ruining the career aspirations or expectations of current competent organisational members. It is of great advantage in the education environment, as it could serve as a productive development tool to

overcome constraints, while at the same time mobilising latent resources to stimulate overall development (Heystek et al., 2006:45).

As a result, school managers should not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on the ground of, inter alia, race, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, colour, age, religion, belief, culture, language or birth. For this reason, the South African Schools Act stipulates that the admission requirements for public schools may not be in conflict with the Constitution and may not discriminate unfairly. School managers should consult with the unions and employees in order to make sure that the employment equity plan is accepted by everybody (Grobler et al., 2006:86).

Affirmative action was not intended to reverse discrimination as it has an inclusive character. It ensures that all groups are included and should not have an exclusive discriminatory character, excluding other groups. It is a continuum of more or less severe responses that attempt to overcome discrimination.

Some affirmative programmes protect the individual internationally. Employing a diversity staff member could empower the school by drawing from rich sources. The schools must communicate the requirements of the post clearly (Cole, 2003:33).

Affirmative action measures are tools for reaching equity in the workplace, including schools. The importance of affirmative action has been outlined by the Employment

Equity Act (RSA 1998), which implies that leaders in organisations have to become the major driving force behind affirmative action programmes and other socio-political changes taking place in South Africa, and focuses on human resource development. School managers are leaders in schools and are to drive affirmative action in schools (DoE 2005:3).

According to the South African Constitution's Bill of Rights, diverse groups have to interact on an equal basis at all levels, which means that the need for a greater understanding of differences and similarities must become more evident in schools. It originates from the earliest efforts to eradicate unfair discrimination and refers to specific steps taken to promote equal opportunities for the designated groups.

In South Africa, race, gender and people living with disabilities had previously been deprived of equal access to, and opportunities for designated groups, transforming the present composition of employees so that they become representative as the designated groups (The Constitution of RSA).

***The purpose of affirmative action is to:***

- eliminate existing discrimination;
- remedy past discrimination, and

- to prevent future discrimination by acting as a pro-active development tool to overcome constraints and mobilise latent resources.

### **3.3.1 How to deal with Affirmative Action**

Affirmative Action was implemented in 1994. In 2010, it has been sixteen years since the new government and new labour legislation came into being. This equates to a full twelve years of schooling and three year degree time period in which everyone had equal opportunities. The reality is that until 2010, Affirmative Action is still temporal. The question is: "Until when"?

- *Grow your own timber* (Heystek et al., 2008:44)

This means assisting and developing members of the staff from previously disadvantaged groups to acquire the qualifications and experience necessary for them to fill senior positions. If there is a shortage of mathematics or science teachers, any person from the designated group can be appointed in any position.

Due to being previously disadvantaged, the supply from this designated group, even though high, is not always enough for the demand created by Affirmative Action. School managers have to focus on staff development to improve the quality of teaching and learning in South Africa across the board.

It is wise for Provincial Education Departments and schools to:

- develop their own designated staff and empowerment as a strategic action taken to legitimise changes;
- focus more on input-based affirmative action such as providing bursaries for students with potential from the body of learners in the designated groups, and
- set goals for achieving compositional change as required by law.

In essence, affirmative action brings with it a renewal focus on developing tailor-made, quality staff members for the school. It also results in a high staff turnover for the simple reason that a school has to make space for reaching the targets set for affirmative action in their equity plan.

### **3.3.2 Advantaged and disadvantages of Affirmative Action**

For those who are benefiting from affirmative action, it is an advantage but it seems to disadvantage whites, the quality of education in South Africa, teaching and learning and management.

According to Welch (2004:37), it is now time to remove affirmative action as a legal aspect of our legislation. It was supposed to be a temporal measure. Available skills and qualifications should already be in place and AA should no longer be

a point of focus when employing new educators with new talent in the workplace.

Also Heystek et al. (2008:32), mention that the “gravy train” applies as much to designated blacks in terms of the Affirmative Action Act as it did to whites in the apartheid era. This results in qualified graduates leaving the teaching profession for other professions. There is further discrimination in terms of females. Affirmative action was implemented to redress the inequalities of the past, with specific reference to workplace demographics.

Educators are to be appointed and promoted in terms of qualifications, skills, attitude and ability. It is easy to provide working experience when the set of competencies exists. An educator with the right attitude is always successful in the chosen career path.

Young South Africans should not be to be blamed for their parents’ mistakes. Everyone should have access to equal opportunities in education, thus allowing education to become a level playing ground. The main purpose of affirmative action is to ensure equitable representation of the races represented in South Africa in all occupational levels and categories in the workplace (Foster, 2005:21).

Viewing the status of disadvantaged groups in terms of empowerment, where the skills of those groups are lost, is wasteful. Measures to rectify the past mistakes should be taken, necessitating purposeful actions of redress and empowerment to elevate disadvantaged groups from their position of subservience.

With affirmative action, attributes the position “powerlessness” to the fact that other races are denied a free and rational choice as to how to lead their lives. Instead of a life with ‘rational freedom’, they are denied autonomy. An employment equity plan must be prepared setting targets bound by date to transform the present composition of the school staff to a composition that is more representative of the demographics of the country (Shanosani, 2006:34).

The Employment Equity Act (No. 55 of 1998) requires that the employers take certain affirmative action measures to achieve employment equity. School managers must prepare and implement an employment equity plan setting out the affirmative action measures they intend taking to achieve employment equity goals.

*Table 3.1 reflects the advantages and disadvantages of affirmative action.*

Advantages of affirmative action	Disadvantages of affirmative action
It is necessary to combat racism and any form of discrimination	Unnecessarily extended to sports which affect the success of national teams in South Africa.
The economy has strengthened	South African economy on the back foot
Does more good than harm	More harm than good and decreasing morale throughout the country
A contributing factor towards bringing about paradigm shifts, opening up new horizons and achieving a new shared culture.	Unskilled individuals who have been appointed due to their colour to redress the imbalances of the past manage the skilled individuals.
The appointment of new young educators brings a fresh new focus with new innovative ideas and an entrepreneurial mindset.	Educators are appointed to redress the past imbalances are not necessarily competent nor have the required qualifications skills and expertise.
It might introduce new values and 'ways of doing things' into the educational environment which is of vital importance to education.	The danger exists that a school might lose competent, qualified and experienced educators. The quality of education might be poor.

**Table 3.1 Advantages and disadvantages of affirmative action**

**Adapted from: Heystek, Nieman, van Rooyen, Mosoge and Bipath, 2008:02.**

The researcher is of the opinion that each job has an intrinsic value and requires a certain level of skills and knowledge. Certain positions require that all applicants should have a certain level of education and experience.

### **3.3.3 The influence of Affirmative Action in education**

Change in the appointment of the staff in schools was implemented too quickly and the policies were too broad. As a result, the less qualified educators took priority in employment over those more qualified. This resulted in a number of young South African educators emigrating to look for other, better job opportunities.

Moloi (2005:34) states that some staff members had been appointed in senior management positions without any relevant qualifications and empowerment. The quality of education had started on a back foot. Many black people are successful and appointed in senior positions, sometimes not because for their skills but for their colour, whilst some white educators are frustrated by a narrow window of opportunity. Morale is low in some school managers.

Those who work hard, reap well, thanks to their colour. In schools a person is appointed unqualified but after teaching for one year, is automatically permanently employed (Milner, 2003:180). In some schools, the quality of education is very poor because there are fewer qualified educators than under-qualified and unqualified educators.

A large portion of the department of education has been appointed in positions which require certain skills and knowledge. Most of those who have been affirmatively appointed are not able to meet the new requirement of the job without the constant supervision and assistance in even the most basic areas (Nthite, 2006:4).

Rampasad (2004:34) says this means that those skilled educators and managers end up not doing only their demanding and time-consuming work but a large part of unskilled managers' work too. The most frustrating part is that high salaries are paid to the "previously disadvantaged", but incompetent, individuals. Some schools are managed by a few members of the school management teams while there are many promoted teachers who are paid for doing nothing (Northnagel, 2002:25).

*"Appoint the best person for the job"*

Questions about affirmative action inevitably arise:

- "How long will the past be allowed to determine current and future employment and career practices?"
- "What is the long term goal of the country in terms of skill upliftment and development opportunities – race or abilities?"
- "If this was temporal, what is meant by temporary – and how will this be defined as having been achieved if it is temporal after sixteen years?"

Affirmative action promotes the appointment, training, promotion and retention of staff members from the designated groups. School managers must provide an enabling environment for disabled staff members parents and learners to participate fully in school activities.

### **3.4 EMPOWERMENT**

Empowerment refers to the development of human capabilities, but it also implies acting successfully within the existing systems and structures of power, and even taking up a management position (Okumbo, 2001:39). Empowerment for the school manager as a leader is associated with the exercising of power, whether in terms of power to command, the power to govern, or the power to persuade and effect transformation.

For the school manager to develop all groups of people under his or her management to their full potential, recognition should be given to each group's uniqueness, and it is therefore necessary to identify the areas in need of redress so that the education sector can take the relevant empowerment steps to fulfil the potential for influencing gender and race relations.

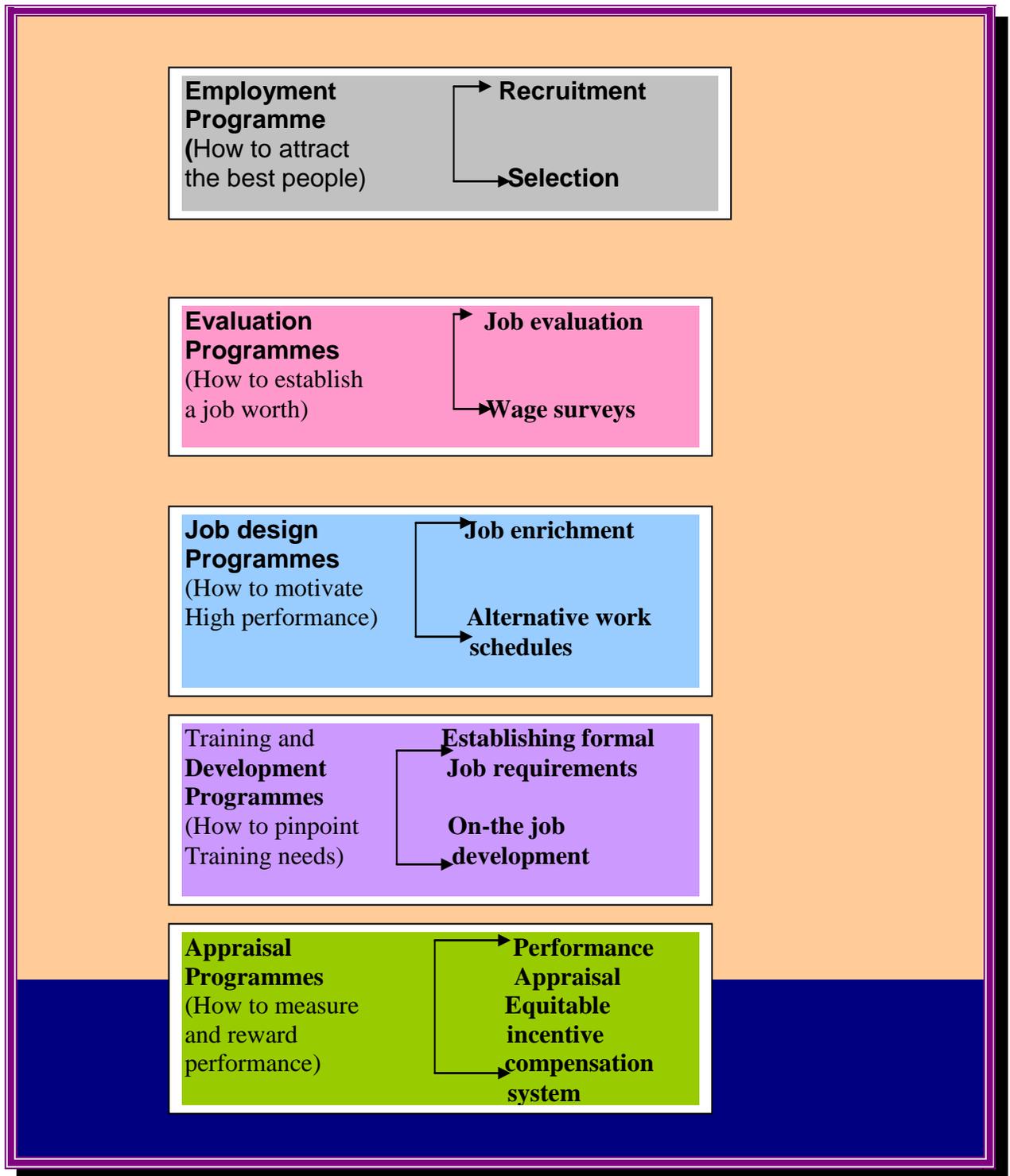
Grobler et al. (2006:256) warns of lack of teaching and learning facilities, and resources and human resource strategies in many public schools. He stresses the need to focus on the retraining and development of the teaching force to avoid future failure.

It is clear that empowerment programmes are imperative. Such programmes are required by the Constitution, as well as numerous legislative and recent education documents that illustrate the necessity of addressing the inequities of the past. Heystek et al. (2008:47) emphasises that leading the staff does not only deal with the distribution of resources to facilitate the high organisational operation, but also with retraining, in-service-training, and development of educators as induction to their new roles have become paramount.

Heystek et al. (2008:156) further states that such training should be in line with the South African Skills Development Act of 1998. In this way the training and development of educators will ensure their alignment with the broader national norms and standards of teacher education, the personal career development plans of individuals and the strategic, organisational needs of schools.

The challenge was clearly the need to devise innovative ways of identifying employees' potential, recognising prior-learning and experience and accelerating employee empowerment.

*Figure 3.1 reflects how the staff was managed by the school manager.*



**Figure 3.1: Staff empowerment**

Adapted from: Browster, 2009:56.

### 3.5 EQUALITY

The necessity for measures such as affirmative action is clear. For many years the disadvantaged groups in South Africa had very few opportunities to be appointed in management positions or even to be educated according to their abilities. This reflects the situation in which the opportunity for “developing natural talent” has been neglected. All these problems surrounding inequality emphasise the need for redress and purposeful empowerment programmes in the education sector (Welch, 2004:39).

According to Shonosani (2006:80), the achievement of democracy in South Africa has consigned to history the past system of education which was based on racial inequality and segregation.

***He further states that South Africa introduced a new national system for schools which:***

- redresses past injustices in educational provision;
- provides an education of progressively high quality for all learners;
- in doing so, is laying a strong foundation for the development of all South Africans’ talents and capabilities;
- advances the democratic transformation of society;
- contributes to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society;
- protects and advances our diverse cultures and languages;
- upholds the rights of all learners, parents and educators;

- promotes their acceptance of responsibility for the organisation, governance and funding of schools in partnership with the state;
- sets uniform standards for the education of learners at schools and the organisation, governance and funding of schools throughout the republic of South Africa;
- combats racism and sexism, and
- combats all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance (Shonosani, 2006:80 – 81).

### **3.5.1 Why equality in education**

In the Constitution Section 9 (1-5) it is stated that everyone is equal before the law and has a right to equal protection and benefit from the law. Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination, may be taken.

The school manager may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth. National legislation must be enacted to prevent or prohibit unfair discrimination.

### **3.5.2 Multilingualism**

Language rights are a politically sensitive matter in South African law. The education system should encourage the study of as many languages as is possible. The provincial legislatures are also empowered to legislate in this field. The governing body of a public school may determine the language policy of a particular school (SASA).

South Africa has eleven official languages; there are other languages which have not received official recognition. The South African Schools Act provides that everyone has the right to receive education in the official language of his or her choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable.

This subsection of SASA is in agreement with Section 30 of the Constitution which stipulates that everyone has the right to use the language of land to participate in the cultural life of his or her choice. No form of discrimination may be practiced by the governing body in implementing the language policy.

In order to ensure the effective realisation of this right, the school manager must apply reasonable educational alternatives which may include single-medium institutions as long as the principles of equity, practicability and affirmative action are also considered.

A recognised sign language is regarded as having the status of an official language for the purpose of the Act. The provision that entitles a person to learn through an

official language of his or her choice creates problems in that single-medium schools with a number of learn who may like to be admitted to that school (Brunton, 2003:176).

Many black children do not have access to Afrikaans medium schools because of the lack of Afrikaans language knowledge. Although the benefits of the mother-tongue education have been generally recognised, parents who want their children to compete effectively in the marketplace often send them to English-medium schools (Seroto, 2004:165 & Brunton, 2003:345).

The South African Constitution and other acts do allow freedom of choice and freedom of association, and allow the governing bodies to select the language and medium of instruction for the school (SASA section 6) as long as governing bodies do not discriminate unfairly.

The multilingual nature of South Africa presents school managers with unique challenges for which resolutions are not going to be easy to find. Mabeba and Prinsloo (2000:39) confirm the problems related to language by noting that educators in open schools often refer to “cross-cultural communication differences” as a major obstacle to building positive teacher-parent and teacher-learner

relationships. This communication includes both the spoken and the written word (Simpson, 2003:23).

Multilingualism results in the lack of contact between black parents and white educators in open schools. Some black parents feel alienated from the school and are reluctant to make contacts because of feelings of inadequacy. Some of the white teachers are not sure what approach to adopt when dealing with reluctant black parents (Lewis-Charp, 2003:34 & Cole, 2003:44).

Ledwaba (2002:23), is of the opinion that some culturally diverse school managers, parents and learners harbour distrust and negative feelings towards educators of other cultural groups. This type of distrust is a great challenge and makes it difficult for parents and learners to believe that educators from different cultural groups will have their interests at heart (Lemmer, 2000:66).

Parents may view their children's failure in either school achievement or behaviour as being a negative reflection upon their children. To achieve a more positive relationship, it is a challenge of school managers to design a relevant curriculum which changes the people's attitudes towards education (Mange, 2005:81).

The school manager must design a curriculum that displays democratic attitudes and values (Schulze, 2003:45). It must promote unity and common citizenship and

destiny of all South Africans, irrespective of class, gender, or ethnic background. It must be relevant to the needs of the individual as well as the social and economic needs of the society (Lewis-Charp, 2003:12). The curriculum must promote

independent and self-critical learning and respect the equality of all forms of knowledge.

More importantly, the process of curriculum development must be democratised through the participation of all the stakeholders (Mange, 2005:80). The educators must have the ability to view the learners and different situations from a diverse ethnic perspective. It must have provision of the complex and multidimensional nature of ethnicity in society. The learners must represent their schools being desirable places to learn by respect and accept cultural and individual differences (Shonosani, 2006:13).

### **3.5.3 Multireligion**

All South Africans have the freedom of religion, belief and opinion. This includes learners. The South African Constitution, Section 15 (1) states that everyone has the right to freedom of conscience, religious thought, belief and opinion. Religious observation may be conducted at state or state-aided institutions, provided that observation follows the rules made by the appropriate public authorities, conducted on an equitable basis and attendance at them is free and voluntary.

South Africa has a wide mix of religions. Many religions are represented in the ethnic and regional diversity of South Africa's population. Managing human resources, attitudes and values relates to the community and school, and how the appointed educator will fit in with local situation.

Issues such as religion and language may be a criterion but may not be used as a discriminatory factor in the selection process when appointing school managers and educators and admitting learners. Most of the traditional spiritualities of blacks were succeeded in predominance by the Christianity religion (The Constitution of South Africa).

In human resources, the school manager and the SGB can use internal and/or external sources. Internal recruitment sources include current staff, friends of staff, former staff and applicants (Seroto, 2004:76). The school can employ people they know who had been recommended by certain people or had previously worked at that school. The school manager must know what to expect of the applicants. Promotions, demotions, transfers and deployments may also provide additional members for a school (Heystek et al., 2008:14).

Some school managers discriminate people based on their religion. If they do not belong to the same religion, they won't appoint him or her. The disadvantage of internal recruitment sources is that the school does not get new outsiders. People who are promoted are staff members of many years. If promoted to principal, they may find it difficult to make changes, even if these changes are needed (Schulze, 2003:98).

Some of the staff members may also find it difficult to accept their colleague in a new position of authority. The decision to recruit from inside or outside the

organisation depends to a large extent on the situation in schools. Factors like the qualification and expertise needed in the school will also determine if it is best to look inside or to rather recruit from outside (Heystek et al, 2008:35).

### **3.5.4 Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism is a perspective that develops through the process of human interaction. It is a way of being, perceiving, thinking, and acting in the world. It cannot be a specific teaching strategy (Lewis-Charp, 2003:354). It is a perspective through which to view and implement appropriate teaching strategies. It is a way of viewing the world in general and a way of perceiving the teaching-learning context within the worldview. In the end, it amounts to sound education practice coupled with a vision for a better society (Mange, 2005:81).

A multicultural perspective indicates a transformational change from the dominant perspective shaped through socialisation to an inclusive view of multiple perspectives and multiple realities. Many people are asking questions about how to deal effectively with ethnically and culturally diverse issues and audiences in their

respective areas of interest (Seroto, 2004:176 & Simpson, 2003:77).

Mange (2005:80) is of the opinion that as a reform movement, multicultural education punctures theories and beliefs of individuals comfortable with - and interested in - maintaining the existing social order. Its emphasis is on equity and

that causes some people to perceive it as a threat, reducing the resources available to other important programmes.

School managers require a specific approach, philosophy and methodology to ensure that staff members are satisfied and motivated so-that they will achieve the organisational goals of the Department of Education. Some school managers find the antiracist theme in multicultural education intimidating and difficult to embrace. They view talking about racism as a highly explosive and volatile undertaking that they prefer to avoid (Ledwaba, 2002:3).

Swanepoel and Slabbert (2003:10) are of the opinion that the multifaceted nature of multicultural education generates diverse conceptions that sometimes cause division amongst its proponents. As education for freedom, multicultural education works to liberate individuals, groups and society from the shackles of oppression, exploitation, and ethnocentrism (Foster, 2005:13).

This apparent lack of consensus is often interpreted by critics and sceptics as a weakness that causes the integrity and validity of multicultural education to be suspected (Thomas, 2004:66). Multicultural education is an attempt to release a child from the confines of the ethnocentric straightjacket and to awaken him to the existence of other cultures, societies and ways of life and thought.

It is intended to de-condition the child as much as possible and to make him able and willing to explore its rich diversity. Multicultural education is therefore not a departure from, nor incompatible with, but a further refinement of the liberal idea of education (Thomas, 2004:63).

It does not cut off the child from his or her own culture; rather it enables him to enrich, refine and take a broader view of it without losing his or her roots in it. It is a viable way for schools to fulfil their functions of socialising learners into the national culture and providing them with the best education possible. Learners know, appreciate and participate in different cultures (Heystek et al., 2008:133).

Moloi (2005:23) concurs with Fullan and Watson (2000:470) that the fact that South Africa is a country with diverse needs and that multicultural education is still such a new experience indicates the need to create awareness and for all school managers to understand these diversities. There is still a need to look more closely at training programmes for school managers as well as educators.

School managers have a tremendous task on their hands and it is therefore imperative that they acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to deal with the various issues related to multicultural education (English, 2002:110). School managers need to look closely at their beliefs and ideas about the purpose, content, nature and function of teaching and learning in their schools, as these forms the basis of the educational principles.

### **3.6 POLITICAL CONNOTATION**

Economic progress depends on improving human resource management and education for all South Africans. Education plays a crucial role in achieving these goals. To succeed, the country has to offer all of its children access to good education and to the technological tools of the modern world.

Since South Africa's first democratic elections, there have not been enormous political changes specific to the country. The emphasis has been on getting rid of the legacies of apartheid, in particular segregation and inequality. In many cases, legislation has been enacted to put in process the racial integration of institutions and to equalise opportunities. The Bill of Rights enshrines the principles of equality, non-racism and non-sexism (Lewis-Charp, 2003:13).

One of the key features of the South African Schools Act of 1996 is the integration of nineteen apartheid education departments into one national and nine provincial departments. The Schools Act also promises nine years of compulsory schooling for every child.

The governance of schools was placed in the hands of the school community, the parents, educators and learners to help promote equity. The Act ensures equal funding to schools within provinces. This is a move away from the highly centralised and tightly controlled system of the past (SASA).

Schools are central in building a new culture of tolerance in South Africa. This is to be achieved through building more democratic and participative structures from schools to national parliament. Schools are given greater control over their own resources. Another way is through teaching learners the skills and attitudes that will enable them to participate critically in our new democracy (Van de Venter, 2003:17).

### **3.6.1 Union-management relations**

A union is any number of workers in a particular enterprise, industry or profession that are united for the purpose of organising relationships between themselves and their employer in that profession (Grobler et al., 2006:417).

The goals of unions internationally as well as in South Africa are to promote the interests of its membership. Through collective bargaining and lobbying for labour

legislation, union leaders enhance their members' standard of living and improve many conditions that surround their work (Thomas, 2004:69).

The South African Constitution, as well as the Labour Relations Act (Section 4-10), grant employers and employees the right to freedom of association. For an employer, freedom of association means that it has the right to form and join employers' organisations and participate in their activities. The presence of a union

has significant implications for the structure of an organisation and for the management of human resources (Steyn, 2002:32).

For an employee, freedom of association means that he has the right to participate in forming a union, or join an existing union of his or her choice. It is a right to participate in its activities and be eligible for appointment as a union representative.

An employee has a right to participate in the affairs of a union federation of which his union is a member (Constitution Sections 23 6-8). In terms of Section 23 of the Constitution and Section 11 – 22 of the Labour Relations Act, employers and employees and their organisations have the right to organise themselves.

Registered unions have more rights than unregistered ones under the Labour Relations Act. Heystek et al. (2006:145) reveal that for union employees, human resource procedures and policies are largely shaped by a written agreement

between management and the union. A registered union that is sufficiently representative of the employee at school has the following rights:

- The school manager is obliged to grant the union reasonable access to its premises, in order to recruit members or to communicate with them or otherwise serve their interests. The school manager is entitled to set conditions as to the time and place. The conditions must be reasonable and necessary for safeguarding life or property or for preventing the undue

disruption of work. In a school situation, this means that union representatives can talk to their members during breaks or after school hours.

- An employee who is a member of a representative union may authorise the employer in writing to deduct subscriptions or levies payable to that union from his salary. If authorisation has been given, the employer is obliged to make the deduction and remit it to the union monthly.
- An office-bearer of a representative union or of a federation of unions is entitled to take leave during working hours for the purpose of performing the functions of that office. The number of days must be reasonable, and can be agreed on with the representative union and the school manager.
- The representative must be paid during the time of absence and the school manager must ensure that the minimum disruption of classes will take place (Heystek et al., 2006:145).

The activities of the unions in the education sector focus on the interests of their members especially with regard to the conditions of service of educators. Unions can also make contributions to the professionalism of educators.

All the current registered unions in the education sector are represented on the South African Council of Educators (SACE) and form part of the decision-making

process. They also endorse the Code of Conduct. Unions should therefore continue to do everything in their power to help to develop and maintain a professional ethical code for educators (DoE, 2005:2).

If the school manager and the governing body have a vacant post, the relevant teachers' unions must be informed about the meetings for short-listing, and also about selection meetings. Written invitations to unions are recommended. Union representatives may attend these meetings, and their role is to ensure that procedures are followed correctly and that there is no unfair discrimination against any candidates (Heystek et al., 2008:34).

Although we live in a democratic, open society, unions may not prescribe to the school governing bodies which criteria they may or may not use. A spirit of trust and collaboration is recommended. The SGB can explain and ask advice from the union members. Union representatives may raise objections, but they cannot prohibit the use of any of the selection criteria. They may lodge a complaint if they are not satisfied after the selection process (SASA).

According to the researcher, dissatisfaction with working conditions occurred among the majority of workers in South Africa and they increasingly joined unions. This shows that collective movements became an important source of ideas about human resource management in South Africa that was in political and socio economic turmoil – a situation felt by virtually every employer and employee in the country.

The increasing importance of teacher unions led the Department of Education in South Africa to pay increased attention to the human resource aspects of management and leadership. The 'hard' aspects of Human Resource Management and the impact of people management practices in education came to the fore at the time that collectivism was gaining more prominence (Foster, 2005:43).

The areas within which boards of education can make decisions independent of unions have narrowed. The compensation process is no exception. The primary concern of teachers' unions has generally been one of finance, interviews and appointments.

### **3.6.2 Reasons for educators to join unions**

Employees in the work force have a right to join unions. Educators in schools also have that right. They are free to join any union of their choice. Educators join unions for different reasons. The subscription is paid directly to the union by debit order.

#### **3.6.2.1 Job security**

School managers and educators need to have a sense of job security and want to believe that management will not make unfair arbitrary decisions about their employment. Further; they want to be protected against technological advances. A union can request any educator to be placed in another school. (Grobler et al., 2006:417). The unions also help them if they experience conflict within the school.

### **3.6.2.2 Wages and benefits**

Educators want to be paid fairly according to their qualifications. Benefits such as medical aid, housing allowance, car allowance, pension and paid leave are also significant issues in unions, who are able to achieve a higher level of wages and benefits than employees acting individually (Kilberloe, 2003:98).

### **3.6.2.3 Working conditions**

Educators want a healthy and safe working environment. Although legislation exists to protect health and safety in schools, educators feel more secure knowing that a union is directly involved in safety and health issues (Kilberloe, 2003:99).

### **3.6.2.4 Fair and just supervision**

Underscoring the union philosophy is the fair and equal treatment of all employees. Unions minimise the potential for favouritism and unequal treatment by insisting that major personnel decisions such as wage increases, promotions, transfers and other job actions, be made according to acceptable criteria that do not discriminate against historically disadvantaged groups. Some of the school managers want to rule educators with an iron fist (Wolcot, 2001:33).

The general shift in leadership styles from autocratic to people-oriented patterns is notable by the fact that school managers treat their staff fairly, justly and respectfully.

A union member who feels that he or she had been mistreated may file a written grievance against the school manager or another educator, initiating a formal procedure through which the complaint will be heard by both union and management representatives (Very, 2006:4).

Very (2006:4) states that improvement of working conditions have been important union concerns in recent years. Unions have successfully bargained for better safety schools, shorter work weeks, less mandatory overtime, longer breaks and lunch periods, and a clean and healthy work environment.

### **3.6.2.5 Mechanism to be heard**

Educators always complain that they have little or no say in matters that affect their work. They often feel powerless to bring about changes which will benefit them. Through unionisation, educators have a powerful collective voice that may be used to communicate to management their dissatisfactions and frustrations. The collective bargaining and grievance procedures ensure that the educators as union members will have their wants, needs and concerns brought before management without retaliation (Vilakazi, 2003:4).

### **3.6.2.6 Need to belong**

The need to belong is strong in all human beings in both their personal and work lives. The union provides a mechanism for bringing people together. Not only to promote common job-related issues and interests, but also to provide programmes, activities and social events that create a strong bond among union members (Very, 2006:3).

- **Reasons for employees not to join a union**

- a. Union ineffectiveness, for example poor recruiting methods.
- b. Political intimidation
- c. The cost of union dues
- d. Employer intimidation

### **3.7 INDUCTION, MOTIVATION AND RETENTION**

To a great degree, the effectiveness of the school depends on the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Without high quality educators, a school is destined to have mediocre performance. For this reason, the external recruitment of human resources is a critical human resource function. Recruiting and selecting qualified educators involves a variety of human resource activities, including analysis of the labour market, long-term planning, interviewing and testing.

#### **3.7.1 Induction**

After an educator had accepted a job, they are keen to learn more about the job and the organisation. Once they are placed in their posts, it is important that they are introduced to the school, their tasks, superiors and co-workers. Induction is also known as orientation or socialisation, and is the process of integrating the new educator into the organisation and acquainting him or her with the details and requirements of the job. It consists of job training for new employees and the whole process of integrating employees into the organisation (Heystek et al., 2006:98).

A degree of induction usually commences before an educator actually enters a school. The pool of potential educators in schools is increasingly becoming more diverse in terms of age, language and cultural background and it is therefore imperative that proper attention be paid to induction (Heystek et al., 2006:34).

During induction, the new educators are introduced to the goals of the organisation, its policies and procedures, its values, co-workers, as well as the activities of the tasks to be performed and the equipment to be used. It is here that the basic requirements of the job are identified (Van Wyk, 2006:29).

It is a process by which newly appointed educators are transformed from complete outsiders to participating and effective members of an organisation. The school manager may do this by means of an informal programme or informal introduction (Grobler et al., 2006:207).

The organisational values, beliefs and traditions which are the cultures of the school are slowly absorbed as the educator is exposed to orientation. An induction programme needs careful, systematic and ongoing attention by the school management team as well as the school manager as an individual. When an educator is starting a new job in a new school, it is a very stressful life experience.

A proper induction process that is sensitive to the anxieties and uncertainties, as well as the needs of a new employee, is therefore of the utmost importance.

Grobler et al. (2006:208) are of the opinion that the influences of the first few days on a new educator and the impression they have gained will have an important bearing on performance and that its rewards in terms of goodwill, morale, and work efficiency by far outweigh the effort and investment used to enable the new employee to feel comfortable and at home. The school is indicating the required behaviour patterns for effective job performance.

The main objective of induction is the integration of the new educator into the organisation, without delay, so that he or she can become an effective educator as soon as possible. People responsible for induction in a school are the school manager, the deputy principal, the head of department, a “mentor” or “buddy”, the shop steward and the newly appointed educator to complete the induction evaluation forms (Van Wyk, 2006:21).

### **3.7.2 Benefits of induction**

According to Vilakazi (2003:8) effective induction programmes will reduce the adjustment problems of new educators by creating a sense of security, confidence and belonging to them.

Benefits that can result from an effective induction programme:

- higher job satisfaction;
  - lower labour turnover;
  - greater commitment to values and goals;
  - fewer costly and time-consuming mistakes;
  - reduction in absenteeism;
  - improved manager and subordinate relationship, and
- 
- better understanding of school policies, goals and procedures.

### **3.7.3 Motivation**

The success of any organisation depends on its employees. No job, regardless of its design, can overcome an employee's lack of interest or willingness. Motivation is the engine for driving the human resource. Motivation is a force that energises behaviour, gives direction to behaviour and underlies the tendency to persist, even in the face of the obstacles. In a constantly changing environment, the complexities of the education system demand that school managers understand what motivates their staff (Heystek et al., 2008:79 concur with Grobler et al., 2006:215).

Motivation is not a quick fix, or a short speech to drive the staff members to new heights. Motivation is needed to achieve long-term goals. It must therefore be considered with the culture and climate of the organisation and the changes and resistance being encountered. Intrinsic motivation is within a person.

It is accepted as a stronger driving force than external motivation and may have a longer lasting effect on the performance of an individual than external motivation. Acknowledgement or the person's own drive to succeed is more important for long term success (Heystek et al., 2008:79).

School managers must motivate their staff so that they can know them as individuals but also to consider the group context. Motivation needs proper planning. Motivating the staff may help the school managers to achieve sustained quality education by using the valuable sources in the form of people in the school.

- **Maslow's hierarchy of needs**

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs comprises five levels (Grobler et al., 2006:217 & Heystek et al., 2008:79).

They are:

- a. physical needs,
- b. security needs,

- c. social needs,
- d. self-esteem needs, and
- e. self-actualisation needs.

Physical needs are the primary needs for food, shelter and clothing that can directly be satisfied by compensation. Educators who are adequately paid can provide for their physical needs. (Grobler et al., 2006:217 & Heystek et al., 2008:79) According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, when a need occurs, motivational tension develops and is directed toward satisfaction of the felt need. The intensity of the effort is a function of how strong the need is.

Once the physiological needs have been satisfied, the safety or security needs become a motivational factor. Many educators' most important security need is job security. Other security factors include increases in salary and benefits. On the third level are social needs. At this level, educators desire social relationships inside and outside the school. Peer group acceptance within the school is often an important psychological need for educators (Weber, 2004:3).

Once the educators have formed friendships within the organisation and feel a part of the peer group, the need for self-esteem takes precedence. School factors such as job title and status items count. Factors within the school such as parking spaces or office size and level of responsibility become important to the educators (Cole, 2003:33).

Finally, the highest need is self-actualisation. At this level, educators seek a fulfilling, useful life in the school and in society. Educators seek challenging and creative jobs to achieve self-actualisation. Maslow contends that individual educators will climb the ladder of need fulfilment until they have become self-actualised. If any need is not fulfilled, the educator will continually strive to fulfil that need. The need becomes a motivational factor (Grobler et al., 2006:218).

He further proposes that when one need is frustrated, educators simply concentrate on the others (Grobler et al., 2006:218). They conclude that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not simple opposites. Poor working conditions results in dissatisfaction while the ideal working conditions do not necessarily lead to satisfaction or motivation. (Heystek et al., 2008:82).

#### **3.7.4 Staff leadership regarding motivation**

According to Heystek et al., (2008:83), for school managers to successfully manage the school, they must consider the following:

- recognise the individual differences in employees;
- place educators in learning areas that suit their subject specialisation;
- set specific goals for the staff;
- provide the staff with immediate feedback on how they are performing;
- ensure that employees perceive goals as attainable;
- individual rewards in recognition of the fact that employees have different needs and are therefore motivated by different types of rewards;

- clearly link rewards to performance, and
- ensure that the principle of internal equity is honoured in the school's reward system.

Although the modern trend is to place great emphasis on 'intrinsic' motivators, one should not forget the fact that most people work for money. One's system of monetary rewards therefore remains very important. In schools the salaries are determined by the National Department of Education.

Unless there is a radical rethink about educators' salary provision, it will be difficult to attract suitable candidates to achieve quality teaching and learning in South African schools (Swanepoel & Slabber, 2003:187).

Once the educators are performing effectively, the school manager's job is not over. This is because motivated educators can become stagnant and complacent. School managers need to support motivated staff members with advice, guidance and training if these teams are to continue to improve. Motivation deals with the needs and desires of human behaviour (Foster, 2005:176).

### **3.8 RETENTION**

School managers must be able to retain their staff members and learners. The mutual obligation from educators according to (Grobler et al., 2006:225) is:

- to work contracted hours;

- to do a quality piece of work;
- to deal honestly with clients;
- to be loyal and to guard the organisation's reputation;
- to be flexible and to go beyond one's job description, and
- to treat assets properly.

### **Educator expectations from the school manager**

According to (Grobler et al., 2006:226), the expectations are:

- to provide new educators with adequate induction and training;
- to ensure fairness in selection, appraisal promotion and redundancy procedures;
- to provide justice, fairness and consistency in the application of school rules and disciplinary procedures;.
- to be fair in the allocation of benefits and to provide job security;
- to allow time off to meet family and personal needs;
- to consult and to communicate on matters that affect them;

- to interfere minimally with educators in terms on how they do their jobs;
- to act in a personally supportive way towards employees;
- to recognise or reward special contribution or long service, and
- to provide a safe and congenial work environment (Grobler et al., 2006:225).

Retention of educators by school managers is a major focus of human resource efforts in schools.

### **3.8.1 Research hypothesis**

Hypotheses are projections of the possible outcomes of the research and are not biased pre-statements of conclusions. According to Fox (2001:32), the main purpose of the hypothesis is to act as a tentative solution to a problem or a tentative explanation for a phenomenon.

The research hypothesis states the anticipated relationship between the variables involved in the investigation. Furthermore, he states that the hypothesis directs the investigation by indicating the procedures to be followed and the type of data to be collected. Finally, it provides a basis for interpreting the results and drawing conclusions (Fox, 2001:206).

### **Hypothesis 1**

Null-hypothesis

Ho1: The Department of education should improve the management skills of school managers so that quality education can be implemented.

## **Hypothesis 2**

Null-hypothesis

Ho2: For the school to perform quality education, it needs human resource management. If the educators are satisfied by their job, they will do their best.

## **Hypothesis 3**

Null-hypothesis

Ho3: There must be a significant relationship between the culture of teaching and learning in schools and the culture of discipline – a quality that caters for diversity, staff motivation and staff retention.

Reviews of literature and information gathered through interview questions will support all or some of the above hypotheses or will reject some of them. Lupi and Tong (2001:165) maintain that hypotheses are never proved nor disproved; they are either supported or rejected by facts collected. This means that their acceptance or rejection is dependent on what facts ultimately reveal.

### **3.9 HUMAN RESOURCE CHALLENGES IN SCHOOLS**

For school managers to face human resource challenges successfully, they need to be moving forward, be purposeful, clear and directed, and yet to have a stable

environment which provides the base for this forward movement. The ability to maintain the balance between movement and stability, challenge and safety is the art of leadership, which is needed in schools.

Leadership is about moving forward, and having a sense of direction. It is about ensuring that the school does not get stuck in a rut or become stale and reactive (Mtshali, 2005:5). Good schools are aware of the school in relation to its immediate and broader context, and will constantly be seeking ways of making the contributions of the school more relevant and more purposeful (Ingersoll, 2001:56).

Leadership should be more visionary, looking forward to the future, and nudging and challenging people within the organisation to be alert and awake to the challenges. Being a good leader means making sure that all people in your organisation can share your vision, or build upon it, challenge it and make it their own. Vision building is essentially a collective activity, but requires that someone has a feeling for the road ahead and can steer the organisation accordingly (Mpofu, 2005:4).

More learners are unable to attain basic skills. The key to identifying these concealed problems is in understanding school climate. School climate is not a new concept in schools. However, over the past several decades, as more and more difficulties have required handling in the school setting, educational psychologists have become increasingly concerned with issues of climate (Naidoo, 2006:2).

The climate of the school is central to the educational mission of a school. Altering a school's internal climate can have a significant positive effect on the feeling of safety in the school community. This study will review the school climate in South African schools and will conclude that how schools are run is indirectly related to level of behavioural disruptions in schools.

For example, schools in which administration and faculties lack communication and do not work together to solve problems have lower levels of educator morale and higher levels of learner disorder. School managers have school climate concerns and fear violence. There is a need for an adequate physical structure to promote overall safety (Brunton, 2003:4). Furthermore, schools in which learners do not believe they belong and feel uncared for by school personnel experience higher levels of disorder.

Conversely, factors such as high expectations among school staff, learners, and parents for learners' achievements, orderly school and classroom environments, high morale among school staff and learners, active engagement with students, and positive social relationships among students positively impact school climate.

However, if there is too much movement and too much challenge, it is likely that there will be a loss of direction. Management is about holding the school together, establishing certainty, confidence and security and allowing for rest and reflection. It

is about making sure that the school, as a whole, is functioning effectively and achieving its vision (Nthite, 2006:2).

Some South African schools have been run with a focus on management rather than leadership. Some good principals are efficient bureaucrats – they complete forms on time, establish highly efficient structures which ensure that the school functions as smoothly as possible. Systems for covering for absent teachers, invigilation timetables, procedures for disciplinary problems and systems of reporting are all regarded as essential aspects of a well-run school (Very, 2004:21).

As a result, most schools were rigid in form and slow to respond to challenges. Some schools were under-emphasising the need to lead the school purposefully and with fluidity in relation to an ever-changing set of circumstances (Ledwaba, 2005:12). Given the changes in education, to solve human resource challenges in schools all stakeholders must have respect for one another, show openness and affirm the contributions made by other staff members (Foster, 2005:34).

Parents' meetings must be structured in such a way that maximum participation is facilitated, showing interest in others, transparency and accountability and, ultimately, the recognition that every person makes a valuable contribution which needs to be fostered (Keating, 2005:9).

The education authorities, school managers and educators have to devise ingenious strategies to introduce a culture of learning and a culture of discipline in

many schools where discipline is absent or under threat. The promotion of diversity and reduction of sexism is not enough in some schools (DoE, 2005:2).

Nthite (2006:6) states that the quality of public education from the educational authorities will provide fulfilment of the learner's constitutional rights of education. The rights of learners as "consumers" of education mean little in practice if the quality of the education product is not of high quality. The emphasis merely on some

rights of learners and the duties of the state is also unhealthy (Welch, 204:37).

According to Very (2004:25), school managers must ensure that:

- all stakeholders are operating smoothly;
- structures are in place to support forward movement;
- processes are contained; and
- the school is operating efficiently.

Naidoo (2006:187) is of the opinion that an important management function is that of "holding" the organisation by providing the framework to fulfil its purpose. Relevant management issues would be system, time, stress and conflict management:

- **System management**

Ensuring that the relevant structures and procedures are in place and functioning effectively;

- **Time management**

Prioritising tasks, setting time frames and keeping to them using time productively. For example, when to have meetings, and when to send memos out, etc.

- **Stress management**

Producing a working environment that does not cause unnecessary stress; and

- **Conflict management**

Developing a mechanism to openly and productively to deal with conflict.

School managers need to be aware that leadership and management are about balance. It's about having a picture of the whole, but attending to the parts, moving forward at the right time and reflecting when it is time to reflect. School managers as leaders have to ensure that everyone is 'on board'. Everybody must be aware of the direction (Dlodlo, 2004:1).

All of the relevant constitutional rights must necessarily be limited in a specific manner in the field of education – otherwise an orderly school environment will be

impossible despite the wealth of human rights. The main challenges are based on the rights of learners in South African schools (Narratimore, 2002:11).

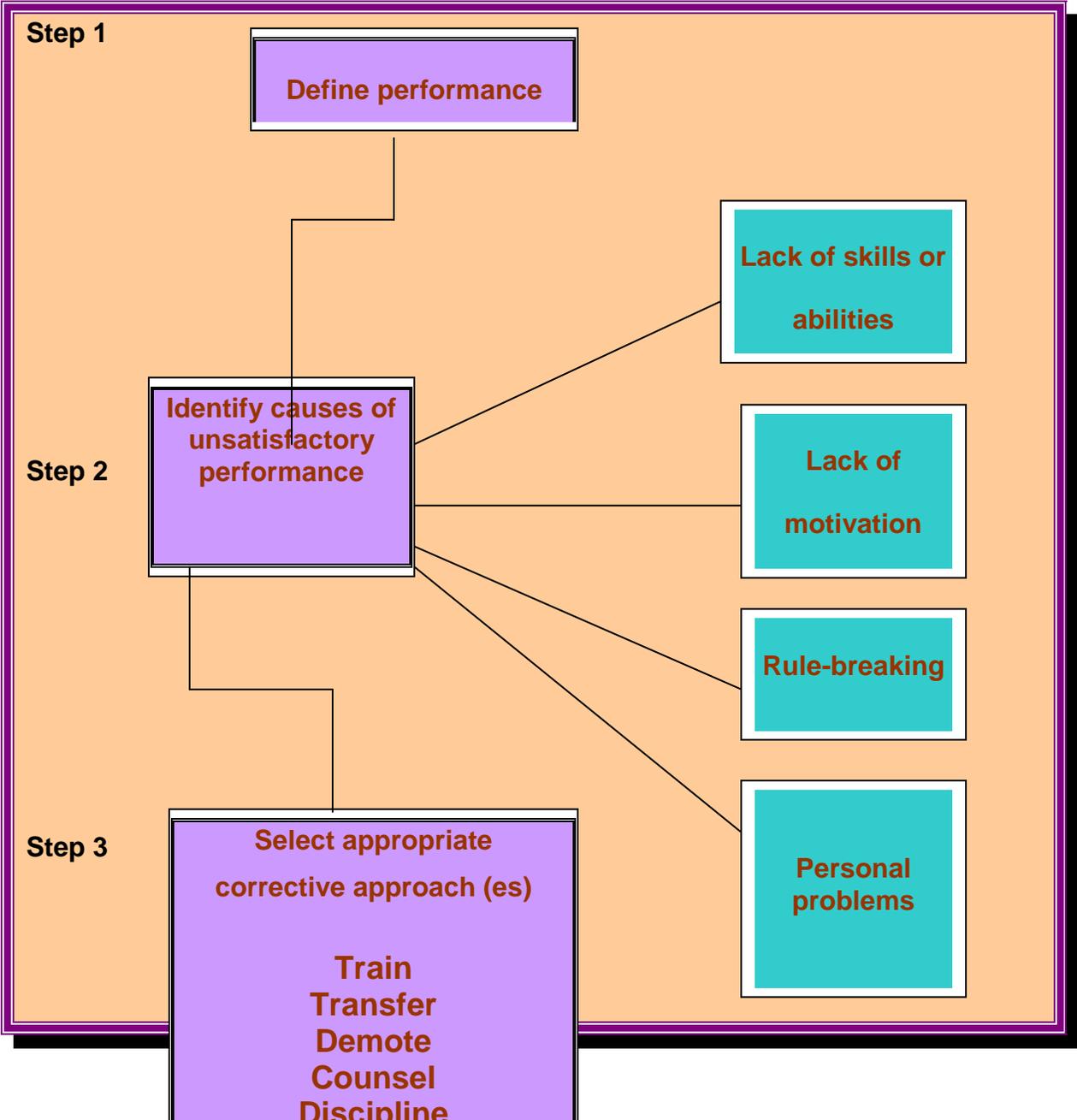
“When children are the victims of violence at schools, not only it is an assault on their physical and psychological well-being; it is also an attack on their constitutionally enshrined right to safety” (Matomela, 2006:12).

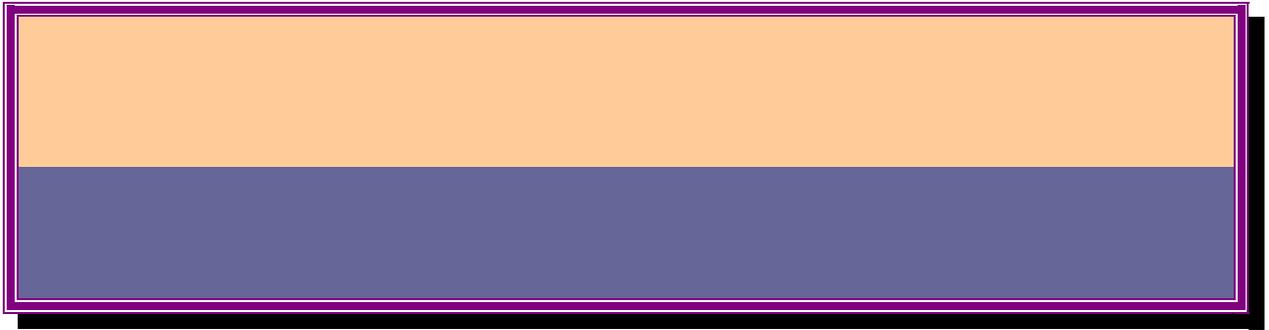
In South African schools, education must become more inclusive of other cultures. “School managers need to insure that our curricular, learners, support staff, administration and all schools in South Africa reflect the diversity and richness of the community, the state and the world” (Dlamini, 2001:108).

“They need to decide whether to embrace the change or attempt to protect vestiges of an educational system that no longer meet society’s needs” (Pretorius, 2005:23). Safety in the schools involves much more than metal detectors and disaster plans.

Although such catastrophe preparation is necessary, there are practices that put children’s everyday safety at risk. Naturally, all children require physical protection. Safety issues are clear-cut and usually well-addressed in schools (Naidoo, 2006:2).

*Figure 3.2 reflected steps to be followed by the school manager to correct unsatisfactory performance.*





**Figure 3.2: A model for analysing and correcting unsatisfactory performance.**  
**Adapted from: Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, 2006:452.**

For professional development, educators must work together in teams. Team members may come from one subject or learning areas they have basis of similar practice, share similar problems and ask similar questions. The diversity of the teaching corps regarding their training, background, needs, experience, knowledge and skills is fertile ground for change and improvement (Alt, 2003:36).

### **3.10 DISCIPLINE**

The primary objective of disciplinary action is to motivate the educators and learners to comply with the school's performance standards. An educator or the learner receives discipline after it had failed to meet some obligation of the school. The failure to perform as expected could be directly related to the task performed by the educator or learner or to the rules and regulations that define proper conduct of work (SASA).

The introduction of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) into South African education necessitates an increased emphasis on the accountability of school managers to ensure that quality teaching and learning take place in South African public schools.

Sometimes some educators change their behaviour for a short time and the manager may need to discipline him or her again in the near future. The proper administration of discipline will not only improve the educators' behaviour but will also minimise future disciplinary challenges through a positive principal-educator relationship (Cai & Fink, 2002:80).

Discipline for poor task performance should not be applied while the educator is newly appointed in that school. Nor should educators be disciplined for problems beyond their control, for example failure to meet output standards caused by a lack of resources or strike. Discipline should be applied only when it has been determined that the educator is the cause of unsatisfactory performance.

It is important in disciplinary matters that the school manager must be fair. The facts upon which to take action must exist. The school manager's actions must be justified by the established facts. The school manager must not use incorrect discipline, for example: threats, harassment, intimidation and beating (Buchel, 2006:4).

Discipline helps to increase mutual respect and trust between the school manager and the educators, between the educators and the learners and between the school manager and the learners. Improper administered discipline in schools can create challenges such as low morale, resentment and ill-will between the school manager and the staff, parents and learners (Grobler et al., 2006:453).

The school manager can use preventive discipline. In this discipline, the staff, parents and learners are managed in a way that prevents behaviour needing discipline. He or she must create a school climate conducive to high levels of job satisfaction and productivity (Brunton, 2003:32).

Brown (2004:143) recommends that the school manager can also use positive discipline to correct the unsatisfactory behaviour through support, respect and people-oriented leadership. The school manager must help prevent staff harassment. Improved employee behaviour is long-lived when discipline is administered without revenge, abuse or vindictiveness.

The staff must be willing to accept personal responsibility for their work problems and have management's confidence and support. The school manager must discuss the performance problems with the staff members, particularly the educators.

Section 8 of the South African Schools Act stipulates that for discipline, all schools must draw up a code of conduct. Although the principal and educators are responsible for the daily discipline in the school, the governing body has a duty to ensure that the school adopts a code of conduct to discipline learners. The code of conduct is subject to the existing legislation. A school's code of conduct provides educators with a degree of authority which they need to allow teaching and education to take place in an orderly way (SASA).

The SASA prescribes how a code of conduct must be drawn up and the Constitution serves as a basis for the content of the code of conduct. It must promote positive discipline and development and not be focused on punishment. It must include a description of the type of behaviour that is not acceptable and acceptable and must indicate what the school's reaction to such behaviour will be. To discipline the staff and learners, school managers must confront the facts of the current reality. They must manage with an honest and diligent effort to determine the truth of the situation. The right decisions must become evident. The school manager must reach the consensus on a uniform disciplinary structure that is, in spirit and practice, form, fair, consistent and positive (Lemmer, 2000:94). For school improvement to occur there has to be a commitment to changing 'the way we do things' for the better. Discipline in schools must be used for school improvement.

The school manager must be able to communicate to the learners and the staff what is wrong and provide a good model of good behaviour. Assertive discipline is premised on the notion that the school manager's attitude influences his/her behaviour that in turn influences learners' behaviour. Good school managers know when to instil good behaviour. A manager taking calm but firm control shows assertiveness by calmly enforcing agreed-upon rules of conduct. They do not express an intention to hurt, but want to help (Mazibuko, 2004:14).

The emphasis in assertive discipline is on classroom control strategy that places educators in charge in the classroom in a human and yet firm manner. It is a system that allows school managers to invoke positive and negative consequences calmly

and fairly. It is a technique for dealing with difficult learners and teaching the class as a whole who behave.

*Table 3.2 shows how discipline can be used constructively by the school manager and educators.*

<b>LEARNER'S EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>PRINCIPAL'S DIAGNOSIS</b>	<b>INTERVENTIONS AND SETTING OF GOALS</b>
The learner is out of control	An opportunity for learning and for building relationships	Talk to the learner in a calm manner; be patient.
Learner is crying	Talk about something different	Calm the learner by talking to him/her
Learner shouting at an educator	Talk to the educator and ignore the learner	Do not react to the learner's body language and emotional speech
The learner is rude	Develop a relationship of trust by listening to the learner's account.	Get the correct account. What happened and where?
The learner talks back to the teacher	Words spoken will indicate the root of the problem	Do not focus only on unacceptable behaviour of the learner

Learner wants to fight, disturbing other learners	Be cool, calm and maintain order.	Do not judge and jump to conclusions. Listen to the learner
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**Table 3.2 Discipline as a learning opportunity**

**Source: Adapted from Buchel, 2006:10.**

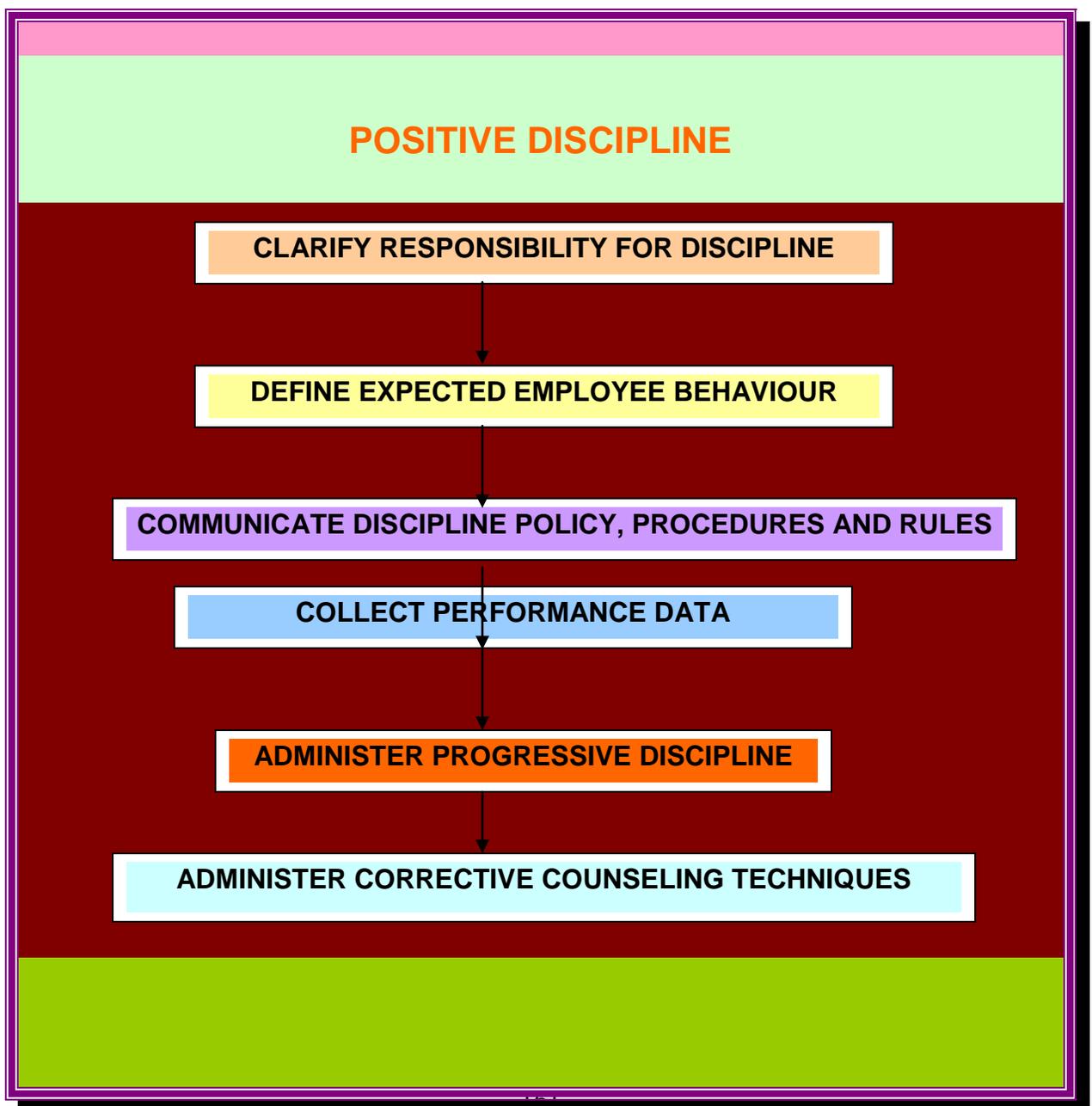
To maintain discipline in schools, a code of conduct as prescribed by Section 8 (2) of the South African Schools Act (SASA) must be aimed at establishing disciplined learners with characteristics such as self-control, responsibility, obedience and excellence. Kilberloe (2003:16) is of the opinion that a purposeful school environment with all activities within the school environment are in accord with the vision of the school. The school manager must be dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of discipline in his or her school.

The school manager must be dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of discipline in his or her school. A central part of every disciplinary process is the definition of behaviour that the school manager expects from the staff and the learners. Disciplining the educator for unsatisfactory performance is imprudent unless the manager has clearly defined the good performance. The manager must communicate the disciplinary policies, procedures and rules (Cai & Fink, 2002:70).

The school manager must provide the educators and the learners with written principles of behaviour. Good communication is of the utmost importance in maintaining satisfactory levels of performance (Brunton, 2003:47). The School

Management Team (SMT) including the school manager is responsible for telling the staff precisely what is expected of them and for ensuring that all standards, rules and regulations are clearly communicated (Buchel, 2006:94). The educator must take specific steps to teach learners how to behave acceptably in the classroom.

*Figure 3.3 reflects that positive discipline is recommended in school management.*



### **Figure 3. 3: Steps in the process of positive discipline**

**Adapted from Grobler, Warnich, Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, 2006: 455.**

The school manager can communicate his or her expectations by the following communication methods:

- educator handbooks;
- orientation programmes;
- trade union contact;
- school rules and the Code of Conduct distributed in writing to learners and educators;
- rules and regulations posted on bulletin boards, and
- school manager-educator discussions on job standards and school policies and procedure (Choorana, 2004:65).

A disciplinary dismissal occurs when the learner or educator is dismissed by the Head of Department. It occurs when an educator has committed a very serious offence, has repeatedly violated rules and regulations or has shown a consistent inability to meet performance expectations. Any discharge should be carried out fairly and just. identifying learners' personal needs and show understanding and willing to help, continually striving to build an atmosphere of trust.

### **3.11 STEREOTYPES AND PREJUDICES**

A stereotype is a fixed, distorted generalisation about a member of a group. Stereotyping that stems from the primary dimensions of diversity - such as race, gender, age, physical abilities/qualities or sexual orientation, and clinging to negative stereotypes about people different from ourselves, results in prejudice. Prejudice consists of processing our stereotypes in such a way as to reinforce one's own sense of superiority to the members of that group (Cayen, 2002:174).

The identification of cultural stereotypes is an important key to cross-cultural communication. Often stereotypes are totally wrong, and in other cases stereotypes are oversimplifications of preconceived notions (Cai & Wilson, 200:320 & Schulze, 2003:15). Stereotyping and prejudice against diverse groups have been institutionalised in schools in South Africa. Therefore, one of the functions of the school manager is to recognise and eradicate both stereotyping and prejudice (Very, 2004:64).

Some school managers in schools spend most of their time handling conflict situations (Choorana, 2004:25). This time could be spent in other areas of creativity. They need to be prepared for an actual conflict or an attempt to resolve conflicts. Unresolved conflicts are a major factor in about fifty percent of voluntary school termination (Dana, 2001:22).

Stereotypes result in conflicts at schools. This results in loss of work time, loss of productivity, loss of morale, loss of profit and sometimes loss of school managers, educators and learners. Conflict can produce positive or negative results (Cai, &

Wilson, 2000:315). In school management, there must be a purposeful intervention by the school manager to stimulate and encourage beneficial or helpful conflict and to resolve, suppress, or prevent harmful conflict (Hertzog, 2001:27).

Stereotypes sometimes surface when disciplining learners from different cultures. Learners need discipline and routine. Educators need to maintain authority more skilfully. Some school managers and educators are not capable of controlling the learners effectively (Calitz, 2002:43).

It is also believed that some learners do not internalise, live up to or respect moral values. A large proportion of educators and school managers are experiencing difficulties with the implementation of equal education, with the result that others had developed a negative attitude towards it, which they often then pass on to the learners they teach (Shonosani, 2006:12).

Although people of one culture do share certain characteristics, stereotypes are likely to cause unrealistic expectations in interpersonal relationships. Probably some of the most damaging stereotypes are culturally based. Some situations in schools are affected by skin colour.

Culturally based stereotypes are very sensitive and have a high potential for conflict situations. One of the best ways to avoid the problem of stereotyping and

unintentional slights is to make an effort at approaching all people as human beings (Arai et al., 2001:447).

It is a mental choice which helps one to be more mindful of the similarities among people, regardless of race or colour. It also helps to build a positive attitude towards people of other cultures. Mayer (2004:5) commented that the continuities or similarities among cultures are more intriguing than the differences.

### **3.11.1 School managers to promote equality**

Schools are the renewal agents of a democratic society. The school manager is the responsible agent that ensures that renewal is continuous. He or she models this behaviour by insisting that the value is fundamental to the operation of the school. He or she models quality education to the educators by trusting them to develop the curriculum, disciplinary codes and programmes.

It is modelled through communication that demonstrates openness to another's ideas and by correcting disrespectful language in educators and learners in school meetings and in teaching and learning in classroom settings (Cayen, 2002:179). If school managers do not concentrate on respect for human dignity, no other schools can promote democratic values, nor can the schools educate learners who will desire to contribute to the society in an unselfish manner.

The renewal of democracy is the task of each stakeholder, who must redefine what it means to live in a democratic school (Harris & Kumra, 2000:613). Christians

(2001:140) states that renewal is more than teaching about democracy. It is the kindling of a spirit in the young people that they have a responsibility to shape the evolving direction of their democracy, to build a democracy more inclusive, more just, fairer, more equitable, more responsible, and more open than their parents (Brunton, 2003:99).

The school managers are playing a role by leading the educators and the learners in discovering the meaning of democracy. Once the meaning has been discovered, schools automatically become the renewal agency in the school community. They create people united in solidarity, people bound to each other who are willing to experience the bumpy ride of diversity, the pain of debate, and the struggle to learn to live together in a society open to cultural differences (Mthembu, 2001:23).

Cai and Fink (2002:82) state that teaching learners tolerance involves active participation of all school stakeholders. A question to be asked by every school manager in school is:

- How can learners understand the value and responsibility if they do not witness responsibility echoed in the lives of educators and school managers?

Teaching unity in school is the responsibility of the school where all stakeholders participate in the activity of enhancing the environment and contribution to each other's welfare. This is the task that must be collaboratively planned and engaged in by everybody within the school (Okumbo, 2001:31).

However, Burns (2000:3) mentions that there are various characteristics in which learners from different cultures are similar in the school, namely:

- they are all children of human beings,
- they are more or less of the same chronological age,
- they have a similar degree of immaturity, and
- they have similar drives and expectations.

School managers have to acknowledge learners and educators as human beings who are unique individuals as well as members of cultural, ethnic and/or racial groups (Burger, 2005:18). All learners as human beings undergo similar developmental stages. It should be taken into account that the rate at which learners' progress through the one stage to the next differs among different cultures and within cultures (Dlamini, 2001:104).

In South African schools, learners are exposed to the diversity of cultures and values in order to function in today's world and help shape the learners' future. They need to learn about other cultures in order to understand themselves. According to Bottery (2004:32), education serves as a bridge to successful learning experiences about people, places, ideas and values that seem so different from their cultural understanding.

Educating learners to accept other cultures as equal to their own is very challenging to school managers, an important and a very serious process. It must be done with great care. It is the responsibility of schools in South Africa to teach learners the way they have to socialise as mates in mixed classrooms (Buchel, 2006:12).

It is the transmission of commitment by the educator to the solidarity of free learners to be bound together and to influence each other's destiny. It should be borne in mind that learners in schools are drawn from different cultural heritages and are mixed together from different family backgrounds.

### **3.11.2 School managers as mentors**

School managers in Vryheid district were beset by many challenges in the schools they are managing. They were to be exemplary to all stakeholders in the school by being fair and just to everyone without favouritism. Rules of natural justice must be practiced daily (Very, 2006:4). The school manager as a leader needs to be skilled in mentoring educators and learners.

He or she needs to mentor all the stakeholders by providing opportunities for them to experience and accept the diversity of people from different cultures (Choorana, 2004:45). This can be accomplished through informal or formal diversity training. When people process diversity in a safe place, a way is opened for all stakeholders to develop new perspectives and close interpersonal relationships. In turn, conflict is more easily resolves in such a school (Vilakazi, 2003:1).

It is his or her responsibility to teach the stakeholders to empathise with others and to look for a perspective other than their own and to suspend judgment. The perception of other people from another culture is a major issue in a multicultural work place.

Schulze (2003:53) states that as educators and learners begin to understand the issues involved in cross-cultural relationships, stronger relationships are formed in the manager's office. As a leader in an organisation, the school manager must emphasise similarities among the staff and learners rather than differences.

According to Lupi and Tong (2001:163), when confronting differences, as a leader she/he has an opportunity to help both the educators and learners to understand and to appreciate the value of individual differences, thereby creating a sense of community. Learners need to experience the diversity among cultures within their schools. In some situations, diversity may be attributed to discrimination.

Discrimination in schools is often a volatile issue that needs to be dealt with. It is the task of the school manager to address the conflict before the issue of discrimination escalates (Christians, 2001:299). He/she must develop conflict resolution skills and positive diversity skills. The more managers practice these skills, the better they become at dealing with bias towards educators, parents and learners (Lupi & Tong, 2001:163).

Cross-cultural school managers need to know and understand the communication process in order to express themselves effectively. Communication skills assist people in presenting ideas, in settling conflicts and in mentoring others (Bergeron, 2000:38). Harris and Kumra (2000:4) indicate the importance of soft skills such as communication and negotiation in the portfolio of international managers.

While defining intercultural communication, Krasch (2002:275) states that “bridges of tolerance” are necessary between diverse cultures. The main obstacles to building bridges of tolerance are the presence of prejudice and discrimination. Mor Barak (2000:345) states that school managers have a responsibility to mentor people from different cultures.

### **3.12 SYNTHESIS**

The school manager together with the governing body must recruit, select and appoint people who qualify for the posts. Quality teaching and learning is based on effective human resource management.

The Central Government provides a national framework for school policy, but administrative responsibility lies with the provinces. Power is further devolved to grassroots level via the school managers, school governing bodies and school management teams, which have a significant say in the smooth running of schools.

*Chapter four is about research design and methodology.*

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one provided an orientation on the study about human resource challenges besetting school managers in school management. Chapters two provided the theoretical framework from the literature survey regarding the human resource challenges besetting school managers. Chapter three focused on recruitment and selection of the staff with regard to the appointment and retention of educators as school managers' challenge in schools

*Chapter four outlines the research design and methodology. It does that by focusing on research approach and methodology, qualitative research: overview and relevance, data collection methods and strategies, research protocol and ethical considerations, pilot research, main research and data analysis and interpretation. The chapter ends up with synthesis.*

#### 4.2 THE INTERVIEW AS AN INSTRUMENT

In this study, the researcher serves as an 'instrument' through which data was collected. As a skilled researcher, she used responses of the participants as a research instrument to guide data collection, probing for further information as needed for depth and clarity. Although the interviews were guided by a tentative

interview guides, the interviewer identified proper balance of structure and flexibility.

According to Brakes (2004:8), the reliability of an interview is influenced by four variables namely, the researcher (interviewer), the interviewee (respondent), the measuring instrument, and the research context. Here the reliability was enhanced by the interviewer.

As the image of the interviewer could affect the reactions of the interviewee, special care was taken not to prompt specific reactions from the interviewee. No leading questions asked, so that the measuring instrument itself would allow ample freedom for the interviewee to express herself / himself.

With reference to the research context, the interviews were all scheduled to take place within a month to ensure that spatial temporal factors remain the same for the interviewees. In addition, each interviewee agreed on a venue for the interview, thus rendering both the interviewer and interviewee comfortable with the interview setting.

The format, timing and sequence of questions changed as the data collection process continued. The researcher maintained control of the interview but there was sufficient flexibility to respond to important content responses and general non-verbal cues from the participant. Most interviews began with open-ended questions

and eventually narrowed the focuses as clarifying questions were asked and themes emerged (Mahabeer 2003:19).

Morgan (2004:67) distinguishes four master roles that could be performed by researchers, namely: full participant, participant-as-observer, observer-as-participant, and full observer. The researcher chose the role of “participant-as-observer” and will thus interacted closely enough with participants to obtain an insider view, but did not participate in activities that made her a true member of the group.

The researcher’s work, involved the constant entry into schools from which the participants were selected, and therefore, she was able to obtain first-hand data on the participants’ activities within the schooling system. The interviewer began by asking an open question. Therefore, judgment was used in probing areas on interest with further open-ended questions, which was designed to assess the interviewee’s approach to challenges besetting them in schools. Each interview lasted for about one hour.

The researcher as a self starter and an independent thinker conducted the research successfully. This helped to promote empathy and enabled the researcher “*to take and understand, thus being non-judgmental about the attitude, position, feelings and world-views of others.*” To achieve the aims, the non-directive interviewing

techniques including semi-structured interviews were used. The responses of interviewees were not guided. Instead, possible questions were prepared according to the items of the interview questions and were utilised to stimulate responses.

In this study, special care was taken not to prompt a reaction from the interviewee. If the interviewer refrains from asking leading questions, he/she provided the opportunity for the respondents to express themselves freely. In this study, the bias of the researcher was further limited, as the response of each interviewee were analysed according to the items and constructs of the interview questions.

#### **4.3 DATA-COLLECTION METHOD**

The researcher visited schools which were former black, former white, former Indian, former coloured, private schools and a school for Learners with Special Educational Needs. She interviewed the participants and simultaneously, completed participant observation and artifact collection.

The researcher in each school interviewed the school managers (Group 1), deputy principals (Group 2), the head of departments (Group 3), and lastly two post level one educators in each school (Group 4). There were five participants in seven selected schools. The researcher collected, analysed, and interpreted the data of each group before further interviews were conducted with the next group of participants.

#### **4.3.1 Permission from the authorities**

With the aim of administering interviews to school managers and educators, it was required to first request permission. Three months before the start of the field work, a written request to research in the selected schools was sent to the Zululand Regional Director of education in KwaZulu-Natal. The letter was requesting permission to conduct research in Vryheid District and highlighted the aims of the study. It also revealed the importance of the research for South African education. Another copy of the letter was hand-delivered to Vryheid District Director's office for approval.

Annexure A is the Organogram of the Vryheid District. All circuits were involved in the study. The permission to conduct research was granted by the District Director (Annexure B) for the intended research to be undertaken. The researcher gave the Research Questionnaire (Annexure C) to the District Director for approval. The permission from the District Director was personally delivered by the researcher to the Circuit Manager to request his or her approval.

Permission was granted by the Circuit manager (Annexure D). Another letter was written and hand delivered by the researcher to school managers requesting permission from them and the teaching staff (Annexure E). The copy of approval from the District Director (Annexure B), a copy of the Interview Questions (Annexure B) and Permission from the Circuit Manager (Annexure D) and a letter to schools (Annexure D) was delivered to school managers requesting school managers and

the teaching staff to be participants in the research. Their letters were accompanied by a copy of the letter of the Statement of Consent from the researcher (Annexure F). The schools and staff members were not selected at random. Those who were willing to participate in research were requested to sign and to return the Statement of Consent to the researcher.

The school manager gave the Interview Schedule (Annexure G) informing the participants about people who were requested to participate in research. A letter informing them of a nature of the research and the anonymity and confidentiality of the questionnaire was attached to interview questions. The respondents were informed of the vital importance of completing and returning the biographical information expeditiously.

Arrangements for administering the interviews with the respondents in schools were made in respect of the date and time of delivery of conducting interviews. Finally and importantly too, the findings and recommendations were made available to respondents and the Directors, if so requested.

#### **4.4 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

McGoogan (2002:30) points out that qualitative research involves an inductive, reductionalistic approach whereby theory is generated by and formulated from the data obtained by the researcher. Holliday (2002:31) refers to qualitative research as “a naturalistic inquiry.

It is the use of non-interfering data-collection strategies to discover the natural flow of events and processes and how participants interpret them. In most cases, qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions".

This inductive process generates a descriptive synthesis of the data. Description provides the "firm foundation upon which qualitative inquiry rests" (Walford 2001:31). Hence, qualitative research, as a descriptive enquiry, provides respondents with the freedom to express spontaneously how they regard their life-world.

McGoogan (2002:32) outlines qualitative research methodology as a "tradition which focuses on the in-depth, the detail, the process and the context of schooling which offers the educationist a valid and worthwhile research method". Holiday (2002:4) adds that qualitative research "invokes the need to discover as much about how the research subjects, feelings about the information they provide."

Importantly, the qualitative research methodology will systematically provide answers to questions related to the problem statement of a research study. Qualitative research in this study is about increasing the repertoire of options for educational activity by attending to the 'seen but unnoticed' challenges of daily life in school management in schools in Vryheid district.

Very (2004:13) reveals that using qualitative research approach; the researcher will explore the phenomenon under investigation about human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district, KwaZulu-Natal. A description of some of the differences between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies will serve to explain the rationale for using the qualitative approach in this research study.

According to Lamina (2001:20), qualitative research involves methods of data collection and analysis that are qualitative. Bestwell (2004:87), is of the opinion that qualitative research focuses on quality, a term referring to the essence or ambience of something. In the qualitative approach, observations are collected and reported in everyday language (Creswell, 2003:8).

Qualitative research contributes to the theory, educational practice, policy making and social consciousness. In this study, interviews will be used to collect data in a less technical everyday language.

*Conceptions of social reality is reflected in Figure 4.1.*

DIMENSIONS OF COMPARISON	OBJECTIVIST	SUBJECTIVIST
RESEARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Experimental or experimental validation of theory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The research for meaningful relationships and the discovery of their consequences for action.</li> </ul>
METHODOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Abstraction of reality especially through mathematical models and quantitative analysis.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The representation of reality for purposes of comparison. Analysis of language and meaning.</li> </ul>

**Figure 4.1: Conceptions of social reality**

**Adapted from Holiday, 2002:4.**

Holiday highlighted the comparison between research and methodology. These methodologies were viewed as an interrelated set of assumptions about the social world which has a strong philosophical, ideological and epistemological dimension to. These methodologies were viewed as an interrelated set of assumptions about

the social world which has a strong philosophical, ideological and epistemological dimension to it.

Wet and Warford (2006:87) identify the following features regarding qualitative approach:

- Research is conducted in a natural setting of social actors;
- It is a research approach that is often inductive in its approach, resulting in the generalisation of new hypotheses and theories;
- A qualitative researcher is seen as the main instrument in the research process;
- Emphasis is on the actor's perspective;
- A main concern is to understand social action in terms of the specific context rather than an attempt at generalising on some theoretical-population; and
- A qualitative researcher is seen as the main instrument in the research process.

According to Dreyer (2003:101), many researchers were recognising the benefits of using qualitative approaches for inquiry in the classroom. She suggested that the predominance of quantitative descriptive research reinforced the marginality of qualitative interpretive studies. The predominance informed only a limited context and depth of understanding.

In ontological perspective, qualitative research is underpinned and guided by the principles of interpretivist philosophy. It rejects positivist thinking and refuses to reduce human behaviour to a mere number (Warford, 2001:85). Table 4.1 highlights the differences between qualitative and quantitative approach.

These methodologies were viewed as an interrelated set of assumptions about the social world which has a strong philosophical, ideological and epistemological dimension to it.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH
In general, the focus is on the individual or a number of individuals, probably not more than fifty.	The focus is on large numbers of people.
The aim of the researcher is to try and understand the individual/s in his or her life world.	The aim of the researcher is to try and discover laws and principles of general validity.
The approach is inductive.	The approach is deductive.
The researcher will enter into the life-world of the person/s being studied.	The researcher will remain an objective 'outsider' during the research.
The research design is flexible and research questions can be reformulated as the study proceeds.	The research design is inflexible, research questions are not reformulated once empirical investigation has started.
Research methods generally include interviews, observation, projection techniques, case studies, and etcetera.	Research methods generally include questionnaires.
Results are analysed and presented by means of 'words'.	Results are analysed and presented by means of statistics.

**Table 4.1: Differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods**

**Adapted from: Warford, 2001:85.**

According to Warford (2001:85), the above exposition provides for the relevant characteristics, of each of the research methods, which the researcher needs to be aware of, and have knowledge of, in the selection of an apt research method for the study.

Thus keeping the above characteristics in mind, in relation to qualitative and quantitative research, it is important at this point, to consider the adoption of an appropriate and relevant research method for this study.

The indication is that they encompass more than techniques of data collection or presentation, as the different assumptions about the nature of the world, affect not only the research approach or research methods used, but also the purpose of the research and the roles of the researcher. The difference between qualitative and quantitative research is clearly summarised, and is captured above.

It is important at this point to focus on the difference between the two research methods indicated, namely; qualitative and quantitative research methods. However, it is also conveyed that the most obvious distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is the form of data presentation (Mouton, 2001:54).

#### **4.4.1 Ethnographic interviews**

The researcher chose to use the ethnographic method to collect data. Ethnography is a specialized type of field study and one specific sub-type of qualitative research that involves researchers' extensive immersion in the setting and phenomenon under investigation.

Holiday (2002: 34) defines ethnography as the branch of anthropology that deals with the scientific description of individual human societies. Johnson and Christenson (2000: 29) state that ethnography literally means writing about people, that is, documenting the interactions of participants, such as, their attitudes, values, norms, practices, patterns of interaction, perspectives, meanings, interpretations, and languages.

The ethnographic interview, as a research technique, will involve the gathering of data through direct verbal interaction between the researcher and the interviewees. The main advantage is that researchers will be free to modify the sequence of questions, change and explain or add wording. If necessary, the researcher will pause at intervals and ask the interviewee to recap or to summarise response.

In this study, the open-ended interview will be the primary data-collection strategy. Warford (2001:84) states that interviews can be perceived as data collection

devices which attempt to capture the varying perspectives of participants to standardised questions that intend to be minimally interventional.

Mouton (2001: 148) states that ethnographic research aims to provide an in-depth description of the participants' perspectives on practices that are embedded in their real life-worlds. According to Gummesson (2000: 132), the ethnographic method is concerned with descriptions of social patterns and researchers learn from the participants about their culture and will need to exhibit empathy, open-mindedness and sensitivity. The researcher made systematic observations and conducted in-depth interviews.

McGoogan (2002:33) adds that ethnographic interviews are “open-response questions to obtain data from participant meanings – how individuals conceive of their world and how they explain or ‘make sense’ of the important events in their lives.”

It should be noted that Johnson and Christensen (2000:144) state that during qualitative interviews “in-depth information about the participant’s thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations, and feelings about the topic can be obtained.

Furthermore, in ethnographic interview, the participants are afforded the opportunity to try and articulate their own perceptions directly to the researcher. At all times the researcher conducted the interviews in a friendly manner, but remained impartial to the interviewees' responses. The researcher made sure that she is familiar with the

questions to be asked during the interviews so that she could read the questions to them without error or stumbling, in a natural, unforced manner.

The questions were addressed to the respondent in the exact words indicated in the interview schedule. During the interviews, the researcher allowed for sufficient time for the respondent to answer. Probes used were neutral so as far not to affect the nature of the participant's response.

The researcher ended the interviews in a positive manner and also respected the respondents. She focused on the main features of qualitative interviewing, namely that many features of the participant's everyday life-world was shared (Achilles and Pate-Bain, 2002:25).

#### **4.4.2 Purpose of the ethnographic interview**

Bryman (2001:13) states that the purpose of ethnographic interview as it may be used is:

- for gathering data which have a direct bearing on the research objectives through the sampling of respondents' opinions;

- as an explanatory device to help identify emergent patterns, and
- in conjunction with other methods in a study, such as participant observation, to follow up unexpected research results, and to explain the motivations of respondents and their reasons for responding as they did.

For purposes of this study the researcher decided to use structured and open-ended questions during interviews. The open-ended questions started with a broad question or a statement and then narrowed down to more specific questions.

#### **4.4.3 Shortcomings of ethnographic interviewing**

For the data collection and accurate research conclusions, the researcher took note of the following shortcomings of the ethnographic interview listed by (Holiday, 2002:45).

- Factors such as interviewer's and interviewees' mutual interest, social life, and control differed from one interview to another.
- Some respondents were feeling uneasy and adopted avoidance tactics when they felt that the questioning was too deep or too complicated.
- Many of the objectives and meanings of the open-ended questions that were clear to one participant were vague to another.

- The interviewing procedures are based on the assumption that the interviewees have insight into the cause of their behaviour, which may not be so.
- There may be a lack of satisfactory recording of respondents' replies during the course of the interview by the researcher.
- Other respondents may not feel free to talk while they know that what they say will be recorded during the interview.
- It is impossible in everyday life to bring every aspect of the encounter during the interview within complete rational control.

The second data collecting technique was participant observation. The main reason for the use of participant observation was gathering more data to cross-validate the data collected during ethnographic interviews. Together with artefact collection, participant observation completed the qualitative cycle of exploration.

#### **4.4.4 Participant observation**

During interviews in schools about human resource challenges besetting principals in schools in Vryheid district, KwaZulu-Natal, the researcher observed the behaviour of principals in schools investigated.

During the ethnographic interviews, the researcher made use of participant observation, described by Bottery (2004:43) as *“that process by means of which researchers establish a link between reality and their theoretical assumptions”*.

Jacobs (2000:7) defines participant observation as “an active process which includes muted cues: facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice and other unverballed social interactions which suggest the subtle meaning of language”.

Mokoena (2003:276) summarises participant observation strategy as a “prolonged field residence to obtain and corroborate salient observations of different perspective recorded in field notes and summary observations”. Monks (2002:311) adds that participant observation “makes the researcher into an active participant in the events being studied”.

Therefore, the researcher had an immersive experience in the real life-world of the participants and field-based settings. As such, it implied that the researcher holistically committed his feelings, thoughts and emotions to the research study.

Gummesson (2000:29-30) and Johnson and Christensen (2000:147) state that participant observation aims to reveal behavioural patterns of the research participants that enabled the researcher to collect additional information about the participants, as “people do not always do what they say they do”.

Hence, this technique provided the researcher with some unusual, unobstructive opportunities for collecting data, especially the non-verbal manifestations, an important qualitative area of information.

During the interviews she did not require respondents to do anything out of the ordinary that may affect their behaviour or their responses. The researcher focused on how she directly observed the participants in terms of their feelings, thoughts and intentions, facial expressions, approval or disapproval, general thinking styles, frame of reference and organisation of their words.

The undertaken participant observation was spontaneous and occurred in a non-structured manner, and will simultaneously allow for the researcher to record observed events.

During participant observation, the researcher adopted a passive role to ensure the minimum contamination of the setting. A deliberate distance was maintained between the researcher and the participants. The researcher kept a logbook to detail the observations.

The researcher arrived very early in the morning to observe each of the seven schools, noting punctuality, cleanliness, their attendance of classes and how they maintain discipline. The reactions of the participants when responding to questions were observed. The school managers, the staff and learners were also observed outside the classroom.

The observation in schools focused on a number of aspects, namely; the school environment, time spent on teaching and learning, school resources, communication and school and classroom discipline practices.

#### **4.5 ARTEFACT COLLECTION**

The researcher investigated personal and official documents in a non-interactive manner. Personal documents were investigated to describe individuals' actions, experiences and beliefs - for example diaries. The researcher asked to see official documents at the school she will visit.

These documents took the form of memos, minutes of meetings, working papers and drafts or proposals that may provide an internal perspective of the organisation (Mcgoogan, 2002:32). It was hoped that these documents provided clues about the leadership and management skills of the school managers in South African schools.

The researcher also investigated documents which were produced for the parents, including newsletters, programme brochures, school governing body reports, public statements by the school manager and school releases. The latter suggested the official perspective on the phenomenon under investigation.

During the analysis of artefacts, the researcher questioned who used them, how they were used, where they were used, and the purposes of their use. The interpretation of artefact meanings was corroborated with ethnographic interview and participant observation.

#### **4.6 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS**

Thirty five respondents participated in this study and the main criterion was that they should be from all types of schools in Vryheid district, namely from junior, senior and post-primary schools, private school and special schools for Learners with Special Learning Needs (LSEN).

Some of these schools had mixed staff and learners; some had only one cultural group while others had educators who are not South African citizens. It was investigated how school managers manage diversity. Schools with all racial groups were investigated.

Some schools such as former black schools had staff members who were of a single ethnic group. In schools like these, educators were selected according to their post levels. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.

Selecting a small sample of participants for a research project had the advantage of enabling researchers to record detailed, quality responses. Therefore, the researcher limited the scope of this study to a small number of participants, namely thirty-five (N=35). The aim of this qualitative study was to generate further research on a qualitative or quantitative basis.

To ensure that the small sample used in this research study was representative of the larger population, a purposeful sample of participants was drawn, specifically to exclude bias (Johnson, & Christensen, 2000:176). The researcher was aware that any participant had the right to refuse to participate in the interviews.

Each participant was informed of their rights to decline participation in this study, which would be respected at any time and for any reason. A statement relating to this right was also placed on the consent form (Appendix A).

The researcher made use of purposeful sampling as opposed to probabilistic sampling. Nthite (2006:23) described purposeful sampling as selecting information-rich cases for an in-depth study, using participants who are knowledgeable about the phenomenon under investigation. Before starting the interviews, the researcher explained to the participants that they had not been singled out as individuals for the study, but selected purposefully in an attempt to study the group of participants they represented.

According to Silverman (2000:81), interviews inevitably may be biased, which needs to be recognised and controlled by both the interviewer and the interviewee. The researcher limited bias as far as possible by building controls into the research design, for example, by having a range of interviews with different participants.

The researcher obtained a list of all schools in KwaZulu-Natal from the Department of Education. Altogether seven schools were selected namely school 1, school 2, school 3, school 4, school 5, school 6 and school 7.

The following groups of research respondents were selected from the seven schools to be interviewed:

- Group 1: Former black school,
- Group 2: Former white school,
- Group 3: Former Indian school,
- Group 4: Former Coloured school,
- Group 5: Private school, and
- Group 6: School for Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN).

After selecting the respondents and gaining permission from authorities, the researcher's first task was to make interview appointments during which she briefed the participants, without bias, that the main purpose of the interviews was the collection of detailed data regarding the aims of this study. Johnson and Christensen (2000:140) suggest that a researcher should want each potential participant to understand that her or his participation is important for the integrity of the research study.

Research respondents were asked to answer questions without any bias. All interviews began by outlining to the participants the theoretical basis of the study, its general and specific aims, practical values and the reason for using the ethnographic interview. All interviews conducted in the natural setting of each respondent's own school, and the school managers were requested to give their educators permission to be interviewed.

#### **4.6.1 Construction of interview questions**

Designing interview questions is an activity that did not take place in isolation. The researchers consulted and seek advice from specialists and colleagues at all times during construction of the interview questions. Questions to be used will be tested on people to eliminate possible errors (Wolcott, 2001:45).

A question may appear correct to the researcher when written down but can be interpreted differently when posed to another person. There was no hesitation in changing questions several times before the final formulation, keeping the original purpose in mind.

The most important point to be taken into account in interview questions is that it takes time and effort and that the questions will be re-drafted a number of times before being finalised. The researcher therefore ensured that adequate time was budgeted for in the construction of the interview questions (Creswell, 2003:87).

An important aim in the construction of the interview questions for this investigation was to present the questions as simple and straightforward as possible. The reasons for this were that not all members of the target population under investigation may be adequately prepared to interpret questions correctly or are familiar with interviews. The researcher's aim was to avoid ambiguity, vagueness, bias, prejudice and technical language in the questions (Brunton, 2003:7).

#### **4.6.2 Length of questions**

In Survey Methods and Practice (Steyn, 2000:287), it is recommended that the interview questions should be as short as possible.

This:

- ensures that the researcher expresses his or her thoughts clearly and eliminates unnecessary words,
- reduces the chance of information overload,
- reduces the likelihood that the respondent will forget the first part of the question while he absorbs the latter part, and
- reduces the number of non-responses.

It is further conveyed that data required should be collected while using as little of the respondents' time as possible. It is clearly indicated that the length of the questions is determined by what the researcher needs to know, the number of questions/items required for credible answers, the type of questions used and the type of respondents. The 'golden rule' was adhered to in this study.

#### **4.6.3 Characteristics of good interview questions**

According to Cherryl (2000:105), the following can be considered as characteristic of good interview questions:

- Contents to be arranged in such a way as to maximise co-operation.
- They have to deal with a significant topic, one which the respondent will recognise as important enough to warrant spending his or her time on. The significance should be clearly and carefully stated in the interview questions and on the accompanying letter.
- They must seek only that information that cannot be obtained from other sources.
- They must be as short as possible, but long enough to get the essential data. Long questions are boring.
- Questionnaires are to be attractive in appearance, neatly arranged and clearly duplicated or printed.
- Directions of good interview questions are clear and complete and important terms are clearly defined.

- Each question deals with a single concept and should be worded as simply and straightforward as possible.
- Different categories should provide an opportunity for easy, accurate and unambiguous responses.
- Objectively formulated questions with no leading suggestions should render the desired responses. Leading questions are just as inappropriate in interview questions as they are in a Court of Law.
- Questions should be presented in a proper psychological order, proceeding from general to more specific and sensitive responses. An orderly grouping helps the respondents to organise their own thinking so that their own answers are logical and objective. It is preferable to present questions that create a favourable attitude before proceeding to those that are more intimate or delicate in nature. Annoying and/or embarrassing questions should be avoided if possible.
- It is advisable to pre-construct a tabulation sheet, anticipating the likely tabulation and ways of interpretation of the data, before the final form of the interview questions is decided upon.
- Brief note at the end of the interview: ask respondents if no answer has been missed out and thank respondents for their participation.

Questions were based on areas that were representative of the types of contextual barriers that school managers and educators experienced such as socio-economic environment, parental involvement, family configuration, parents' educational status

and the language and culture of the community. They were arranged in random order.

#### **4.7 RESEARCH ETHICS**

Roodt (2007:6) suggests the following definition of ethics:

*“Ethics is a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers assistants and students.”*

Ethical measures which were adhered to in this study include the fact that the aims of the research were clearly explained to all participants and that the participation of both the school managers and educators were voluntary and anonymous (Silverman, 2000:7).

The researcher made all participants to feel at ease during the interviews and not to embarrass, frighten or impose on any of them. As mentioned, the researcher acknowledged the participants' right to non-participation and privacy, to remain anonymous, confidential, and to expect experimenter responsibility.

- **Voluntary participation**

According to Steyn (2000:270), & Taylor, 2000:13), the right to privacy refers to the right of any participant in a research study to keep from the public certain information about themselves. To safeguard the privacy of the participants, the researcher obtained direct consent for participation from each participant. Participants had the full right not to participate in this study.

Regarding the research participants, the researcher strived to be sensitive to human dignity. The researcher explained to each participant, without bias, what the study entails in order to overcome any negative affects that might result from any respondent's participation (Wolcott, 2001:21).

According to Steyn (2000:277) the right to privacy refers to the right of any participant in a research study to keep from the public certain information about themselves. To safeguard the privacy of the participants, the researcher obtained direct consent for participation from each participant. Participants had the full right not to participate in this study.

- **Informed Consent**

School managers and educators who were willing to participate in this study were requested to fill in the consent form and to sign it. The form was requesting them to give their biographical information of the researcher and the reason for the study. The participants were then interviewed after they had signed.

As a further measure of confidentiality and anonymity, the researcher emphasised to the research participants that she requires group data rather than individual data. The number allocated to the participant was corresponding with the number given to the school: in other words, school managers' respondents<sup>1</sup>, deputy principal respondent 1, heads of department 1 and post level one educators 2. This was the same in all schools under investigation.

- **Confidentiality and anonymity**

The researcher respected each participant's right to anonymity and confidentiality, and the right to expect experimenter responsibility. Those are two ways of protecting participants' privacy. They were adhered to in this study. "The essence of anonymity is that the information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity" (Ramparsad, 2004:151).

No names of specific institutions were required of respondents. In this study, interview questions merely indicated the level at which the respondents operated within the institution; that is, whether they were school managers, deputy principals, heads of department or post level one educators. The questionnaires containing their biographical information were accordingly having serial identification numbers for researcher use and data analysis.

Confidentiality implies that *'although the researcher will be able to identify participants from the information given, they will in no way make the information known publicly'* (Zetoun, 2005:4).

- **Permission**

Permission was requested in writing from the Chief Director of Education in Vryheid district office by the researcher. The researcher explained the aim of the study and the interview questions were given to the Chief Director for approval.

From the Chief Director, these questions were sent to the Circuit Manager, then to selected school managers and their school management teams and their educators. The permission to observe the documents and the schools would be requested. The researcher also requested the permission to use a tape recorder during the interviews.

- **Trustworthiness**

Milner (2003:12) identified four criteria or strategies to ensure trustworthiness, namely:

- (i) *truth value, also called credibility*

- This, in qualitative, research is usually obtained from the discovery of human experiences as they are lived and perceived by informants;

*(ii) applicability or transferability*

This demonstrates the applicability of the findings to another context;

*(iii) consistency of the data*

Whether the findings could be replicated with the same subjects or in a similar context; and

*(iv) neutrality*

The freedom from bias in the research procedures and results.

*Trustworthiness of the study was addressed as follows:*

A qualitative researcher with many years of experience in interviewing, particularly at school level, conducted interviews. This was done in an attempt to eliminate biases and to ensure objective results.

#### **4.7.1 The purposes of the pilot study**

A pilot study gave the researcher an idea of the practical problems that could ultimately arise, such as the ambiguity of questions; money spent delivering incorrect questionnaires. To avoid asking problematic questions, a pilot study enables the researcher to avert these problems by changing procedures, instructions and questions (Zetoun, 2005:54).

The pilot exercise helps to develop a final instrument so that the respondents in the main study have no difficulties in completing the questions, and so that revisions can be made in readiness for main distribution (Zetoun, 2005:55). A pilot study was indispensable for successful research and administration of the research data. It is a useful tool for determining the shortcomings in the envisaged method (McMillan, 2002:49).

The researcher interviewed a limited number of four respondents (sixteen in total) from each pilot school including school managers, deputy principals, head of departments and educators at four schools in Vryheid district. They did not form part of the main study.

Foster (2000:124) reveals that pilot research is a preliminary or “trial run” investigation using similar questions and similar subjects as in the final survey. Piloting and pre-testing of the questions is closely linked to issues of validity and reliability of the data collection instrument (Bryman, 2001:52). It is a useful tool for determining the shortcomings in the envisaged method (McMillan, 2002:42).

The researcher requested the permission from the respondents to use a tape recorder to capture the responses to interview questions. The reason was to save time and to make sure that the researcher did not lose any of the responses information or part thereof.

The researcher also made key notes about respondents' attitudes and enthusiasm and about general impressions in the course of the interviews. In addition to biographical information, empirical surveys and personal interviews with principals was also conducted in the pilot study. According to Ramparsad (2004:129), "*All data gathering instruments should be piloted to test how long it takes recipients to complete them, to check that all questions and instructions are clear, and to enable the researcher to remove any items which do not yield useable data*". Piloting thus is a crucial process prior to main distribution.

He further suggests that the pilot respondents need to be asked the following questions:

- How long did it take you to answer the questions?
- Were the instructions clear?
- Were there any questions unclear or ambiguous? If so, will you say which and why?
- Did you object to answering any of the questions?
- In your opinion, has any major topic been omitted?
- Was the layout of the questions clear and attractive?
- Are there any further comments?

The number of participants in the pilot study or group is normally smaller than the number scheduled to take part in the final survey (Kilberloe, 2003:356). For the purpose of this study, the researcher conducted a pilot study with school managers,

deputy principals, departmental heads and post level one educators in Vryheid district schools in KwaZulu-Natal.

According to Ramparsad (2004:159), all data gathering instruments should be piloted to check that all questions and instructions are clear. In this study, the pilot research was to be conducted before the main research. The main aim was to reduce the number of treatment errors because unforeseen problems revealed in the pilot study were to result in redesigning the main study.

It saves the researcher time and money expenditure on aspects of the research which would have been unnecessary. Feedback from other persons involved is made possible and leads to important improvements in the main study.

In the pilot study, the researcher tried out a number of alternative measures and selects only those that produced the best results for the final study. The approximate time required to complete the interview will be established in the pilot study, and questions and/or instructions that are misinterpreted were reformulated.

Through the use of the pilot study as *“pre-test”*, the research was satisfied that the questions asked complied adequately with the requirements of the study. At the end of the pilot study, the interviewees were asked to comment on the questionnaire and make suggestions for improvement. Some of the questions were rephrased for

better understanding. The interview questions were then reworked by taking into account the comments by the interviewees in preparation for the main interviews.

Feedback from the respondents were considered and led to important improvements in the main study. The approximate time required to complete the questionnaires and interviews was established in the pilot study. Questions and instructions that were misinterpreted were reformulated.

Based on the comments and suggestions provided by the interviewees, some of the questions were rephrased for better understanding. Incorrect numbering, wrong spelling, wrong tense, omission of certain important aspects, poor wording and poor instructions were flaws that were identified.

Questions and instructions which were misinterpreted were reformulated. Some improvements in the main research questionnaire were made as suggested by the pilot research.

Only a few minor adjustments were made to the questionnaire due to unforeseen problems that emerged during the pilot study. Thereafter the questionnaire was finalised and presented to the respondents in the sample to check whether the questionnaire was correct. After their approval, the questionnaire was distributed to respondents.

The flaws identified in the pilot study were corrected before the main research. The researcher conducted a pilot study before the main research to test how the research questionnaire works before she did the full version of the research. The pilot research was best because she was able to discover some problems with her research questions before the main research.

#### **4.8 SYNTHESIS**

The explanation and detailed discussion of the research methodology design and data analysis was the focus of this chapter. An attempt was made in this chapter to analyse and interpret the method used to investigate the challenges besetting school managers in schools. Qualitative research method was used in this study.

*Chapter five focused on analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data with regard to challenges besetting school managers in schools.*

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Following from Chapter 4, *Chapter 5 focuses on data analysis and research interpretation. The pilot research was used to improve the methods of data gathering.*

The main research findings stem from the categories of tuition and administration, and parental involvement as a challenge for school managers. These findings are also presented in terms of different types of schools in all types of schools both rural and urban contexts from which data was gathered. Human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal was closely scrutinised.

#### 5.2 THE RESEARCH PROCEDURE

Chapter 4 described the qualitative research design and methodology of the study. This chapter presents the findings of the qualitative research. It will present a detailed analysis of the information gained from ethnographic interviews, participants' observation and artefacts.

The aim was to determine what themes emerged that could be of assistance in determining the nature of the managerial and leadership human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid District in KwaZulu-Natal. Seven

schools were selected including former white, coloured, Indian and black schools, institutions for learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN) and a private school in KwaZulu-Natal Province, with five respondents from each school targeted.

For reasons of anonymity, the schools' names and of respondents were omitted and referred to as School 1, School 2, School 3, School 4, School 5, School 6 and School 7. Thirty-five respondents were interviewed.

The following groups of respondents were selected from each school:

- 1 school manager
- 1 deputy manager
- 1 head of department, and
- 2 educators.

The researcher first conducted private interviews with school managers and the staff members in each school. Managers, the deputy manager and heads of departments were interviewed in their offices and the educators in specially arranged quiet rooms.

With the permission of the respondents, a tape recorder was used to record the responses. After completion of the ethnographic interviews of each school, the data were interpreted before conducting interviews with the next school. This chapter presents initial findings from data collected from thirty-five participants from seven schools selected for the study.

Targeted schools were those who were former white, coloured, Indian, black only schools, private schools and special schools. Those with culturally mixed staff were also selected. It was noticeable that all participants had a positive attitude toward the research. They had an opportunity to voice their feelings about the challenges they faced.

### **5.3 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

The research conceptualisation incorporated in this investigation was inductive, that is “*patterns emerge from the data rather than being imposed on during or prior to data collection*” (Walford, 2001:56). In addition, data analysis involves cyclical phases, namely “discovery analysis in the field, identification of topics that become categories, and synthesis of patterns among categories” (Brunton, 2003:23).

During data analysis, the researcher used coding, “*the process of dividing data into parts by a classification system: segmenting the data into topics or using predetermined categories to break it into smaller subcategories*” (Bryman, 2001:43).

#### **5.3.1 Reliability and validity**

In selecting the research techniques, namely the ethnographic interview and participant observation, the researcher examined how these formats reflected both reliability and validity.

Before drawing any conclusion from the analysed data, the researcher assessed reliability and validity thereof to determine whether the research result was

consistent. Reliability means that “*two or more researchers studying the same phenomenon with similar purposes should reach approximately the same result*”.

Reliability therefore curbs dishonest research (Gummesson, 2000:91).

According to Burgess (2002:6), for optimum reliability, a researcher needs to overcome the following factors that could impede the reliability of a research study:

- poor health, fatigue or emotional strain on behalf of the interviewer or the interviewee;
- poor physical condition of the room in which the interview is conducted;
- fluctuations of the interviewer’s or the interviewee’s memory, and
- a lack of ethnographic interview experience on the part of the interviewer or the interviewee.

In this study, validity depended on the degree to which the researcher will faithfully represent the phenomenon under investigation rather than on the number of cases studied.

### **5.3.2 Triangulation**

The researcher used triangulation; that is, cross-validation among data sources and collection strategies in a single research study (Johnson & Christensen, 2000:212-213; Holiday, 2002:43, 75). According to Very (2004:35), triangulation allows the researcher to find regularities in the data; that is, “*to see whether the same pattern*

*keeps recurring*". Wolcott (2001:30) adds that the practice of checking multiple sources is often quoted as one of the strengths of fieldwork.

Furthermore, data was cross-checked for interconnected patterns in order to present holistic and more meaningful results. Bryman (2001:87) states that this allows researchers to locate where they are in relation to some other points in a phenomenon under investigation.

### **5.3.3 Securing a good response rate**

Walford (2001:127), writing in relation to response rates of interviews, indicates that a response rate of 70 percent and more is very good. Thus for the current study, in order to obtain a good response rate, the researcher employed the following strategies.

These included a covering letter and a thank-you note in the interview questions. Questions must be easy to answer. Poor questionnaires included those that had no instructions or inadequate instructions for completing, had unclear response categories, had too many open-ended questions and were too long.

Questions which were avoided in interviews were leading questions; that is, questions worded in such a way as to suggest to respondents that there was only one acceptable answer.

No complex, irritating questions or instructions or questions that use negatives were used. These suggestions were followed in an attempt to obtain a good response rate of questions. Question construction was carefully planned.

#### **5.3.4 Dealing with non-responses**

A careful record of the interview dates was kept. Ramparsad (2004:133) indicates that *"generally there is a good response at first and then it slows down"*, and that *"inevitably all the interviews will not be conducted by the specified dates"*.

A follow-up on non-respondents was done through a second letter and by sending interview questions again, and a system of numbering also needed to be devised in order to know who has replied and who was not. Opinions also varied as to the best time to send out follow-up requests. The researcher will *"need to write about a week after the original (initial due) date if you (the researcher) are to complete data collection in the time allocated"* (Very, 2004:45).

The researcher, in this study, made a follow-up request for the interviews by means of a telephonic reminder on the day after the "due date" has elapsed. An extension period of one week was thereafter granted for the interviews.

The researcher was thus guided by the ideas suggested in dealing with non-responses to the interviews in this study. In addition too, because follow-up needed to be done for non-response, it was important that interview questions needed to

have some sort of identification, so as to make follow-up possible. This study made use of serial numbers.

The number of participants in this research study was limited to thirty five, as the researcher primarily focused on the detail and quality of an individual's experiences and no claims were made as to general applicability or implications of the findings. Throughout this study, the researcher was bearing in mind the appropriate and effective procedures outlined in this chapter for accurate data collection.

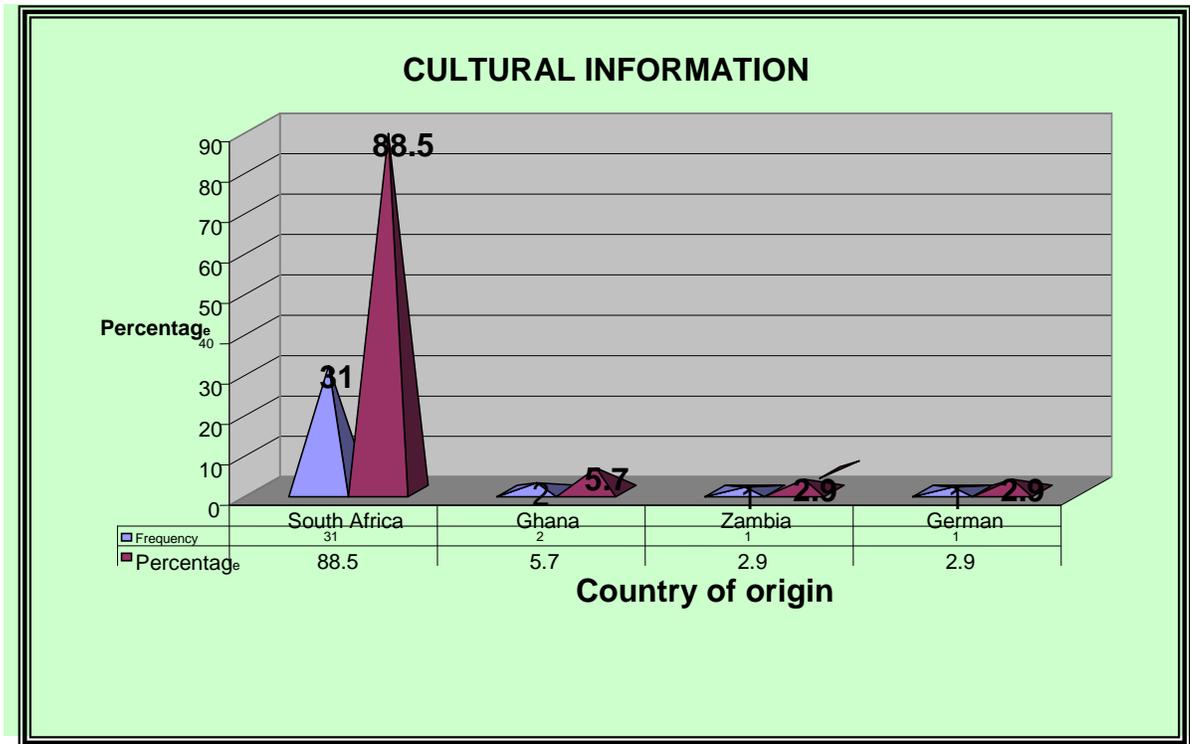
The researcher remained objective and disciplined and conscientious in taking detailed field notes at all stages of the study, clearly separating description from interpretation and judgment. The researcher was become involved in experiencing the setting while maintaining an analytical perspective grounded in the purpose of the fieldwork, namely scientific research designed to answer the research question.

Detailed notes made by the researcher enabled her to make perceptive observations about human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district, KwaZulu-Natal. Thirty-five respondents were interviewed. These instruments were tested in a pilot study.

With this research study, the researcher aimed to provide an in-depth description of human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid, KwaZulu-Natal schools. Throughout the research, the challenges besetting school managers were investigated.

The research results gathered through collection of data from respondents were compared and interpreted. The qualitative data collected through investigation were summarised and were addressed through the issues of tuition, parental involvement and administration as a challenge for school managers.

## 5.4 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

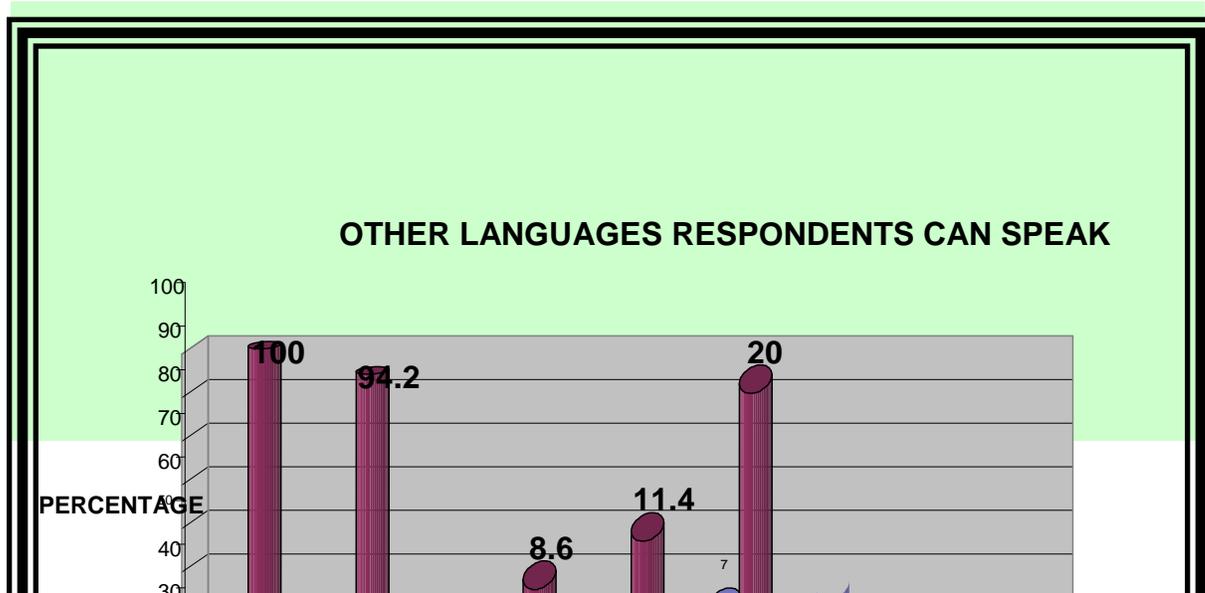


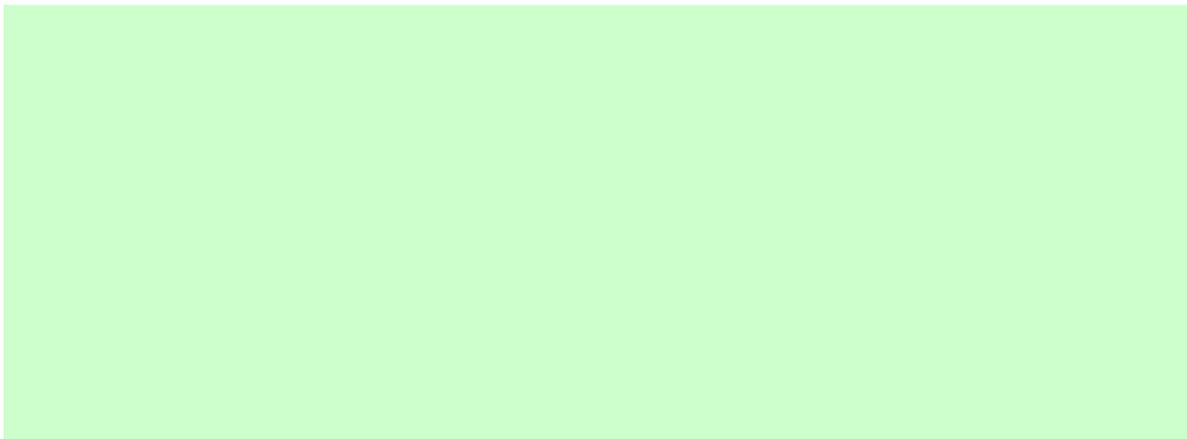
**Figure 5.4.1: Cultural information of respondents**

Interview questions were administered to thirty-five respondents. Out of 35 respondents, thirty one (88, 5 percent) of the respondents were South African citizens. The figures show that the majority of educators were teaching in their country. Two (05, 7 percent) of the respondents were from Ghana and one (02, 9 percent) from Zambia and Germany.

It can be derived from the table above that thirteen (37, 1%) of the educators interviewed were speaking Afrikaans as their first language. This was due to the fact that there were whites and coloureds who speak Afrikaans as a mother tongue.

There were few blacks who could also speak Afrikaans. It is followed by eleven (31, 4 %) English, 10 (28, 6%) IsiZulu and one (02, 9 %) were Sotho-speaking school managers and educators.

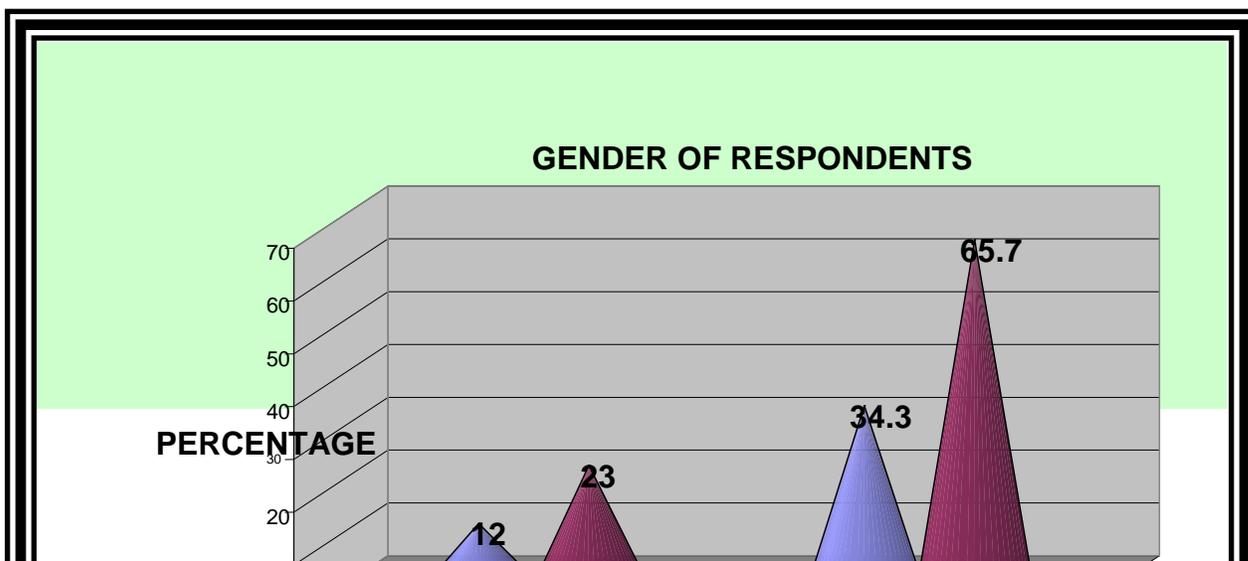


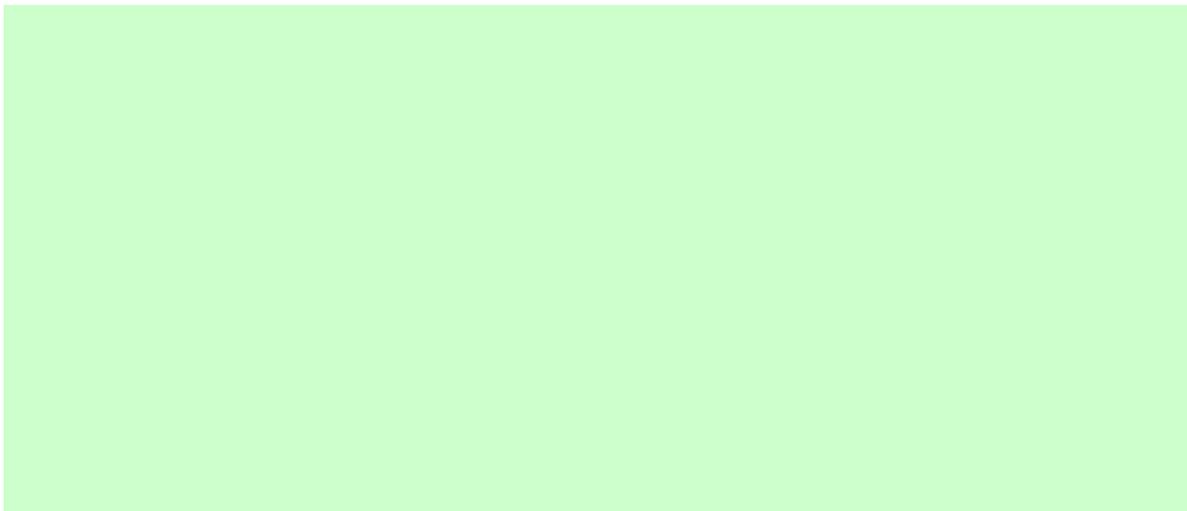


**Figure 5.4.2: Other languages spoken by the respondents**

Out of 35 respondents, all thirty-five (100%) of respondents were able to speak English. English is an international language and is used globally. The figure shows that English is the medium of instruction in South African schools and all school managers and educators were able to speak it.

Thirty-three (94, 2%) were able to speak Afrikaans, seven (20%) were able to speak Zulu, German and Tswana, three (08, 6%) were able to speak French and eight (22, 9%) were able to speak IsiSwazi. Seven (20%) of the respondents were able to speak a language but could not read or write it.

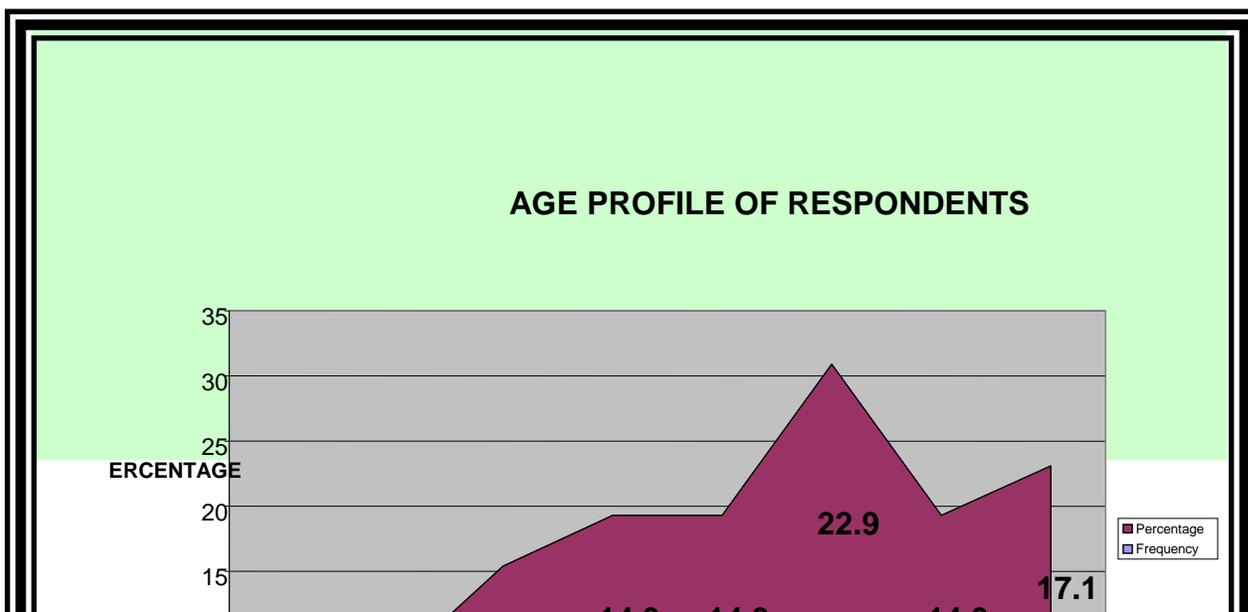




**Figure 5.4.3: Gender of respondents**

Interview questions were administered to 35 respondents, of which twelve (34, 3%) were male and twenty three (65, 7%) female. The ratio of male to female staff indicates that there were more female educators in schools than males.

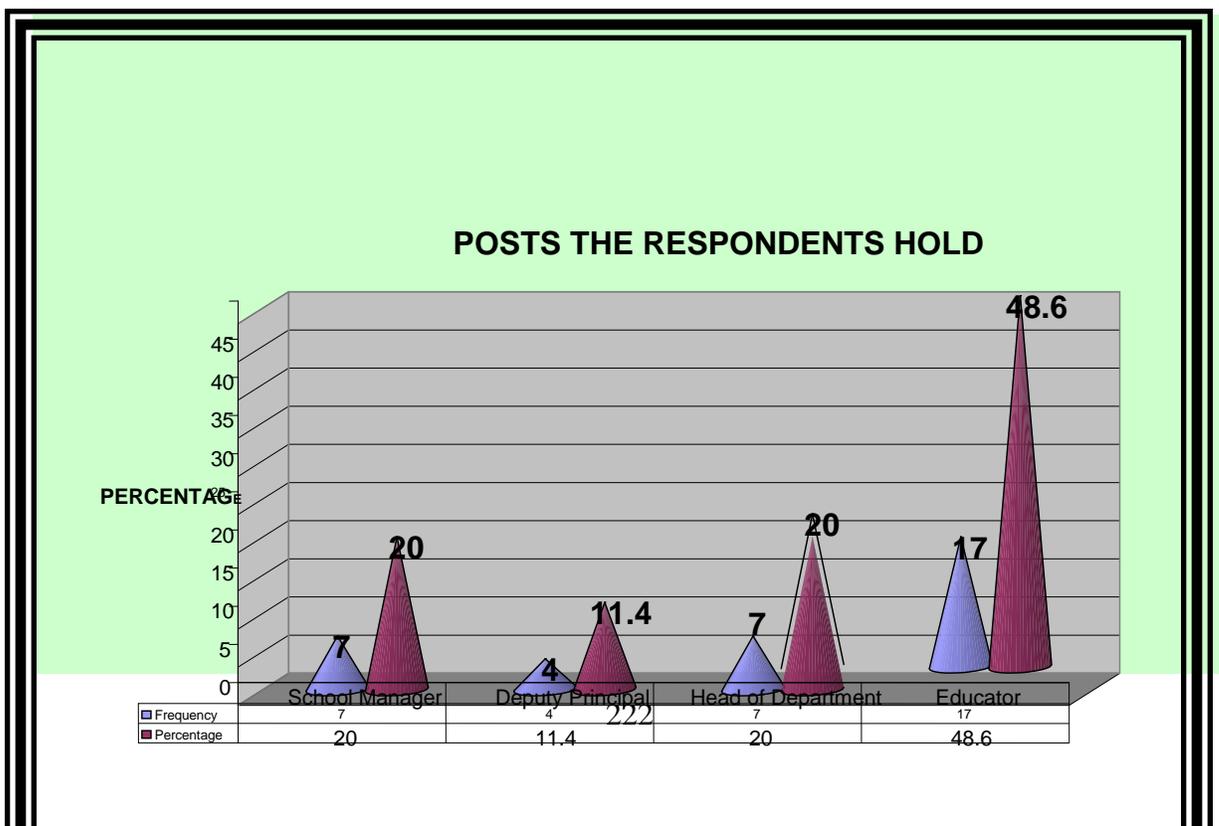
Male are commonplace in post-primary schools and there are no male educators in junior primary schools. Most of the males were managing senior primary and secondary schools. They were also teaching in schools managed by both males and females.



**Figure 5.4.4: Age profile**

**Figure 5.4.4: Age profile**

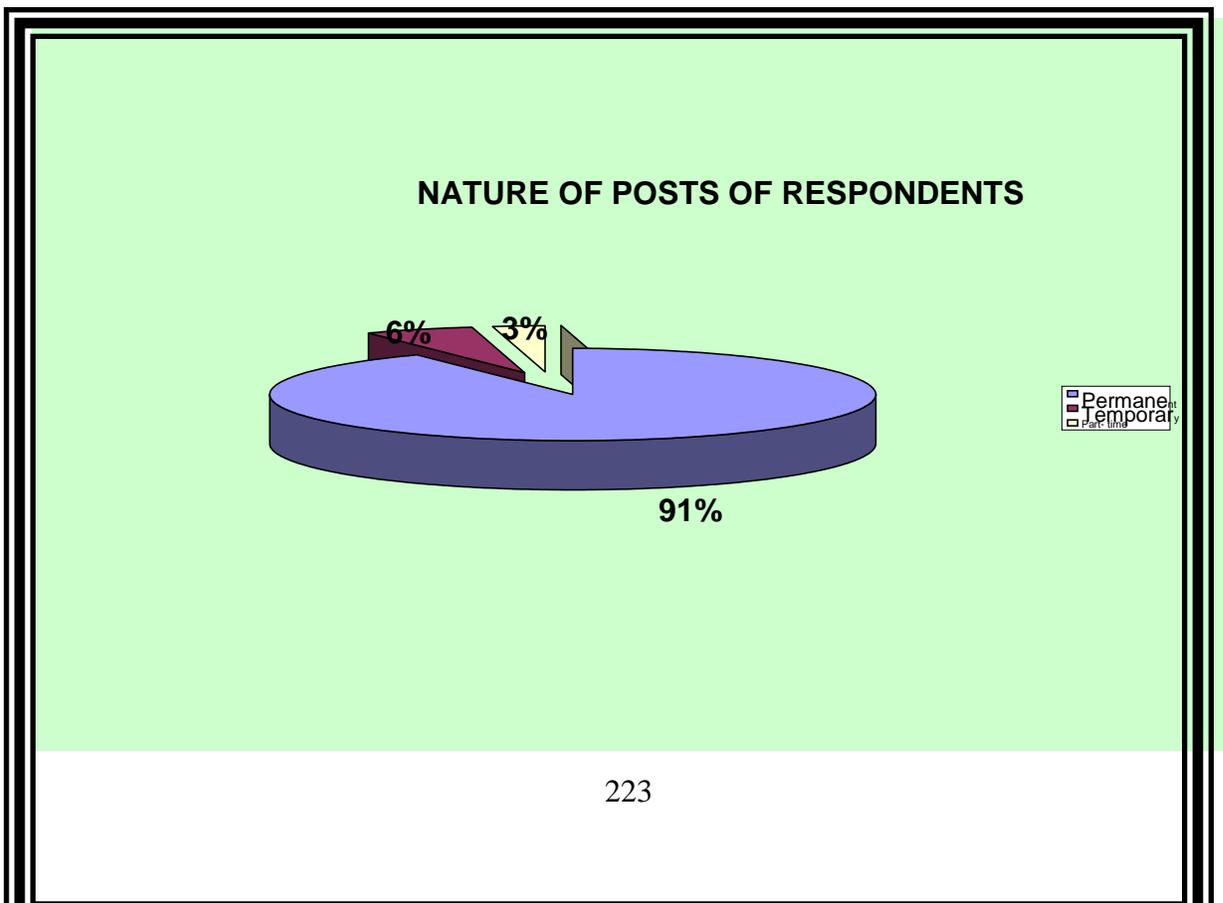
In the sample of 35 respondents, none (00%) was below twenty years of age. Two (05, 7%) were between 21 and 25 years old, four (11, 4%) between 26 and 30 years old, five (14, 3%) between 31 and 35 and 36 and 40 years old, eight (22, 9%) between 41 to 45 years of age, five (14, 3%) between 46 to fifty years old and six (17, 1%) over fifty years old.



**Figure 5.4.5: posts held by respondents**

Out of 35 respondents, seven (20%) were school managers, seven (20%) were deputy managers, seven (20%) were Heads of Departments and fourteen (40%) were post level one educators. The participants' response was hundred percent.

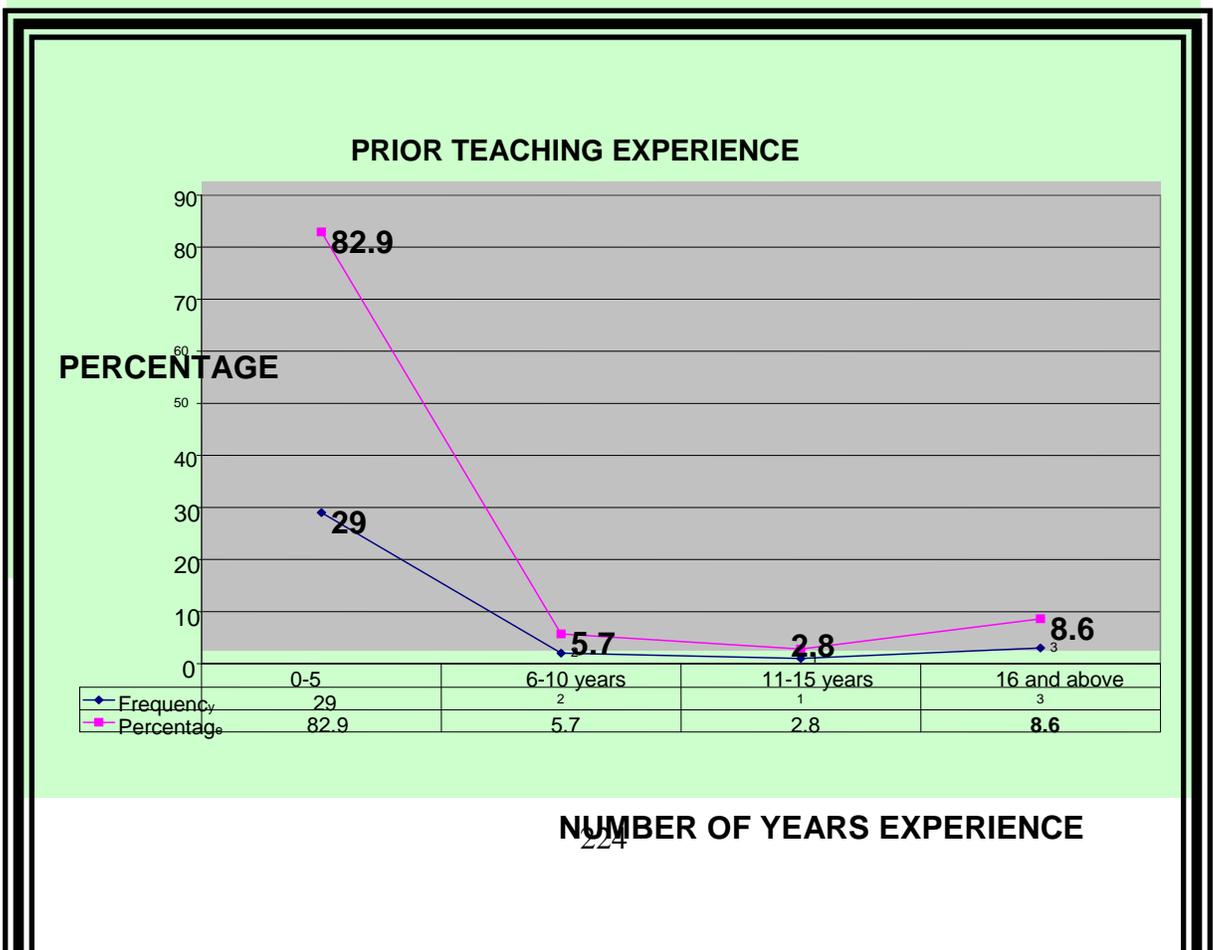
The study explored human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal.



**Graph 5.4.6: Nature of posts of respondents**

According to the data Figure 5.4.6 in the sample of 35 respondents, thirty-two (91, 4%) were permanently employed, two (05, 7%) were temporary and one (02, 9%) was a temporarily employed educator. She was on a month-to month contract. All school managers, deputy managers and heads of department were permanently employed.

Educators were promoted to senior positions only if they were appointed permanently by the Department of Education.



### Graph 5.4.7: Teaching experience

In the sample of 35 respondents, the study showed that twenty-nine (82,9%) of the respondents have an experience of zero to 5 years, two (5,7%) from 6 to 10 years, one (2,8%) 11 to 15 years and three (8,6%) with 16 and above years of experience in non-racial schools. These statistics depicted the experience of the majority of educators and managers.

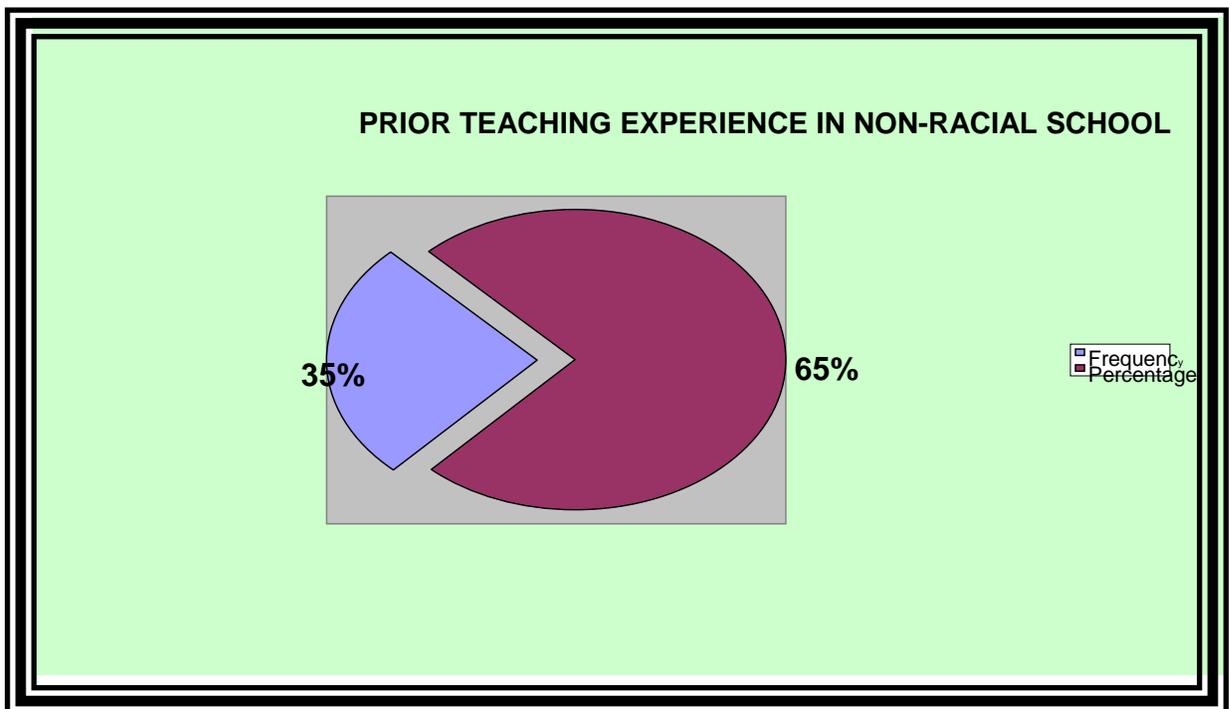
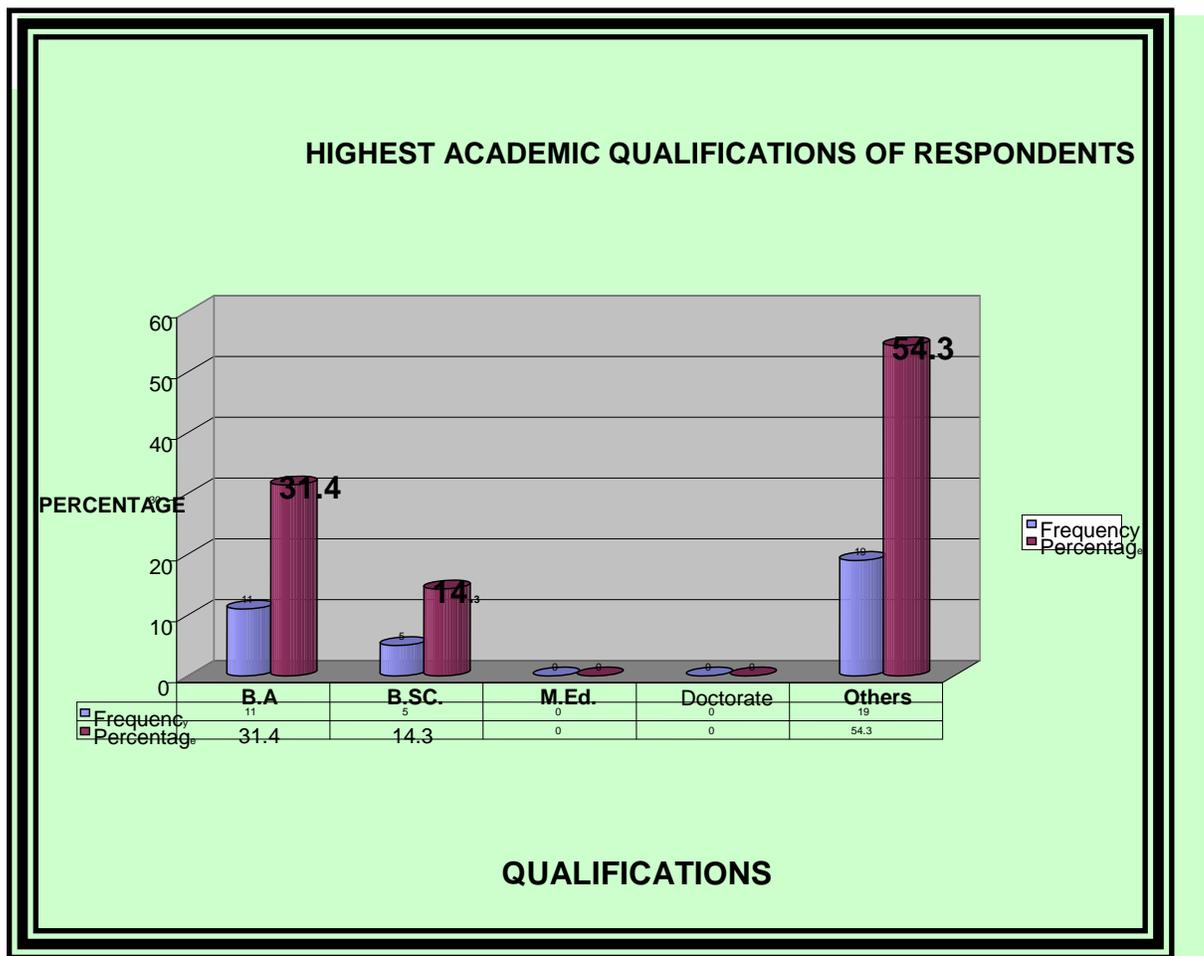


Figure 5.4.8: Prior teaching experience

According to the data in Table 5.10, in the sample of 35 respondents, all of the thirty-five respondents (100%) had no previous experience in teaching in mixed schools where they had taught learners from different races and cultures. They had experience in teaching mono-cultural learners. With changes in education, they found themselves teaching more than one race in one class.

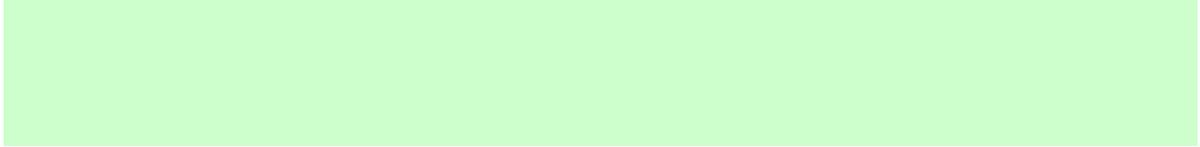
The graph indicates that with changes in education in South Africa. All thirty five respondents had no previous experience on how to teach in non-racial schools. They were expected by the Department of Education to teach what they had not been taught.



**Figure 5.4.9: Highest academic qualifications of respondents**

Out of 35 respondents, eleven (31, 4%) had Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Degrees, five (14, 3%) had Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) Degrees, nineteen had other qualifications, which were diplomas and certificates. The table showed that the majority of the respondents were not highly qualified. This might be due to the environment in which they lived and worked in. Most of educators with qualifications did not like to teach in remote rural areas. The majority of the staff members were unqualified and some of them were under-qualified.



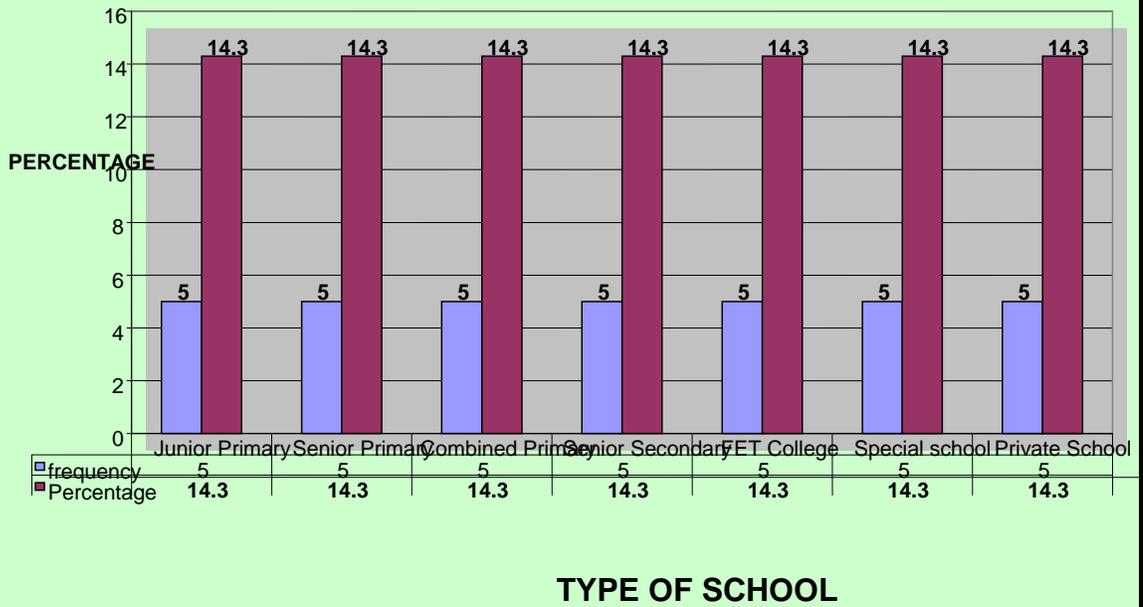


**Figure 5.4.10: The highest professional qualifications**

Graph 5.4.10 shows the responses to the question about professional qualifications of the participants. The percentage for school managers and educators having University Educational Diplomas (UED) were 11, 4 percent. Educators and school managers with Secondary Teachers Diplomas (STD) was 17, 1 percent. Those with Senior Primary Teachers Diplomas were 11, 4 percent. The respondents with Junior Primary Teachers Diploma were 14, 3 percent.

The remainder of the respondents had other professional qualifications which were Teachers certificates, Technical certificates, and other qualifications were 31, 5 percent. The majority were educators with the highest standard passed being matric. They were teaching in all types of schools.

## TYPE OF SCHOOLS



### **Figure 5.4.11: Type of schools of respondents**

The above graph shows the type of schools of the respondents. In the sample of 35 respondents, the researcher interviewed five (14, 3%) staff members from each school. This included the school managers, deputy managers, heads of department and post level one educators. Where there were different races in each school, they were chosen according to that and interviewed.

In junior and senior primary schools, 14, 3 percent school managers in each school were interviewed. The respondents from combined primary, senior secondary, private school, special school and from the intermediate were 14,3 percent from each school. Five participants were selected from each school. They were a school manager, deputy principal, head of department, and two level one educators.

## **5.5 HUMAN RESOURCE CHALLENGES BESETTING SCHOOL MANAGERS**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **5.5.1 Ethnographic interview analysis and interpretation**

The analysis and interpretation of the data gathered during the ethnographic interviews were discussed under the following headings:

##### ***Schools 1 to 7: (N=35)***

- school managers (7)
- deputy managers (7)

- heads of departments (7)
- post level one educators (14)

The gathering of information generated by the four data-collection categories was descriptive. The researcher analysed the interviewee responses of schools 1 to 7, searching for events, words and phrases that indicated emerging patterns and occurred repeatedly. Finally, the recurring patterns were analysed to indicate how the events were similar or different. The gathering of information generated by the seven data-collection categories was descriptive.

In order to gain an insight into the participants and draw meaningful research conclusions, the researcher recorded all responses. The aim was to establish, in the light of this study, whether a lack of efficient managerial and leadership skills by school managers and educators were partly responsible for low pass rates and disciplinary problems in schools.

## **5.6 TUITION AND ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES AS A CHALLENGE FOR SCHOOL MANAGERS**

All school managers and head of departments complained that the educators' administrative duties, such as keeping class registers and completing records, were often incomplete or inaccurate. To substantiate their complaints, the school managers of schools 2 and 4 produced incomplete class registers for different grades.

The deputy manager of school 2 pointed out that he did follow up on many educators' duties, but that these attempts had still proved ineffective. According to him, *"the educators were not interested in making an effort in improving their efficiency"*.

The deputy principal stated that sometimes the school managers did not recruit best people for the post. They sometimes appoint anyone available. Learners were disadvantaged. He said: *"Our principal does not motivate the staff. He only wants to see learners learning and teachers going to class. He does not care about the problems the staff have. No provision is made to retain the staff."*

The head of departments from schools 2 and 5 said that educators were often late in handing in examination papers for moderation by subject heads. The educators from all schools added that they did not have enough time as they had to set more than one grade paper for more than one subject/learning area, with memoranda.

In addition, the heads of department often identify many errors in the question papers submitted by the educators. None of the respondents had examples of previous tests and examination question papers available for the researcher to scrutinise.

Furthermore, the head of departments from all seven schools claimed that the marking of examination scripts often did not occur in good time. Many educators did not complete marking in time.

They stated that it was difficult even for the school manager and the deputy manager to deal with or remedy this issue due to the educators using the existing high learner-educator ratios at their schools as an excuse. *“If an educator is appointed, there is no induction. No Code of Conduct and no mentor. They learn things as they work. There is no communication between the SMT and the staff.”*

All school managers and head of departments indicated that educators claimed that they had too many scripts to assess, but agreed that this may be a valid reason for inefficiency by the educators. One manager stated: *“Some staff members need to be under strict supervision. They don’t want to be independent thinkers. This is a great challenge.”*

In this study, the interviews conducted in the schools became a way of understanding the managers’ lived experiences regarding human resource challenges besetting them in schools.

All school managers were of the opinion that Affirmative Action and the Employment Equity Act have brought more harm than good to their management. The school manager in a secondary school stated *“The unions appoint educators who do not qualify for the post. The reason is sometimes that one is their active union member or he or she is a friend, a relative or she is within the school if it is a promotional post. They don’t appoint a person suitable who is an expert. This results in our management being difficult. Some of the appointed educators are lazy”.*

### **5.6.1 Curriculum change**

It was established in the interview conducted with the participating manager in school 1 that school managers beset challenges in schools they are managing. The manager in school 1 said: *“We are working with professionals, children whose parents are professionals and to manage those people is not easy. You have to think before you talk or act.”*

He further mentioned: *“A major human resource challenge besetting them in schools is in the education reform process. There are so many changes in education.”*

The myriad of changes in the education system is a management challenge. He revealed: *“After redressing the injustices of the apartheid regime, the challenge was to redress the past imbalances.*

*That can be achieved by the restoration of a culture of teaching and learning in schools, which is not easy in democratic schools.”* He was of the opinion that the suddenness of changes in schools’ management meant that managers as educational leaders were to prepare themselves to deal with many new challenges within a short time.

He further revealed that the vast majority of managers had no previous experience in dealing with challenges of curriculum changes in education. He

said: *“The Outcomes Based Education (OBE) was introduced in schools with many learning areas replacing subjects. There is a lot of paper work involved. Our educators were not trained in OBE.*

*They attended two day workshops and they were expected to teach learners for the whole year. Teachers themselves are not getting help. In such cases the Department of Education was compelled to intervene to help school managers with their challenges but they never helped us.*

The semi-rural senior primary manager further indicated that many school managers needed staff development programmes to highlight their duties and responsibilities. He was of the opinion that the challenges they beset are sometimes caused by the department of education, by not guiding them sufficiently in that regard.

He further said: *“School managers are not given enough attention about their qualification and their core duties and responsibilities necessary for school atmospheres conducive to teaching and learning. Managers are appointed on trial and error method while they are managing experienced and well-qualified staff.”*

A manager in the senior primary school further mentioned that as school managers, they were responsible for the creation of a climate conducive to learning in the school. Creating and maintaining an atmosphere conducive to learning does not involve a single action but various management laws come into effect.

The participant reported that they are not given any management law by the DoE, which is a challenge. This indicates an organisational climate where school leaders should continually make decisions, solve problems, co-ordinate and delegate, motivate, communicate, evaluate and act correctively without management policy.

He stated: *“We are managing educators who are qualified in educational management and know labour law and their democratic rights.”*

If managers challenge educators when they make mistakes, they confront them or report them to their unions. He further said that many managers, particularly in rural areas, work under extremely stressful conditions which are often characterised by low staff morale, poor or no resources, inadequate facilities, under-qualified staff, social problems such as gangsterism, substance abuse and disillusioned learners.

*“We are challenged when trying to cope with learners in trauma or suffering emotionally from untold loss of their family members,”* he stressed.

He reported that school rules were based on the Constitution of South Africa and the South African Schools Act. Learners and parents were informed about the rules and regulations of schools in admission to semi-rural senior primary schools. He further indicated that although they reprimanded learners for misbehaving, these learners seldom showed remorse for their actions. *Some educators did not manage to control their classes effectively and they contributed to the continuously poor learner behaviour.*

He was of the opinion that the poor learning environments in their school, together with educators' inefficiency, were part of the cause of learner disciplinary problems and, ultimately, contributed to the continuous human resource challenges besetting him as a school manager in creating a sound educational school environment.

It was established in the interviews conducted with the manager in school 1 that as they serve the community, schools needed to interact with parents in the community to create the context that allowed them to identify their assumptions about what is happening in schools and the manager is expected to provide clarity when it is needed. He said, *“Through this interaction, parents and educators learn from one another and make efforts to work together and solve learners' problems.”*

According to the manager, ill-disciplined learners were often academically weak, and therefore contributed to low pass rates in tests and examinations. He indicated that some parents were aware of the behaviour of their children but they did not provide adequate home support for learner academic progress. He added that the Department of Education needs to give parents advice in this regard.

### **5.6.2 Diversity management**

During the interviews the researcher held with participants in school 2, the school manager raised a concern that the main challenge they face in their schools in Vryheid district is that they lacked relevant knowledge to improve the culture of teaching and learning at their respective schools to be the best.

Their responses in the interviews made it evident to the researcher that their school management teams needed the co-operation of the unwilling educators, ill-disciplined learners, and the parents who are sometimes not actively involved in their children's academic progress.

The school manager of the remote rural secondary school indicated: *"I have been addressing the issue of quality teaching and learning with my teaching staff for the last five years, but I have not yet seen any improvement. They want to do things their own way."* He stated: *"How can we manage diversity if we fail to manage people of our culture? I had never attended diversity management training workshops. I am challenged by diversity. When I do things and talking, they call me a racist. That is how I look at things."*

He further stated that the lack of the quality teaching and learning culture in the educators in his school contributed to the prevailing school atmosphere not being conducive to teaching and learning. He was of the opinion that the lack of quality education in most schools was a multi-faceted problem and learner academic progress would continue to decline unless managers make concerted efforts to improve the culture and the structure of their schools.

He revealed: *"Now, more than ever, the ways in which school managers manage and respond to issues of diversity are essential to promote the systematic change needed to best meet the needs of the changing student population. Cultural and religious differences are a challenge to all stakeholders"*.

During the interviews that the researcher held with the manager, he further stated that some of their teaching staff did not possess the necessary qualifications, distinct organisational control, delegation and evaluation skills to effectively contribute to a school atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning. It sometimes became the responsibility of managers to manage their classrooms.

Some of the managers delegate their duties to the school management team to reduce their workload and to finish that work faster. *We are overloaded by management duties and by teaching and learning.* He added: *“As managers of schools, we are expected to manage the staff, learners, parents and finance. We have to fulfil the roles of accounting officers, managers and leaders including the establishment of school culture conducive to teaching and learning.” All these duties are challenging.*

The school manager mentioned that the culture of teaching and learning was very important to them as managers. It was the way of life of the people within a particular school or organisation. Culture refers to the underlying beliefs and assumptions, norms and values, relationships and interactions shared by the staff and were dominant in that particular school. He said: *“Our culture in my school is quality teaching and learning, which is not practically implemented.”*

*“The human resource challenge we face as managers of schools is the growing number of educators retiring, promoted and resigning each year, resulting in the*

*shortage of experienced educators to substitute them. We are also challenged by the high turnover among young educators,” he said.*

The manager mentioned that some learners within school premises were engaged in name calling, swearing, teasing and fighting. He also noted that learners disrupted and interfered with one another, showing a lack of consideration towards fellow learners. It is evident that the introduction of so many changes in education posed a problem to all managers who were involved in the education system, particularly in managing teaching and learning. Managers in schools with different cultures faced a challenge on how to handle learners.

About culture, the manager indicated his challenge: *“Well, it is the issue of culture. That one is a very big challenge. As a school manager, I need to come to grips with it; I need to come to an understanding that I am not dealing with people from my own culture. I am dealing with people from different cultures. There is a challenge of different cultural groups refusing to work out their differences.”*

The participant commented that sometimes there was a general air of tension between the different racial groups. There was seldom actual violence between them, but there was always the feeling that it will happen. Another problem he identified was the absence of the work ethic as one of the reasons for the disruption on the part of learners. *“Some learners did not interact freely with one another but*

*preferred to remain within racial groups.” He described racial conflict as “subtle but evident”.*

### **5.6.3 Special educational needs**

The manager from school 3, a special school, said that they had forty-five learners. He explained: *“Well-managed, effective schools display an orderly environment, emphasise academic achievement, set high expectations for student achievement, and are run by managers who expend an enormous effort to produce quality teaching and learning and to encourage learners to learn. This is our main challenge as managers. We need to meet those expectations.”*

The school manager said: *“Our learners arrive with needs that go far beyond learning to read and write. Their problems, ranging from neurobiological differences to suicidal depression, are complex and largely undifferentiated in the minds of the learners.”* She said: *“We are losing the battle. Nobody is providing the challenged learners with mental health care in our school. Our children are really in trouble. We’ve got to bring the service to the school to help them.”*

During the interviews held with the school manager, she said: *“Every day educators face students who are hitting, kicking, spitting, throwing books and desks, leaving no obscenity unused, making threats, screaming and yelling, hurling themselves to*

*the ground in rage. Some kids bang their heads against walls, act out sexually, and destroy property. They sometimes attempt suicide in class.”*

Another challenge is that the school manager needed to appoint educators who were tolerant, not only qualified, who love and care for the learners with challenges as they need special attention. Some educators were qualified but they failed to cope with the learners. “The staff must not bully them. Tolerance makes learning interesting to them” she said.

The school manager reported: *“It takes only one seriously disturbed child to disrupt the education of an entire classroom a day. Learners’ mental health needs are seriously straining a school designed to educate, not to heal or rehabilitate.”*

According to the respondent, the school managers in special schools faced a challenge of dealing with learners who were physically and mentally retarded. The school manager revealed: *“Some parents bring them to school and they don’t fetch or even visit them. They feel embarrassed by their children. Some of them treat them badly because they see them as curses. As a special school, we need to act as their parents.*

*Some parents see their children as problems. Their attitudes are roughly the same. Some parents can’t face and often can’t admit that the problems exist. “Most of my educators need training in special needs because of the practice of inclusion. We always feel that we shoulder the entire burden for these children. Mostly, I put out*

*fires all day. Sometimes a learner stays in the corner. If you try to move him or her, he fights” she said.*

*She said: “In my school, many learners have single parents. Their fathers leave their mothers if they have retarded children. In some cases, mothers also abandon their children. Our responsibility as the staff is to make them independent.” She indicated: “A special school is a challenge because it is a school catering for students who have special educational needs due to severe learning difficulties, physical disabilities or behavioural problems.”*

*Some learners use wheelchairs and they need support from the staff. She further stated: “Special schools are specifically designed, staffed and resourced to provide the appropriate special education for children with additional needs. Appointing the staff is a major challenge. Learners themselves are a challenge, let alone teaching and learning.”*

*The challenge became clear when the participant clearly revealed: “As a manager in a special school, our learners need individual attention to address specific needs. Student-teacher ratios are kept low, often 6:1 or lower, depending upon the needs of the children.”*

*She stated: “The challenge we face is that sometimes there are many learners and the department of education do not appoint educators if the need is identified. So*

*learners stay without teachers or classes are overcrowded when teachers have to take more duty loads. It is very difficult for a teacher to teach ten learners or more.*

*“Sometimes we have more educators while there are fewer learners. Sometimes educators resign to other professions with the scarce special school skills they had gained. To get an educator with the experience in special schools is not easy. Usually we employ educators from mainstream schools without experience in special schools.*

*“Training the educators after they had been appointed was another challenge. It depends whether he or she wants to learn the special skills of teaching the retarded learners or not. As a school manager, I easily identify an educator who hates the retarded children and they also don’t even go to that teacher. They feel or sense if you don’t like them.”*

During the interview with the school manager, it was revealed that in recent times, with inclusive education, the number of special schools available is declining as more children with special needs are to be educated in mainstream schools. This might result in special school teachers being redeployed to mainstream schools.

The participant was of the opinion that although learners were going to schools, there was still a hope that there will always be some children whose learning needs are not appropriately met in a regular classroom setting and they required specialised education and resources to provide the level of support they require.

The participant further mentioned that an example of a special need that may require the intensive services that a special school provides is mental retardation.

*“Mentally retarded learners are a challenge even to educators. They need more individual attention and they are taught differently.*

*They needed their special classrooms. Even some of the teachers cannot work with them. They need to be observing them closely in their classrooms full time because they move up and down destroying things and they sometimes get lost or are sexually abused by their school mates or the community members.”*

Special schools needed to be staffed by specially trained educators to provide specific, individualised instructions to individuals and small groups of learners with special needs. Sometimes, there are two teachers in one classroom. Learners need to be taught practical skills like craft. She said: *“The main challenge we face is that our aim is to equip learners with employable or self-employable skills. As a school manager and educators we are expected to offer patient care to learners living with disabilities.”*

Some learners were violent and it is very challenging to control them. They also need to be mindful of the fact that learners are from different backgrounds. There is a strong link between school performance and the socio-economic status and the background of learners.

The worse the economic status of the community, the greater the chances that children from the community will not adequately realise their true potential, owing to the negative environmental influences. In recognising the special needs of learners from a disadvantaged background, it was the challenge of managers to render appropriate assistance to overcome their backlog.

*“We do a lot of anger-management groups that allow learners to express their frustration. Clearly, the school’s professional staff help the limited services available but tend to be crisis-oriented rather than long term or preventative.”*

#### **5.6.4 Professional etiquette**

A manager in school 4 noted: *“As private school managers we are school leaders and professionals who need professional help to enable us to better cope with ever-changing challenges in our daily routine. Sometimes we are reluctant to ask for professional assistance from other people even when help is available and needed, attempting to maintain our power and firm image.”*

The challenge in private schools was that they were competing with public schools. The educators were paid more money, but there were less benefits and job insecurity. Private schools needed better teachers to get best results. Educators were employed only if there were learners they could teach. They paid large salaries because the staff was paid by the learners. Sometimes learners did not pay and the salaries are reduced or not paid. The challenge was to maintain quality programmes and teachers.

Public schools are offering free education and the fees in private schools are very high. Most parents are taking their children to public schools with qualified educators. The primary purpose of the school manager is to render service, that is, to effect education through quality human resource management for effective teaching and learning. Only those rich parents take their children to private schools. He also mentioned that the rapid changes in quality education are a major challenge. The manager stressed: *“My educators have been doing subjects now in learning areas and in this school. There is a special way of teaching them. The introduction of Outcomes Based Education was a change in education, which was only introduced to educators, not to school managers. We as managers have to monitor. There is a lot of paperwork and educators in mainstream schools don’t have enough time to teach. This is a challenge to all as managers.”*

He was of the opinion that the challenge they beset in managing schools was that some learners did not have a sense of morality to which one could appeal and there is, as a result, no sense of shame, with the learner being unable to admit to error. Sometimes managers beset challenges and feel that they were alone on the job and needed help. The threat implied was exposing their weaknesses. Lack of reliable resources or help within the formal system, fears of damaging self-image and losing capacity to influence are barriers undermining managers’ inclination to formally seek help.

The challenge was that when managers beset a challenge, they preferred to informally ask the assistance of some individuals and not the Department. Sometimes they adopted various strategies such as avoidance, attempting to prevent the assumed negative consequences associated with help-seeking behaviours.

She further stated that some managers were obtaining the best results in all grades because educators themselves were dedicated. As those educators got the best results, they were easily promoted to positions where they were not utilised. Managers said that they were losing all the best educators through promotions and resignations.

Managers were also challenged by the unions. Sometimes they were scared of disciplining educators even if they were wrong because they called their unions. They were making schools unruly because people just call them in, even for minor things which could be solved internally. Sometimes educators left learners unattended and go to meetings and or on strikes.

Learners were disadvantaged by the active involvement of unions. Some educators were employed as full-time educators with a time table but they were busy with union matters every day. Learners were deprived of their right to basic education.

He stated: *“Some managers showed the necessary managerial and leadership skills, especially with regard to the effectiveness of the educators’ instructional*

*leadership skills, but we still need to be given more guidance and encouragement to encourage educators to perform their duties in a responsible manner.”*

According to him, violence in his school has resulted in a drop in enrolment. He explained: *“School managers with a vision of a better school with best human resource management must also have knowledge, understanding and skills to inspire their staff members, followers and clients to make that vision a reality”.*

Learners often attended classes in classrooms without window panes. He suggested that as a start, parents needed to increase parent participation in school-related matters. He needed to task educators, together with the school management team, to ensure a positive learning school atmosphere by creating a culture of work on a daily basis. Promoting commitment by personal example and providing and consolidating an orderly, positive learning environment must be the priority of all schools.

The manager said that discipline was their major challenge, particularly tardiness and absenteeism. He stated that: *“We are compelled to discipline learners using corporal punishment although we know that corporal punishment was abolished. This is also time-consuming. Instead of the educators going to class to teach those learners who arrived early, they have to punish the latecomers. Even educators are punished because they need to be supervised by them. Learners need discipline. We are just making them to be afraid so that they would hurry to their classes but we only punish them for serious offences..., particularly for very serious offences.”*

According to the school manager, they have a primary responsibility for establishing the concept of positive behaviour within the school set-up. Life-long learning must be the priority of the school manager, the educators and the learners and to take place in four levels. He further stated that school managers and educators have a corresponding duty to provide learners with safe, secure, and peaceful environment in which quality teaching and learning could occur.

*One manager said, "Discrimination and sexual harassment are common here. As a school manager, some male managers harass us. When we report them to the District manager, they don't even ask them because they respect them as seniors. My colleague was harassed by an official."*

*When we reported the matter, it was just a joke. They harass us verbally and through actions. As females we are also discriminated against in senior management positions. Redressing the past imbalances is for those who are fortunate, not for all females."*

She revealed that challenges within schools came to the fore in classrooms although they vary in importance, urgency and intensity. As school managers in all levels of schools, they had to identify problems in learners, their causes and possible consequences as soon as possible. They were expected to promote good behaviour among learners in schools and to make every endeavour to ensure that learners behave in a manner that would positively influence a culture of learning.

The manager further described some learners and educators as being irresponsible, full of excuses when not doing the required school-work and being lazy.

#### **5.6.5 Expertise and motivation**

A manager from school 5, an urban junior primary school, indicated that school managers were challenged by the teaching methods and confusion in OBE, learner motivation, discipline, textbooks and instructional materials.

She reported on serious issues related to ill-disciplined learners that sometimes hinder learner academic progress. She was also sometimes undermined as a female manager. Some males did not take instructions from her and sometimes females become aggressive. *“I have to work twice as much as males to prove myself to the community and the staff”*, she added.

She also expressed a low level of staff morale towards the teaching profession. According to the manager, *“Some schools lack well-qualified educators in subjects such as science, technology, mathematics and accounting.”* Another human resource challenge became apparent when they had a vacant post in the school. They were not allowed by the Department of Education to appoint any qualified educator in that post.

She was of the opinion that school managers with vacant posts were not allowed to select appropriately qualified educators for his or her school but must depend on educators made available by the Department of Education because they were superfluous at their own schools. They had to wait for the educator to be redeployed by the Department of Education.

Managers were supposed to appoint educators who were on the list identified for redeployment. She stated that such redeployment took too long, implying that learners were without an educator for a long time. She also claimed that the majority of the educators who were redeployed had been rejected by their managers.

She argued that a lack of appropriate qualified educators had a negative impact on academic achievement. Managers were powerless to control redeployment. Some of the redeployed educators were not well qualified in the subjects they were required to teach.

She further indicated that in many instances, redeployment took place against the will of the educators involved, making them lose morale and become demotivated as managers were reluctant to accept them, suspecting them to be weak educators who would not contribute towards improving school results.

She revealed: *“Managers cannot be expected to acquire good educators to teach effectively and to ensure good academic performance. In South Africa, the success*

*of learners is assessed by the performance of grade twelve learners in the matriculation examination but schools are not well staffed,” she added.*

She further mentioned: *“The roles and responsibilities of managers would be imperative if they could improve learner-academic progress to decrease learner disciplinary problems”*. She indicated that managers’ role in school management was challenged and complicated by learners who did not heed or respond to warnings to spend more time studying. This contributed to low manager morale.

She was of the opinion that school managers were holding the future of the community they serve and of society at large was in their hands. If the school manager fails to manage the school’s human resource, the community also fails.

She said: *“We seem to be unsure of our core duties and responsibilities as we are involved in all school activities.”* A manager who participated in the research in a rural secondary school stated that the subject specialist was criticising the manager for the high failure rate in her school, particularly grade twelve.

She further said: *“This contributes a lot towards my challenges. We cannot make unwilling educators teach learners if they do not have all the resources and with no specialisation in that subject. Sometimes, they are not even prepared to go to class regularly. The blame goes back to the manager.”*

She was of the opinion that enrolment is now going down in her school. She further added, *“Our poor results discourage educators and learners from taking pride in their school as a whole. Some of the educators’ morale is very low and this is indicated by high rates of absenteeism and occupational stress. This was ascribed to poor working conditions, inadequate curricular materials and government policies which were seen as unclear and confusing.”*

She further stated that some of the educators were less concerned about quality teaching and learning than salaries. Another challenge was that some educators did not get the teaching and learning aids when they needed them. Sometimes they did not get them at all. *“It took a lot of time for me to give them these due to the lack of support and funds.”*

An improvement in the resources in schools could motivate the staff and learners to do better in their schoolwork. She indicated that the lack of libraries and laboratories for subjects like Physical Science and Biology become difficult to handle as there are no facilities for practical work at early stages of education.

*“Even if I try to compromise as a manager, learners tend to become confused, bored and disciplinary problems arise.”* She confirmed that they were beset by a challenge of maintaining discipline at her school, for example by discouraging tardiness, absenteeism and the general observation of school rules and regulations.

She added: *“I find it difficult and challenging to implement the school’s Code of Conduct. The DoE and the unions decide on the instrument to be used for the evaluation of the educators. Some educators regard evaluation as an attempt by managers to expose them, especially if they are deemed incompetent. If educators are not evaluated, they were not likely to improve their performance, and would not develop to their full potential.”*

#### **5.6.6 Training of school managers**

The school manager in a semi-urban senior primary school stated that the situation in schools they are managing is exacerbated by the inadequate or non-existent training of school managers, the rapid changes taking place in education and the unavoidable promotion of educators to different senior positions, resignation and the death of educators.

He was of the opinion that the DoE in KwaZulu-Natal blames the poor results largely on the way managers manage schools while the current selection practices for school managers did not always identify the required competence. As a result of this, many managers who were ill-prepared for the demands of managing schools are appointed as managers.

He stated that some managers did not receive human resource management training at all and were thus completely unable to manage their schools successfully. Lack of management skills invariably led to incompetent handling of

management tasks and problems. Consequently, in order for managers to achieve success at their respective schools, they needed to receive the management training that would enable them to manage their schools effectively.

He mentioned that change management was of considerable concern to most managers. He felt that change was imposed on them by a system that did not provide them with support necessary to facilitate the successful implementation of new policies and curricula. *“We lack confidence to manage and lead change as we were not professionally prepared for”*.

He indicated: *“There was no overall effective training for the job of being a manager. Schools cannot perform their functional task (teaching and learning) effectively if their human resource is poorly managed by school managers, in which case they have a negative impact on the overall education of the country.”*

He further mentioned that in senior primary schools, they had inadequate teaching posts. In view of this, some educators were forced to teach subjects they were not qualified to teach, resulting in poor teaching, which had a negative impact of the academic performance of learners.

Inadequate posts led to overcrowded classes by creating a situation in which school managers try to squeeze learners into as few classes as possible in order to avoid exposing them to unqualified educators, or there was a shortage of educators. In

overcrowded classrooms, educators found it very difficult to complete their syllabi as those overcrowded classrooms slow down teaching and learning.

He was of the opinion that overcrowded classes did not allow individual attention and make educators lose their enthusiasm for teaching, their motivation and their morale. This led to ineffective teaching and poor academic performance by learners.

As a manager who used a code of conduct to discipline his learners explained: *“Our school Code of Conduct clearly indicates that a learner who abuses drugs, who comes late for school, who victimises other learners, who disrupts the school, should be disciplined, meaning the manager, the SGB, the disciplinary committee and the educator will talk to the learner.*

*“If he/she continues behaving in that unacceptable manner, he/she will be given a sanction; it can be final warning, detention nor suspension depending on the offence. My learners do all this daily. If I can’t discipline them, no teaching and learning can take place. This implies that as a school manager, I am failing in respect of formulating and implementing a Code of Conduct,”* he reported.

He indicated: *“Some learners do not take responsibility for their actions. They do not attend detention when they are told to, they ‘bunk’ classes, talk during class and walk the wrong way in corridors. As managers we are beset by common challenges such as learners who are rude. Some learners are not punctual in attending their classes, let alone doing their homework.*

*“Littering of classrooms and school premises is common in my school”.* The manager regarded theft as a problem in the classroom and learners differ in this behaviour. He noted: *“The challenge we face as managers is that some learners do not have a sense of morality to which one could appeal and there is, as a result, no sense of shame, with the learner being unable to admit if they had done wrong.”*

He further emphasised the adverse effects of poor learner academic progress, especially regarding the shortage of educational resources, textbooks and stationery and lack of teaching staff as teachers seem not to be motivated. He revealed that there was sometimes conflict between learners and educators themselves. He cited rudeness, arrogance, vulgar language, talking out of turn, cheeky behaviour and a lack of adherence to simple courtesies and manners as problems resulting in disrespectful behaviour.

This was what he said in the interview about disciplining the learners: *“I have learnt that it is best to talk to learners first before disciplining them, although others refuse to listen. It is vital for the learner to know his/her mistakes before receiving a punishment or being subjected to disciplinary measures. Talking to learners before disciplining them is recommended. If they are treated politely, they usually accept the discipline and promise not to repeat the mistake again.”*

He said: *“Some learners drink alcohol within school premises or they came to school drunk and disrespect educators. Some of them are abusing drugs, and carry*

*guns and other dangerous weapons on school grounds and within the school premises, which is a serious challenge.”*

The school manager further revealed: *“Other learners had learning problems while others were parenting teens.”* Learner challenges were more likely to be seen as more problematic by managers in secondary schools than managers in primary schools. Managers’ report of the seriousness of alcohol and drug abuse decline in senior primary schools when compared with secondary schools. They further stated that some learners were a challenge to educators because of their intelligence.

*“Some educators have no professional teaching qualifications while others are unqualified and others under-qualified. Some schools have poor working conditions. In some cases, the principal is both the teacher and the manager which means that there is very little time for human resource management and administrative duties.”*

In responding to the question of learner challenges at school, the school manager indicated that the majority were boys, repeaters and learners who were old (above legal school-going age). He stated: *“We had failed to use the school rules to manage those learners. Sometimes to discipline them, we make them remain behind after school, depending on the seriousness of the offence.”*

He further reported: *Poorly disciplined learners are prone to lose interest in their school work and to neglect their studies. Learners with problems destroy their healthy educator-learner relationship.”* The manager was of the opinion that ill-

disciplined learners kept their fellow learners from progressing academically as it became almost impossible to concentrate in a noisy class where naughty learners deliberately caused classroom havoc. Learners' disciplinary problems, together with home circumstances not conducive to learning, contributed to low morale which is a challenge to managers.

Strict classroom rules and different forms of punishment could improve learner behaviour and learner academic progress. The managers' responses correspond with the literature study findings that undisciplined learners lose interest in their school work and neglect their studies. The school manager mentioned the following disruptive classroom behaviour by learners as school challenges:

- Learners talking while the manager was talking or teaching.
- High rate of pregnancy, tardiness, drug abuse and absenteeism.
- High levels of noise that prevented other learners from concentrating or hearing the educator. The noise levels in classrooms were seen as too high with some educators having little control over learners.
- A lack of respect towards managers when learners shout and swore at them and learners' 'fooling around' while teaching and learning was in progress.

He further stated: *“As a manager, the challenge is that he needs to staff his school with capable educators. They need to identify educators needed to accomplish their schools' goals and objectives.”* He was of the opinion that the ways in which

educators are appointed do not make it possible for the school to obtain the best educators for best results.

The manager claimed that the incompetence prevalent in secondary schools is mainly the result of educators not attending all their teaching periods, not marking learners' exercise books, not completing the work programme for the year, not going to school fully prepared to teach, not being qualified for the subjects they teach and often being absent from school without a sound reason.

He revealed that as managers, they were scared to deal with them because they were afraid of the unions. He concluded that incompetent educators lack the ability to perform their tasks successfully and they retarded the academic performance of their schools. In the light of this study, it was confirmed that managers were beset by challenges at all levels of schools.

For the existence of a school atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning, managers needed to introduce and implement fair learner disciplinary policies. This correlated with the literature review. Discipline was a problem although it differs from junior primary school to secondary school and from rural to urban areas.

*“Managers are challenged by their management positions to redefine and rethink their roles and to examine critically the interaction between parents and the quality of education they deliver. Some challenged managers appeared depressed and*

*stressed because of the disappearance of the culture of work in their schools”,* the manager added.

### **5.6.7 Code of conduct**

The researcher found at an urban senior primary school that although participants talked of using a code of conduct in order to ensure uniformity in correcting behaviour, this was not the case in some schools.

There was no code of conduct in any of schools 2, 4, and 5. It became clear both from what the researcher observed and also the responses participants gave, that some of the participants did not make use of a set of rules that are clear, written and communicated. The research findings revealed that educators should respect learners and instil responsibility. In some schools investigated, this was not the case.

A manager revealed: *“According to DoE, all school managers must concern themselves with quality teaching and learning in their schools.”* In his school, they did not have clear policies relating to class visits, nor the number of tests which learners are supposed to write in a year.

In the school investigated, they were beset by many human resource challenges. *“Some learners in school were abused emotionally, neglected, abused physically and sexually. Some of them were violent in class.”* The school manager stated that some learners in their schools were in early, middle and late adolescent stages with many behavioural problems.

A secondary school manager noted: *“Some educators shouted at learners when they had done something wrong, instead of talking.”* He referred to shouting as unprofessional behaviour. He further explained: *“Each educator should formulate classroom rules with learners and when a learner contravenes a rule, the educator should ask him or her to read the rule and suggest ways to change the unacceptable behaviour.”*

He was of the opinion that educators must not shout at learners. *“They must talk to them and show them their mistakes. Together they should work out a plan on how to correct bad behaviour even if that shouting was in response to noisy and misbehaving students.”*

The respondent indicated that issues related to ill-disciplined learners in secondary schools had caused some of the managers to become very negative towards the teaching profession and school management. Another complained: *“My main challenge is that ill-disciplined learners continually interrupted their educators and created a continuous, high level of noise that disrupts the classroom activities.”*

According to her view, ill-disciplined learners often tried to rule fellow learners. Most of the time there cause strikes in schools. She added that some of the class managers did not act strictly enough on disciplinary issues while there was a great need for learner disciplinary policies.

Managers in rural secondary school identified disrespect as a problem. Disrespect was described as: *“Learners back-chatting managers. They do not listen to instructions and directives from the manager. Some learners were distracting classes while educators were teaching and ‘not nice’ towards their manager.”* Managers were also challenged by learners making excessive amounts of noise in classrooms when educators were not present.

A secondary school manager saw disobedience towards classroom rules as a problem in the classroom. He commented on learners’ habit of eating after break, during teaching and learning periods, when the teacher was teaching and not listening to educators as examples of a bad behaviour.

A school manager confirmed: *“In order to manage the school as an organization, school managers should execute certain management functions such as planning, policy-making, organizing, leadership, controlling, decision making, motivation and communication with certain areas of management.”*

He further mentioned that issues such as too much work expected by the Department of Education in a very short time, and the fact that some learners do not receive their textbooks on time from the suppliers, was a major challenge. He also added: *“Some educators were not prepared to listen to learners with problems while some choose their pets.”*

He felt concerned about educators being seen as friends to learners instead of as authority figures. He lamented: *“The sense of relying on educators as parents has gone missing in some educators. Some educators are learners’ friends now, boyfriends or girlfriends maybe.”*

### **5.7 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AS A CHALLENGE**

The study indicated that the Department of Education encourages parents to become involved in their children’s education either by joining school governing bodies or by assisting their children with homework at home. Parents and the community in general, as partners in education, should share the responsibility of educating their children with school managers.

Some educators indicated that parents’ view of discipline of learners was aimed at making educators responsible. The researcher’s reaction to this was to point out that this made it acceptable for learners to be punished by their parents, but that it did not give educators the same right. And yet the educators claimed in the same breath that they still punish learners because they themselves received punishment from both their parents and educators.

Nevertheless, several of the participants in this study maintain that they believe that they are what they are today because of the punishment they received – that corporal punishment made them behave in a manner that was socially acceptable.

Participants mentioned that they are living testimony that the use of corporal punishment is not necessarily harmful. Learners were not disciplined because they are not punished.

According to research findings, both the school and the home influence the manner in which children approach their learning tasks and this was why the continuity between home and school was vital but difficult to achieve.

Still there were learners who lived on their own without parental guidance. It was noted that managers were beset by challenges in making learners observe school rules and regulations. The maintenance of discipline in all schools rests squarely on the shoulders of the managers. Parents are expected to play a significant role in the maintenance of discipline in schools.

### **5.7.1 Discussions with school managers**

The researcher conducted interviews in different schools. Participants were interviewed as individuals. Those who were willing to be together were free to do so. All school managers were interviewed as individuals. Their responses were discussed separately.

#### **5.7.1.1 Findings from School 1**

This manager regarded parents as informal chief educators for children. She stated that if this responsibility was abdicated, it presented problems to school managers. She further stated: *“As school managers are expected to teach parents’ children quality education, schools need the full support of parents and the community.*

*Parents as primary educators need to teach their children manners and discipline at home before they get to school.”*

The manager was concerned with the lack of involvement by some parents in the education of their children. She mentioned: *“Some parents were often absent from their children’s schooling, either by leaving them and staying with other partners or by working far from their children.”* She insisted that if parents and managers keep in touch with each other and communicate on a regular basis, children would do better in their school work.

In her view, this sense of communication appeared to make a difference in the children’s educational progress. She stated: *“If parents and managers are part of the child’s education, then they directly influence each other and the child becomes involved in this relationship. If parents are not involved, the result is the lack of commitment to the education of the child.”*

She further indicated that some school managers were facing a serious human resource challenge of alcohol, delinquency and drug abuse that was common among the learners and the community.

She further said that parents at home needed to create a home environment conducive to learning. To become responsible promoters of a culture of learning, parents had to create and maintain a home environment that was supportive and conducive to preparing the child for the requirements of formal schooling. Pretorius

(2000:85) established in his research that the characteristics of the home environment often play a more important role in academic learning than do the normal school inputs.

The manager said: *“Parents have the primary responsibility, as well as real concern for their children.”* Duschi (2000:312) documented that the home setting provides diverse opportunities to create a process for learning and to provide stimulation for developing the cognitive powers children need for effective learning at school. The basic intellectual power of children can be increased by providing a nurturing environment for learning in the home.

The respondent mentioned that parents had the primary responsibility, as well as real concern for their children. Managers in school 1 suggested that parents should be encouraged to volunteer to be included and be of assistance to the school. He said: *“Parents can be invited to assist in the organisation and management of extra-curricular activities like coaching sports, catering or to transport learners. Parents must have a sound understanding of their children in all aspects.”*

She stated without hesitation that active parent involvement in learner academic achievement did not exist at their schools. Some parents only came to school if they were invited but sometimes not. The junior primary school manager indicated that when they have a parents’ evening, they attempt to make contact with all learners’ parents to check their children’s work. Some of the parents do not attend those meetings.

The manager from the school in rural areas indicated that he had realised that some parents did not know how to become actively involved in their children's academic progress. Some parents showed little or no interest in their children's academic achievement and often did not arrive for a scheduled meeting or they would offer apologies. They still need workshops about parental involvement and the importance of education.

The study revealed that sometimes other learners did not inform their parents when they were called for meetings. Some of them brought people who were not their biological parents or guardians. They just grabbed anyone they come across to be their parents. This resulted in little or no educator-parent relationships.

The manager in an urban junior primary school indicated that their contacts with parents were good. Parents were called in to discuss their learners' disciplinary problems, for outstanding school fees and on prize-giving days and most of them responded to those meetings.

#### **5.7.1.2 Findings from School 2**

The manager indicated that the most important support system for the children to remain at school was their families. Without this support, which provided mental stimulation as well as sustained nurturing, children dropped out of the school system. He further indicated that parents and the community needed to be involved in schools as they had a very important role to play in the learning experience of

their children. There might be a positive relationship between parents' attitude and learners' school performance.

He added: *"Since parents are primary educators, it was imperative that they instil a sense of identity about where learners come from and to which ethnic group they belong."* He blamed lack of parental commitment for the high failure rate by saying: *"One of the main reasons for high failure rates in schools is the lack of commitment from parents in the education of their children. Most children in my school come from families whose dynamics are not conducive to supporting a learning environment."*

He further responded that for some learners, the absence of their biological parents made it difficult for the school manager to discuss the challenges the learner could experience at school. He sympathetically concluded: *"Sometimes my challenge is that when the parents have normal desires for the education of their children, the burden of poverty and unemployment become obstacles to them performing their parental roles."*

The school manager stated that if parents and managers keep in touch with each other and communicate on a regular basis, children would do better in their school work. This sense of communication appeared to make a difference in the children's educational progress. If parents and managers were part of the child's education, then they directly influence each other and the child becomes involved in this

relationship. If parents were not involved, the result is lack of commitment to the education of the child.

It was revealed that parents at home need to create a home environment conducive to learning. To become responsible promoters of a culture of learning, parents had to create and maintain a home environment that is supportive and conducive to preparing the child for the requirements of formal schooling. Pretorius (2000:85) established in his research that characteristics of the home environment often play a more important role in academic learning than do the normal school inputs.

The deputy principals of schools 1, 2, and 5 stated without hesitation that active parental involvement in learner academic achievement did not exist at their schools. They indicated that they had attempted to make contact with parents through parent meetings, but very few parents attended these meetings and that they had *“actually stopped having these parent meetings”*. The HOD of school 2 added that he realised that in rural areas parents did not know how to become actively involved in their children’s academic progress.

The deputy managers of schools 2, 3, 5 and 6 indicated that at present, their only contact with parents was if parents were called in because of learners’ disciplinary problems or outstanding school fees. According to the educators, the parents showed little interest in their children’s academic achievement and often did not

arrive for scheduled meetings or they sometimes offered apologies when they did not arrive for the meeting.

Some of the learners did not tell their parents when they were needed at school. Other learners brought people who are not their parents or guardians but friends. Others brought their siblings not parents. This resulted in no or little educator-parent relationship.

Educators of schools 2, 4 and 5 stated clearly that the parents were not interested in their children's academic performance. The class managers said that they made many attempts to get the parents to discuss their children's academic progress, but most parents did not respond to these invitations. It should be noted that all school managers and educators showed concern over the fact that many parents did not realise how important their active involvement was, especially when improved educational school environment was to be created.

In schools 1 to 6, there was a need for their school governing bodies to inform parents about the importance of parents' meetings and that their attendance would be valued by the school manager, the staff and the learners. According to the literature study, (see Chapter 2), it was the role of the educators to educate the community regarding the importance of continuous communication between the parents and all school stakeholders.

It was clear that the school managers did not make enough effort to communicate with the parents when it was necessary, but instead depended on the governing body to intervene. Managers cited that poor qualifications and unionism in schools are possible causes of human resource challenges facing school managers in some schools.

Given the traits of effective leaders, such as initiative, analytical abilities, resourcefulness, being vision-oriented, displaying democratic-participatory management styles, time management skills and high expectations of all school stakeholders (see chapter 2), it became evident to the researcher that some of the school managers in South African schools lacked these traits. More importantly, the school managers showed a lack of effective communication, empowerment and accountability skills.

### **5.7.1.3 Findings from School 3**

School 3 is a private school. The school manager was of the opinion that privatising schools reveals a commonly held belief that private schools are better able to produce quality education. He said that the private schools had control that yielded strong student performance. Private schools had always been an important component of the education system. School managers in private schools were sometimes not rewarded for showing accountability or for exercising autonomy.

The school manager said: *“In some of the private schools, the climate is tough.”*

The participant was of the opinion that enrolment at many private schools was shrinking.

During the interviews the researcher held with the participant, he revealed his experiences, both negative and positive.

He further stated that for effective human resource management, some school managers are faced by a challenge of advising their staff on all educational matters relating to teaching and learning. School managers needed to be good human resource managers. This implied the ability to motivate parents, teaching and non-teaching staff and learners.

All participants agreed that as the roster of private schools grows smaller each year, costs become prohibitive. They predicted that private schools may close or merge. If a private school was well funded, it is likely to excel. It had not been easy though to manage in a private school. Qualified people did not want to work in such a place. Sometimes they appointed retired educators.

He viewed parental involvement as a combination of commitment and active participation on the part of the parent to the school and to the learner. He stated his major challenge: *“My major challenge with parental involvement in private school is that some parents feel unwelcome at school. They see education as very important to their children and pay large amounts of money but they are not involved.”*

The manager acknowledged the role played by private schools in the sense that it encouraged parents to become involved in their children's education either by joining SGBs or by assisting their children at home with homework. Parents and the community in general, as partners in education, should share with the managers the responsibility of educating their children but they don't.

The school and the home both influence the manner in which children approach their learning tasks and this is why the continuity between home and school is very important but difficult to achieve. The respondent mentioned that parents have the primary responsibility, as well as real concern, for their children. The basic intellectual power of children can be increased by providing a nurturing environment for learning in the home.

#### **5.7.1.4 Findings from School 4**

The school manager said: *“Challenges besetting school managers in school spills over from a culture which is deep-seated in some communities. The schools must involve parents in teaching and learning because children need solid, consistent and caring parenting for quality education.”* According to him, *“It takes the school manager and the community to bring up the child. Schools need to work with parents to strengthen parent- manager relationships.”*

School managers appealed for team work. This manager stated that some parents no longer discipline their children, and thus, parents, school managers and other institutions such as the church and other community organisations as a team also have a role to play.

He counted on parental involvement: *“Parental involvement in schools is very beneficial. It benefits the learners, the parents, the community, us as school managers, as well as other children in the family. School managers should do everything possible to encourage parents to become actively involved in their children’s learning.”*

In the effort to involve parents, the school manager acknowledged that he was a leader. *“As a manager, I am the driving force of the school. My leadership drives the parents in the direction of emphasising the importance of parental involvement in schools.”* He suggested that parents should be encouraged to volunteer to be included and be of assistance to the school.

They could be invited to assist in the organisation and management of extra-curricular activities like coaching sports, catering or transporting learners. Parents might have a sound understanding of all aspects of their children’s education.

The manager expressed his concern about the lack of parental involvement in some schools. He stated: *“In that regard, active parental involvement in learner academic achievement does not exist at some schools. Some parents only come to school if*

*they are invited.*” He indicated his experiences in that regard, recalling that when they had a parents’ evening they attempted to notify all parents through their children. Some of the parents did not attend those meetings.

The school manager stated that they needed training in financial management, school management and supervision of outcomes based education, the new method the department used in the acquisition of books and stationery and other administrative duties. Clerical staff members also needed to be trained in administration.

#### **5.7.1.5 Findings from School 5**

The manager here mentioned that parental involvement actually declined as students grew older, so that it was less prevalent in secondary schools. The challenge was that at that stage, learners became more uncontrollable, rude, violent and undisciplined. So, in junior primary and secondary school stages, parental involvement was needed the most.

The school manager indicated the strong influence of parents in their children. She said: *“Another thing is that what parents teach their children at home comes back to how a child will behave at school. Their family backgrounds play a very important role in the way they behave at school. You find that especially the boys are very arrogant or disrespectful showing limited parental upbringing.”*

She further stated that teenagers had always been a worry to their parents and school managers, which was the nature of adolescence. They gave school managers headaches. The onus of disciplining learners has shifted from home to school. Most parents expect school managers to lay the foundations and to discipline their children. She was of the view that discipline started at home and was only nurtured for a little while in schools.

The manager said she had realised that some parents did not know how to become actively involved in their children's academic progress. Some parents showed little or no interest in their children's academic achievement and often did not arrive for scheduled meeting or they offered an apology. They still needed workshops about parental involvement and the importance of education.

The managers in junior primary school suggested that parents should be encouraged to volunteer to be included and be of assistance to the school. They could be invited to assist in the organisation and management of extra-curricular activities like coaching sports, catering or to transport learners. Parents ought to have a sound understanding of all aspects of their children's education.

#### **5.6.1.6 Findings from School 6**

The manager was of the opinion that schools had to work together with parents who collectively were the immediate community. It was very important that every effort be made to get parents as involved in the education of their children as possible.

He also responded that parents and society should be aware of what is happening in schools, and that they should feel that their contributions and opinions are sought and respected by school managers.

He indicated that in his school, parents were assisting as helpers, decision-makers, as well as educators in the absence of the manager. He stressed: *“Schools are not islands. They are the mirrors of the communities that they serve. Challenges that plague communities are felt in schools.*

*Both school managers and parents must have a firm control over children. Together, they need to frequently communicate their high expectations to the learners. Children must view parents and school managers as a mutual support system and problem-solving unit.”*

The school manager in a senior primary school stated without hesitation: *“Active parent involvement in learner academic achievement is not well. Some parents only come to school if they are invited but sometimes they don’t.”* The school manager indicated that this occurred when they had a parents’ evening or even when requested to come on a Sunday. They had attempted to make contacts with all learners’ parents for parents to check their children’s work. Some of the parents attended those meetings.

The participant stated that if parents and managers kept in touch with each other and communicated on regular basis, children would do better in their school work.

This sense of communication appeared to make a difference in the children's educational progress. If parents and school managers were part of the child's education, then they directly influence each other and the child becomes involved in this relationship. If parents were not involved, the result was a lack of commitment to the education of the child.

The manager said that parents at home needed to create a home environment conducive to learning. To become responsible promoters of culture of learning, parents had to create and maintain a home environment that is supportive and conducive in preparing the child for the requirements of formal schooling.

He further indicated: *“School managers together with parents and the communities are responsible for the provision of an environment and atmosphere that are conducive to teaching and learning and for learners' personal development.*

*Parents need to be involved in the education of their children and to become actively involved in the improvement of their children's education.”* Some of the reasons for learners' poor performance was the lack of commitment and participation of parents in the education of their children.

#### **5.6.1.7 Findings from school 7**

It was established in the interviews conducted with participating educators that some educators were intolerant. During the interviews the researcher had with participants, they acknowledged that most parents recognised learning disabilities as disabilities. In special schools where learners with special educational needs were taught, they needed to be taught effective learning strategies that would help them approach life more effectively.

The research conducted revealed that school managers in special schools face many types of learning disabilities as one person varies from another. Participants indicated that some of the situations commonly found are dyslexia (inability to read), dyscalculia (inability in math reasoning), dysgraphia (difficulty with syntax), visual and audio difficulties. Generally, a person with learning disabilities experienced difficulties in study skills, writing skills, oral skills, reading skills, math skills and social skills.

The researcher observed specific behaviours that were socially unacceptable. Participants in a special school revealed that in studying, learners with learning disabilities experienced an inability to organise time and was therefore unable to finish work on time. She further noted that they have trouble in taking notes and following instructions.

The school manager stated that educators were always complaining that learners with disabilities often have difficulty in spelling the words correctly and have frequent grammatical errors resulting in poor sentence structure.

The school manager revealed: *“Some of the educators speak very fast. That results in learners having difficulty in understanding the educator and in recalling the words. The learners we teach are usually slow readers. Sometimes they have incorrect comprehension and poor retention.”*

When learners realise their inabilities, it results in low self-esteem, which greatly affects their social skills. The research conducted in the special school revealed that dealing with students with learning disabilities takes patience. Educators need to consider cross-age or peer tutoring if the learner appears unable to keep up with the class pace or with complex subject matter.

According to the manager, facilitating factors besetting school managers were challenges in school management such as community involvement; school-based professionalism and a flexible curriculum and organisation. He added: *“Many schools are challenged by a high failure rate, early school drop-out, low morale and anti-academic attitude due to lack of discipline and consequently unacceptable behaviour. Poor school attendance and truancy is one of the contributing factors to the absence of a culture of learning in many schools.”*

He reported that in some schools, managers seemed to be uncertain of how to efficiently fulfil the core duties and responsibilities, as the Department of Education did not evaluate or give feed-back regarding the manner in which most of their duties were performed.

The DoE is only concerned with grade twelve learners. This indicated a lack of interest in supporting classroom activities in other grades by the educational planners which challenges school managers. Teenage pregnancy, child abuse and parents who were not actively involved in their children's school work were a challenge.

He further stated that over-crowded classrooms were a problem. They were understaffed and the Department did not immediately replace an educator who had passed away, resigned or was always ill. *"We wait for a long time and are saddled with learners without an educator. Sometimes as a manager, you have to teach and manage. Some learners are not well-disciplined. They come to school late, bunk classes and leave early. They don't want to be punished for their offences nor fetch their parents."*

Parents who did not live with their children were a challenge when learners need help with homework. Most children were living with grandparents or guardians because their parents work in towns and cities. *"We are also challenged by Outcomes-Based Education with a lot of paperwork. Strikes and unions are making our schools unruly."*

## 5.7 OVERCROWDED SCHOOLS

All respondents agreed that overcrowding at their schools adversely affected their schools' pass rates. There was a high number of learners in some classrooms and an absence of clearly formulated learner academic goals.

The learner class lists and educator registers dating back to 2005 showed that there had always been very high learner-educator ratios at schools. All school managers indicated that high learner–educator ratios at schools directly indicated that there was a shortage of actual classroom space, shortage of furniture such as desks, shortage of textbooks, and shortage of educators.

Educators in school 1 revealed that large classes make large demands. Good planning and preparation, with a sound awareness of what you wish to achieve, is key to meeting the challenges posed by a large class. The head of department in school 5 agreed: *“As a class educator, you must know your learners. Above all, know their names. You need to move around the class. This reduces the distance between the educator and the learners. It also promotes learner improvement. This is practically impossible in our overcrowded classrooms.”*

Head of department at school 7 said: *“If you divide the overcrowded learners into groups, it is not easy to control them. In a large class the learner can easily ‘disappear’ into the group. You cannot maintain eye contact with your learners.”*

Learners did not get the necessary individual attention in classes nor were they often assessed, which could be detrimental to their academic progress.

This contributed to school atmospheres not conducive to teaching and learning. These conditions created challenges to school managers and educators when creating a sound educational school environment. Overcrowding in schools was further complicated by educators who were under-qualified and clearly did not have the answers to all learners' questions.

All educators indicated that school governing bodies could not afford to appoint for the shortage of educators to reduce the existing high learner-educator ratios. They found it impossible to address the problem of school overcrowding without the Department of Education soon providing adequate, qualified educators.

The heads of department at schools 5 and 6 also stated that in many classes, the learner-educator ratio was greater than 35:1 in a very small classroom. Some managers indicated that due to a shortage of educators, there were up to 80 learners in one class with only one subject educator.

Cheating was rife and affected continuous assessment (CASS) negatively. All school managers showed concern over the fact that overcrowding deprived all learners of the individual attention that they were "entitled to".

All respondents commented that it was educationally unsound to expect one educator to teach and accurately assess so many learners' tests and examinations. In their view, this was the reason learner academic progress was not regularly monitored by educators. They complained that they did not receive any guidance from the school governing bodies on how to approach or address school overcrowding.

They added that in overcrowded classrooms there was *“very little possibility for learner-academic improvement”* (heads of department at schools 1, 2, 3, and 6). The deputy manager at school 7 stated that should the Department of Education envisage an improved pass rate, the existing *high “pupil-educator ratio should be decreased as soon as possible”*.

The reality of school overcrowding and the additional financial problems incurred at these schools are in line with the literature review, which reported serious financial difficulties at schools in KwaZulu-Natal. Furthermore, the qualitative research proved that learners in large numbers had less possibility of producing better test results than their counterparts.

All respondents agreed that the Department of Education needed to address the existing high learner-educator ratio as their schools could not afford to employ more educators to improve this situation.

They felt that their communities were poor and “*basically left teachers to do the job*” (deputy manager and head of department at school 5).

Deputy managers of schools 4 and 6 suggested that in a large class, the group work method of teaching cannot be used to individualise and to work inclusively. An educator could include a certain learner in a group where she knew this would be to the learner’s advantage, and where the other learners could support him or her.

In other circumstances educators could create homogeneous groups for certain purposes, for example, those who read at a certain level, and those the educator wishes to give more attention. The educator could easily promote learner participation and active learning in overcrowded classrooms.

The Department of Education declared a national learner-educator ratio of 35:1. All educators indicated that their school managers were unable to adhere to the prescribed learner-educator ratio, especially in their schools which were also in poor physical condition. The educators at schools 1 to 7 stated that the poor physical condition of schools discouraged learners from learning, especially when there is no electricity.

Consequently, the educators felt that due to the large number of learners per class, it was “*impossible to give individual attention to all learners’ academic needs*”. Educators at schools 1, 3, 6 and 7 revealed that giving individual attention would reduce learner academic achievement and resulted in more opportunities for unruly

learner behaviour. The school management team and the school governing body are responsible for ensuring that the policies agreed on by the school governing body are put into practice and that all areas of the school function effectively. All stakeholders had to work productively.

The researcher maintained that the current high learner-educator ratio was an indication that the school managers do not adhere to stipulations by the Department of Education and school governing bodies. This contributed to the continuous, high failure rates in some schools.

According to educators at schools 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7, in cramped classes with high learner-educator ratios, the learners were often left to “learn by themselves”. An educator at school 2 insisted that in their school, learners had to obtain academic assistance from fellow learners. This contributed to a continuous high level of noise in classrooms, which was detrimental to teaching and learning.

The educators at all schools added that, due to classroom overcrowding, the learners were seated too close to one another or shared desks, which encouraged them (learners) to talk to each other and be distracted from their academic work. This caused a further decrease in learner academic progress. All educators indicated that the school managers did not give attention to the root cause of noise. They blame the class managers.

It became apparent to the researcher that the school managers lacked the necessary effective management and leadership skills to contribute to the creation of a work ethic in the schools through the placement of supportive classroom management structures conducive to teaching and learning. The educators and the heads of department of all seven schools were discontent about the fact that, due to the large number of learners per educator, it became very time-consuming to mark tests and examinations.

The educators of schools 1 to 6 gave learners short tests. Also, to save time on marking large numbers of class tests, the educators at schools 1, 3, 5 and 6, openly admitted that they allowed learners to mark fellow learners' tests. The educators said that they realised that this practice had detrimental implications, such as cheating, which often occurred and influenced CASS negatively.

They further said that the subject educators continuously warned learners not to cheat, but to no avail. The problem of overcrowding had been reported to the school managers, who reprimand the learners and do nothing else. The researcher concluded that the school managers lacked follow-up skills, and too often ignored adverse issues that might impact negatively on learners' academic progress.

The educators at schools 2, 4 and 5 indicated that overcrowded classes mostly made them change their teaching methods. They further said that the lecturing and

the text book method were clearly not good teaching methods to use for better improved learner academic progress, because they did not allow for personal academic contact between the educator and the learners. All educators indicated that most of their classes were overcrowded

All educators who participated in the research revealed that classes were overcrowded because their school managers were paid according to enrolment numbers. While educators suffer, managers benefit. That was the reason managers did not decrease the number of learners even when they admitted that they know there are no extra educators available. They report that they were always overloaded with learning areas and overcrowded classes.

They agreed that any school manager had a challenge to create a vision for the future and inspiring the staff to make the vision a reality. They ought to have a vision of better schools. They need to have knowledge, understanding and skills to inspire their staff members, followers and clients to make that vision a reality.

### **5.8 EDUCATORS' INEFFICIENCY**

Deputy managers and HODs of schools 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 expressed their concern that some of the educators in their schools were very inefficient and that this was evident through the poor academic results achieved by the learners in their particular classes.

All respondents complained that they did not have time and educational resources to assist educators to be more efficient in classroom management. However, they would like the Department of Education to offer more workshops where educators could improve educators' classroom managerial skills.

They maintained that inefficient educators contributed to school atmospheres that were not conducive to teaching and learning. The findings correlated with the literature review in chapter three that advocated the provision of a classroom ethos that enhances learner productivity and the promotion of learner discipline through educator effectiveness.

The educators of schools 2, 3, 4 and 6 stated that it was disconcerting to have to report that they received complaints that some educators allowed learners to mark fellow pupils' tests. Some of the educators were giving examination papers to their children in high schools to mark (head of departments of school 2 and 5). Those tests needed to be controlled and marked by the subject/learning area educator for continuous assessment but due to the high number of learners, peer assessment is promoted.

All deputy managers and the head of departments reported that this practice gave learners the opportunities to cheat during the marking of scripts. According to them, the incidence of cheating contributed to learner disruption during classes and further serious learner disciplinary problems.

All deputy managers agreed that the adequate educator efficiency contributed positively to an improved learner academic progress. Some educators were not willing to make a concerted effort to change their negative attitudes towards the teaching profession.

### **5.8.1 Lack of educator classroom management skills**

HODs and educators of schools 3, 6 and 7 were of the opinion that discipline was an important part of the day to day classroom management. It was closely bound to teaching and learning. Good discipline could be ensured through good management and teaching skills. Educators had to establish meaningful relationships with learners.

The deputy managers and heads of department reported that there was a need among the educators to be informed about more effective educator classroom management skills that contributed to school atmospheres which was conducive to teaching and learning. This would help schools to create a sound education environment.

Some respondents indicated that the lack of educator classroom management skills adversely affected the learners' academic progress. The literature review (see chapter two) emphasised the necessity for school managers to encourage educators to expand their professional knowledge, which would lead to improved classroom managerial skills.

The deputy manager of school 2 stated that class educators must be consistent in their expectations and application of discipline.

They need to be punctual themselves, organised and well prepared for lessons also promoted discipline. Head of department of school 3 said: *“Educators must set realistic and achievable targets for learners. They need to motivate them through awards and encouragement. If educators could create positive learning experiences for learners by presenting well-prepared and interesting lessons, the pass rate in schools might increase.”*

The deputy managers and heads of department from schools 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 said that they were embarrassed by the *“improper classroom organisation of some educators, particularly Grade 08 educators.”* The deputy managers and the heads of department indicated that learners complained that educators did not insist on classroom order and discipline especially when learners entered or exited classes, which “caused chaos”.

The heads of department added that learners complained about some educators arriving late for classes and hardly ever dismissing learners in an orderly fashion. The deputy manager of school 4 and 6 replied that they had previously tried to address the problem, but the educators did not heed their advice.

All heads of departments agreed improved classroom organisation would also serve as motivation for improved learner academic progress as learners themselves would also “become more organised in their approach” to their academic progress.

These aspects corresponded with the literature review, which indicated that it is imperative for school managers to develop educator classroom skills to enhance effective teaching and learning, and hence improved learner discipline. It was the responsibility of all respondents to ensure an effective instructional climate and classroom organisation. From the deputy managers’ responses, it was clear that they lack the necessary managerial skills to make a positive impact on educator classroom management as a whole.

The deputy principal and the educators of school 1 to 6 emphasised that not all Grade 12 educators in their schools were adequately qualified to teach Grade 12 subjects. A reason given by the head of departments of school 1 to 5 for allowing under-qualified educators to teach Grade 12 learners was that there were educator shortages, especially due to the government redeployment process.

The educator of school 1 and 4 also indicated that some Grade 12 educators had died, promoted, resigned or retired. The Department of Education had not yet filled the vacant educator positions. These respondents indicated: *“The DoE did not have sufficient funds to employ ‘replacement educators’. This resulted in higher learner-educator ratios.”*

They expressed their concern in this regard and realised that educators' under-qualification contributed to low matriculation pass rates. All school managers stressed that more qualified educators should be appointed by the Department of Education to reduce the high learner-educator ratios and to afford the learners better learning opportunities.

The researcher pointed out to all the school managers that the Department of Education prescribed a learner-educator ratio of 35 learners to 1 educator. All school managers indicated that they had learner-educator ratios greater than 35:1 because they had a shortage of academic teaching staff.

The deputy managers at schools 2, 4 and 6 said that they had combined classes so that all learners would have an educator. It became evident to the researcher that what was happening in schools did not comply with the policies of the Department of Education.

During interviews, the educators frequently stressed that effective classroom management was imperative and that they were aware that it was their duty to manage their classes effectively. They said that improved classroom management would ensure a vast *"difference to the poor manner in which learners behaved"* (educators at schools 2, 4 and 6).

Therefore, it would also improve learner academic progress. However, some of the educators had action plans to improve their classroom management practices. They added that they relied on their school managers to advise them on what to do (educators at schools 4 and 5).

“It is the responsibility of the school managers to monitor classroom management and school practice in order to identify where there was a need for improvement, especially in the areas of actions to avoid classroom disorder, activities necessary to allow the main task of the teaching-learning situation to take place effectively, and establishing conditions in the classroom in which effective teaching and learning can take place” added the deputy principal of 3.

It became evident from the educators that the school managers, deputy managers and heads of department did not provide adequate guidance on efficient classroom management and classroom policies. The educators at schools 1, 2 and 3 indicated that their school managers did not visit their classes. Their question is: *“How would the school managers know what is going on in classes?”* The educators in school 2 indicated clearly that their school manager was to be blamed for the disorder at their school because he lacked management skills.

All educators indicated that some school managers did not provide the educators with enough clear learner rules, procedures and policies for effective classroom management. School managers should schedule regular meetings with their staff

with regard to planning, organisation and regular feedback on school academic development, focusing on learner academic progress.

According to the educators, it was clear that the school managers were not doing their work properly and this resulted in educator-classroom management to deteriorate and culminated in increased educators stress levels. In the light of this study, the researcher asked about job satisfaction and all the educators from seven schools investigated indicated that this aspect existed in their life-world experiences at their respective schools, while others were not satisfied.

All the educators were aware that job satisfaction could lead to more dedication to the teaching profession. The educators at schools 1 and 6 said that during early morning assemblies, the school managers should make the learners aware of classroom routines, how the learners should behave during teaching and learning time, and emphasise the general school rules once they have been set.

The school managers should create opportunities to communicate issues to educators and learners at various assemblies. Some educators at schools visited indicated that there was a lack of clearly formulated learner academic goals to which learners could aspire.

Regarding effective classroom management, the educators at schools 1, 3 and 4 indicated that they would appreciate it if the school manager could work closely alongside them, advising them on how to implement classroom rules, especially in their classes with large numbers of learners and where learners were 'unruly'.

These respondents indicated that the abovementioned contributed to classroom rules, which were set with input from the school manager, all educators, all learners and especially the Representative Council of Learners and the parents. This would reduce learner disciplinary problems to a great extent. The educators at schools 3 and 7 emphasised that the implementation of efficient classroom rules would facilitate learner academic progress.

From the educators' responses, the researcher established that they lacked the skills to co-ordinate with colleagues of all grades in order to maintain a good teaching standard and progress among learners and to foster administrative efficiency within the school, as well as the skill of effective classroom management.

### **5.8.2 Learner disciplinary problems**

The study revealed that all respondents from all seven schools expressed their concern over educators' verbal reports of poor learner behaviour during class time, which occurred on a "*daily basis in different classrooms and different schools*". The deputy manager of school 4 said: "*If an educator must discipline a learner during a*

*lesson, he must give short and simple instructions with clear reference to classroom or school rules. He can also make use of quick responses.”*

He further revealed that the educator must do it quickly and immediately and to continue with the lesson, and not to get “over angry”. Heads of department were of the opinion that the learners did not pay attention to reprimands from the educators or themselves, and many times the same learners committed similar offences. The school managers indicated that they and their staff are concerned with expelling the culprits who continuously committed the same offences.

He stated: *“Quality education is the important building block in schools. Religious practice in the schools is a sensitive issue and must be handled circumspectly by school managers. School managers in schools need to adjust their managerial styles so as not to come into conflict with the rights of anyone within the school.”*

The respondents added that dealing with disruptive learners was very difficult and time-consuming because they did not listen. This led to the question of how school managers, who lacked the ability to stipulate learner rules and regulations, or put the necessary supporting structures in place, could demand discipline from educators. (Educators in schools 1 and 2).

There was a very low level of learner discipline in some classes. Some educators were absent too often. This resulted in learners not being adequately prepared for

the examinations. Many learners were disrespectful to educators by doing other work or reading magazines during lesson time or bunking classes. The educators reprimanded the noisy learners but the defaulters would take no notice of educators' requests for their attention and cooperation.

Other learners would listen for a while, but soon continued disrupting the classes. The educators continuously addressing disciplinary issues infringed on other learners' academic time. All educators agreed that the learner disciplinary problems experienced in their classes contributed to classroom atmospheres not conducive to teaching and learning.

Moreover, the deputy managers and heads of department of schools 2 and 4 indicated that educators always brought disruptive learners to their offices and expected them to solve the problem without the educators dealing with these issues themselves. This action, in turn, caused more learner disturbances due to educators leaving their classes to go to the school manager's office.

The heads of department of schools 2 and 5 indicated that they had clearly told their staff not to leave their classes unattended during subject periods except for very serious cases of learner misconduct. Minor defaulters were to be reported at break times or after school. They added that most educators did not respect this request and that learner disciplinary problems disrupted the school atmosphere.

All respondents felt that the high incidence of learner disciplinary problems at their schools “*created a breakdown in the teaching and learning process*”. This lowered the levels of educator morale (educators of all schools). According to the deputy managers and heads of department of all schools, the disruption in the teaching process led to learners’ developing negative attitudes towards their schools. All school managers emphasised this problem.

The deputy manager and head of department of school 2 indicated that he had raised the deterioration in the culture of teaching and learning in his school at an annual general meeting with the parents. The governing body promised to address the issue in the near future. All respondents indicated that although they had reprimanded learners for misbehaving, these learners were getting worse.

The school management teams admitted that they sometimes did follow up sessions with the educators or the learners to determine whether learner behaviour had improved. The extent of learner disciplinary problems emphasised that learner achievement was viewed as an “indirect failure of school managers’ actions that positively affect instructional climate and classroom organisation. The foregoing was the situation at all schools visited.

All deputy managers and heads of department were of the opinion that educators did not manage to control their classes effectively and they contributed to the continuous poor learner behaviour in schools. In the light of this study, it was

questioned how school managers who lack the ability to address the schools' management challenges can obtain best results in schools.

The researcher was of the opinion that these school managers were not fulfilling their job description, that was, to ensure improved educational school environment in schools through solving learner disciplinary problems. The deputy principal of school 7 was of the opinion: *"Should a learner become disruptive during a lesson or refuse to carry out a task, the teacher must deal with it immediately.*

*He added:" They need to be consistent. Educators should ensure during the beginning of the lesson that all learners have clarity about the educator's expectation and matters such as homework, assessment tasks and incomplete work."*

Some educators at schools 1 to 7 indicated that issues related to ill-disciplined learners had caused them to become *"very negative towards the teaching profession"*. The educators at schools 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7 complained that ill-disciplined learners continually interrupted their lessons.

They said that ill-disciplined learners also created a continuous, high level of noise that disrupted the classroom activities. According to educators, ill-disciplined learners often attempted to rule fellow learners.

They added that the class managers did not act strictly enough on disciplinary issues and there was a need for learner disciplinary policies.

According to the deputy manager of school 7, ill-disciplined learners were often academically weak, and therefore contributed to low pass rates in tests and examinations. She indicated that some parents were aware of the behaviour of their children but they did not provide adequate home support for learner academic progress. She added that the Department of Education needed to give parents advice in this regard.

All educators from school 1 to 7 were of the opinion that ill-disciplined learners kept their fellow learners from progressing academically as it became almost impossible to concentrate in a noisy class where ill-disciplined learners deliberately caused “classroom havoc”. The educators indicated that the learner disciplinary problems, together with home circumstances not conducive to learning, contributed to major challenges in the creation of a sound educational school environment in schools.

Strict classroom rules would improve learner behaviour and learner academic progress. The educators’ responses correspond with the literature study that undisciplined learners lost interest in their school work and neglected their studies.

### **5.8.3 School atmosphere not conducive to teaching and learning**

During the interview the researcher held with the deputy principals and HODs, they raised the concern that school managers lacked the knowledge to improve the poor situation at their respective schools. In some classrooms, there were no pictures and posters to make learning a pleasure and they do nothing about it.

The school managers' responses in the interviews made this evident to the researcher when they mentioned that educators needed to approach teaching with a positive attitude. This helped to create a positive classroom atmosphere. All school management teams referred to the need for the co-operation of the unwilling educators, ill-disciplined learners, and the parents who were not actively involved in their children's academic progress.

Head of department in school 7 said that class educators needed to plan their discipline to the same degree that they plan their lessons. They needed to equip themselves in advance to handle certain crisis situations. They agreed that problems such as absenteeism, late coming and theft are very common.

Disciplinary to disruptive behaviour that affects the fundamental rights of the learners to feel safe and to be treated with respect in the learning environment is achieved by effective and efficient human resource management. A respondent from school 3 indicated: I was addressing the issues with the assistance of the

whole staff, but had *“not yet seen any improvement. Some educators even teach sitting down. Those passive educators easily lose the attention of the class. Educators must create a positive environment by moving around while teaching”*.

The head of departments stated that the lack of successful disciplinary measures by the educators contributed to the prevailing school atmospheres not conducive to teaching and learning. Deputy managers of schools 1, 4 and 5 indicated that the lack of a school atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning was a multi-faceted problem especially as the parents were not actively involved in their children’s academic progress.

Moreover, the communities were poor and could not contribute to an improved school budget. The respondents of all seven schools indicated that the poor physical state, including the poor school infrastructure and condition of school buildings and grounds, impacted negatively on school atmospheres, resulting in an unfriendly and uninviting atmosphere for learners and educators alike.

According to the school managers, this has resulted in a drop in learner academic motivation as well as an increase in learner absenteeism. The deputy managers of schools 1, 3, 4 and 7 maintained that learner academic progress would continue to decline unless they made concerted efforts to promote learner academic achievement.

School managers needed to ensure a positive learning school atmosphere by daily creating a culture of work, promoting commitment by personal example and providing and consolidating an orderly, positive learning environment in the classroom situation.

Furthermore, the research conducted revealed that from all respondents, it was evident that although they made some suggestions on how to address issues which impact negatively on the creation of a sound educational school environment in schools, they did not carry out these suggestions and lacked follow-up procedures.

According to the deputy principals and the educators, some school managers, therefore, did not possess the necessary distinct organisational, control, delegation and evaluation skills to effectively contribute to school atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning. It became clear to the researcher that the school managers did not fulfil their role as accounting managers and leaders regarding the establishment of school atmospheres conducive to teaching and learning.

The deputy principal of school 2 was of the opinion that many problems in classrooms originated at the beginning of the lesson when learners come into the classroom. Subject educators must try to get the lesson underway as soon as possible – learners must not wait for the educator to teach, nor should the educator have to wait for them.

The researcher concluded that all the roles and responsibilities fulfilled by the educators would be imperative if they wanted to improve learner academic progress and decreased learner disciplinary problems. The educators from all seven schools emphasised that their role in the classroom was complicated by learners who did not heed or respond to warnings to spend more time studying and that this contributed to low educator morale.

Although all respondents agreed that one of their main duties was to ensure that there was an acceptable level of discipline in the classroom, they seemed to be unsure of their core duties and responsibilities. The educators in schools 2, 3 and 4 indicated that it should be the responsibility of the school managers to provide guidance to them, in the form of staff development programmes, to highlight their duties and responsibilities.

Some educators indicated that their school managers did not guide them sufficiently in this regard at present. The educators in schools 1, 2, 6 and 7 said that their school managers *“have never given any attention to their core duties and responsibilities necessary for classroom atmospheres to be conducive to teaching and learning”*.

It was established in the interviews that all educators in seven schools visited seemed to be unsure of how to efficiently fulfil the core duties and responsibilities as

the school management team did not evaluate or give feedback regarding the manner in which most of their duties were performed. The research findings indicated a lack of interest in classroom activities by the school manager and the deputy manager.

It became evident to the researcher that some school managers did not show the necessary managerial and leadership skills towards educators, especially with regard to the effectiveness of the educators' instructional leadership skills. It is evident that some school managers did not guide and encourage the educators to perform their duties in an accountable manner.

#### **5.8.4 Low educator morale**

The deputy managers, heads of department and the educators reported that the morale among the staff members was very low. They all stated that one of the main reasons for low staff morale was low levels of learner discipline at their schools and that they found it very difficult to teach disruptive learners.

These learners sometimes caused educators to become very despondent and to give up teaching early in their careers. They ultimately make educators decrease their involvement in their classroom management and academic responsibilities. The educators at school 1 and 4 indicated that they felt their school managers did not distribute the academic and administrative workload at their schools evenly.

It is the responsibility of the managers and the heads of department to delegate tasks evenly to persons who have the potential to successfully execute them. The educators at schools 1 to 7 expressed their dissatisfaction regarding the government's redeployment process and the adverse influence it has had on their morale.

This had created insecurity among educators, damaging their morale. The deputy managers at schools 3, 4 and 5 said that the poor educational conditions at schools were not improving in any way and this adversely affected their staff morale. The responses indicated that the educators were teaching under difficult conditions, especially at those schools with a shortage of textbooks and stationery.

There was an immediate need to lower the existing high learner-educator ratios at schools by introducing more qualified educators as they were overworked. The low staff morale contributed to high educator illness and high absenteeism. The educator morale is low due to job dissatisfaction together with poor working environments at schools.

Furthermore, it became evident that the school managers did not provide the educators with adequate guidance on efficient classroom management. The diversity of cultures and the complex composition of the population, each cultural group having its own traditions and values, was a great

challenge in schools. Conflict between managers and educators and between educators and learners has been highlighted. This implies a drastic and pervasive change in thinking and conduct, leaving many school managers and educators in a state of uncertainty. Changes put greater demands on teachers' motivation.

The suddenness of changes in schools' management meant that school managers as educational leaders had to prepare themselves to deal with many new challenges within a short time. A respondent claimed that the vast majority of school managers had no previous experience in dealing with challenges of curriculum changes in education. The research conducted revealed that school managers were experiencing increasing human resource management challenges.

The situation was accelerated by:

- the rapid changes taking place in education;
- the minimum qualifications for a candidate to be appointed as a school manager, which was just a teachers' diploma in education;
- the appointment of inexperienced, under-qualified educators in schools;
- the promotion of the best experienced educators to the positions of managers, school inspectors and ward managers;
- the new generations of educators appointed were a great challenge, and
- educators appointed to teach with only matric and no teaching method experience or qualifications.

## **5.9 DISCUSSION EMANATING FROM OBSERVATIONS AND ARTEFACTS**

In some classes in some schools, it was observed that learners were making a noise and moving about during teaching periods without educators' permission. Some learners were left alone in classrooms. On checking where the educator was, it was found the educator was in the staffroom marking exercises and not attending to the class. Experiences like this made the researcher aware of the fact that some educators were randomly leaving their classrooms and the learners unattended.

In some of the schools, the researcher found a very relaxed, easy feeling. There was a relaxed dress code for managers (no ties or suits). In schools investigated, teachers were addressing managers as Mister, Miss or Mrs and their surnames, initials, or by their first names.

The cures of schools visited were different. Although the researcher requested quiet rooms to conduct the research, learners in some schools were making a noise outside while, according to the composite timetable, they were supposed to be in their classrooms with an educator. On one occasion when the researcher visited schools at 08h45, many classes were still unattended and the learners were noisy and moving about.

Some learners were standing outside while the girls were sweeping the classroom. In S3 and S4, learners could be seen roaming the corridors during teaching and

learning hours. The cleanliness of the school premises, the staff room, and how the learners wear school uniform were observed by the researcher. From class attendance registers it was clear that some learners were frequently absent from school, arrived late for their classes and was late with homework.

The instances mentioned above were a clear indication that managers faced challenges because their school management team members and teachers were sometimes entirely ineffective. In a thorough analysis of the current artefacts, namely respondents' school grounds and buildings, the researcher made the following observations:

The artefact analysis included the school documents, minutes of meetings, attendance registers, circulars, school rules and the code of conduct for each school. In all schools, the researcher observed the school managers' human resource challenges. The aim was to investigate whether school managers were involved in teaching and learning or if they were based mainly in their offices, completing paperwork, talking on the telephone or whether they walked in the schools' corridors and visit classes.

When they were talking to learners and educators or visiting the staff rooms, the researcher observed how many interactions school managers had with staff members, learners and parents during the research. According to the researcher, to ensure an improvement in the condition of the school grounds and gardens, the

school managers were required to give instructions in writing to the staff and to do follow-ups as a form of control.

This helped to establish whether the instructions had been carried out by ground staff members. The researcher established that the school manager did not give the ground staff written instructions. The school managers did not have staff meetings with the ground staff as no minutes of the meeting were available.

At schools 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, the researcher observed that school premises and buildings were clean. The school managers indicated that the ground staff members had been at those schools for many years and were familiar with their job descriptions and that they *“did not need any reminders”* from them.

During the visits to the selected schools, the researcher observed that staff members at each school brought disruptive learners to the school managers' offices. At schools 2, 3 and 5, the school managers relied on the educators to give learners suitable punishment. At schools 1, 5, 6 and 7, the school managers were responsible for giving suitable punishment for the incurred offences. Some of the school managers and educators concerned recorded the offences.

During the interviews, the researcher observed that sometimes school managers did not do follow up on these matters, the reason being that almost all educators bring learners' problems to the school managers every day. With the help of the

School Governing Body, they only pay attention to very serious matters. Other problems were to be solved by the class educators and forwarded to the deputy principal.

The researcher noted that all educators who brought the defaulters to the school managers were frustrated and were clearly annoyed with the learner's disruptive behaviour. Learners were unperturbed about their poor behaviour and the negative impact it had on academic classroom activities and fellow learners' academic progress. The behaviour and actions of some learners were insolent and disrespectful in the presence of the school managers. Some school managers were upset about the reported disrespectful learner behaviour.

The researcher did not notice any school rules, learner discipline policies or any code of learner conduct displayed in any of the school managers' offices or in any of the schools' corridors used to discipline both the educators and learners. Learners who were being reprimanded for continuous, unacceptable classroom behaviour were to be attended to at a later stage.

The researcher established that these school managers did not set follow-up dates and did not provide adequate guidance on how to solve the particular learner classroom behaviour. During the time of the research, follow-up letters were sent to the respective parents by the school managers. This emphasised that the school managers were involved in the solving of learner disciplinary problems.

It indicated further that these respective school managers were interested in identifying learner disciplinary problems. The researcher regarded and interpreted these activities as unsatisfactory procedures and poor managerial skills by the school managers. It was further questioned, in the light of this study, whether a lack of parent support and active involvement in curbing poor learner classroom behaviour partly contributed to the continuous challenge of creating a sound educational school environment in Vryheid district schools.

During the researchers' visits to the respective schools, she managed to establish a link between reality and the theoretical assumption about the real-life world of school managers, as portrayed in the literature study in chapter two of this study. It is necessary for school managers to ensure the smooth running of schools as institutions where an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning prevails to afford learners the opportunity to achieve academically.

Furthermore, efficient management was concerned with orderly structures, maintaining day-to-day functions, ensuring that work gets done, and that they monitor the results. Through the observations of the activities at the seven schools, the researcher concluded that the schools' environments were not conducive to teaching and learning and that the school managers were not concerned with their management and leadership roles.

The following section will refer to similarities and differences between the findings of the qualitative research and the literature study. To draw accurate conclusions, the researcher referred to all the findings of the qualitative research study artefacts.

## **5.10 SYNTHESIS**

This chapter attempted to analyse and interpret human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district schools, KwaZulu-Natal. All participants interviewed agreed that management in their schools showed clear signs of breakdown in structures and processes like the loss of authority among educators and lack of punctuality in both educators and learners. There was a lack of interest and laziness in some educators and some learners. The lack of parental involvement results in disciplinary problems.

*Chapter 6, the final chapter of this study, consists of the research findings, conclusion and certain recommendations.*

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter One orientated the reader about the study. That included, among others, the identification of the problem statement, the research aim and method of research. Chapter Two focused on the literature survey of identified challenges besetting school managers. These stem from the categories of tuition and administrative challenges. In the previous chapter, identified managerial challenges besetting school managers in schools were discussed.

Chapter Three dealt with the recruitment of the staff and the selection process in appointing educators in schools. Induction and staff retention issues were discussed. Chapter Four outlined the research design and methodology. It does that by focusing on research approach and methodology. Chapter Five focused on data analysis and research findings from the empirical research. These stem from the categories of research findings.

*Chapter Six presented the summary and recommendations of the study. These stem from the research findings and conclusions, challenges identified, high failure rate, recommendations, discipline and the recommendations for further research.*

## **6.2 THE RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The implications of the research findings are that school managers as individuals regard and observe human resource challenges differently and thus some of them differ in their judgement. Challenges did not affect them all in the same way or to the same extent. However, they all experienced some of these problems. None of the human resource problems was dismissed by the manager as not a problem at all. Thus their challenges supported their views as was obtained by the interview questions.

The view held with by the school managers as well as their negative impact on academic achievement are supported by the literature. The identification of these challenges addresses the fundamental aim of this study. The study revealed that school managers experienced numerous human resource challenges in the schools they manage. Challenges did not only inhibit their performance of their management responsibilities, but also had a negative impact on the performance of educators and learners.

In schools where school managers beset human resource challenges in their management, climate creation was essential to promote greatly lacking unity. School managers were mainly concerned with the improvement of work satisfaction and morale. They were challenged in human resource to show their accountability. In the managerial area of tuition the human resource challenges that they beset were addressed through the issues of their management and leadership roles.

### **6.2.1 Punctuality**

It was shown in this study that in some schools, punctuality for teaching and learning was not strictly adhered to, and the teachers and learners alike were always late for their classes in the morning, after break and when they change classes. The code of conduct was not strictly followed.

Some school managers beset major human resource management challenges in their schools due to the late arrival of the staff and learners. The disciplinary methods used by some school managers to deal with disruption led to the conclusion that some school managers were unskilled in this aspect of school management.

The study revealed that some learners in other schools displayed unacceptable behaviour. Some school managers indicated that some educators left learners alone in classrooms. Learners were left to loiter while educators remained in the staff room. Some learners were referred to the school managers for discipline issues. This indicated that that some educators were unable to keep learners disciplined and focused on the learning process during contract hours.

In some primary and secondary schools where there was subject specialisation, school managers mentioned that some educators left learners in classrooms before the end of their teaching periods. The researcher concluded that although the participants mentioned the use of a Code of Conduct in order to ensure uniformity in

correcting behaviour, this was not the case in some schools. It became clear both from what the researcher observed and also from the responses participants gave, that there were many challenges besetting school managers. Some school managers were managing class managers who did not believe in their own ability to restore classroom discipline and were always referring problematic learners to school managers and blaming the education system.

The study showed that modelling self-monitoring was lacking in some schools. School managers in all schools mentioned that during teaching periods, learners in classrooms not attended by educator would be noisy.

Learners were noisy when the educator was absent, and not uninvolved or not disciplining learners. School and classroom rules existed in some schools but learners were undisciplined. Learners needed to be included in the formulation of the classroom rules designed to keep discipline. Those rules needed to be implemented. If learners were part of the formulation of the school and classroom rules, they developed a sense of ownership of those rules.

The leadership style of the school manager determined the climate, values, growth and development of staff members and learners. The researcher was of the opinion that school managers needed to be reflective, collaborative and adaptive. They were to be able to solve problems in varied settings and aware of the

interdependence of classrooms within the school, society and all who operate within them. They were to be flexible and dynamic to meet the human resource challenges, the needs of the changing society, learners and other stakeholders.

Learners believed that they had the power to control their own lives when they participate in choices and decisions that affect them. This resulted in teaching and learning becoming very enjoyable and fun. In addition, when learners were allowed to make choices, they tend to assume responsibility and became self-directing and free. Respondents said that repeaters and older learners typically caused disciplinary problems in many schools.

Almost all participants reported difficulties in finding time to support their staff and to be effective in their roles as school managers. Unrealistic deadlines imposed by the District office were also cited as a challenge and as a result, some of them were failing to balance work and family life.

The following findings emerged from interviews in schools in Vryheid District, KwaZulu-Natal Province. They indicated that:

- some of the teachers lacked motivation and classroom management skills;
- learners in schools are not receiving the quality of learning they deserve, because of incompetent teachers;

- some teachers in rural areas were under-qualified and others unqualified;
- some teachers expressed lower teacher morale and stress towards their profession and leaving the teaching profession. and
- some school managers did not have enough time to monitor learner academic progress regularly because of many human resource managerial challenges they beset. Almost all participants believed their schools received inadequate funding and were understaffed.

### **6.2.2 The appointment of the staff**

The selection and recommendation for a vacancy must be done in terms of the relevant legislation and with attention to the role and responsibility of the school governing body. In appointing quality school managers, the school's needs and values ought to be balanced with the national needs and priorities of redress and equal opportunity. This had to influence the criteria for the selection of school managers and educators.

The study revealed that the effectiveness of the school depends on the effectiveness of the educators. The school governing body and the school manager had to recruit and select people who are qualified and are specialists in the subjects they teach. The recruitment could be outside the school or the internal movement of educators. They could be internally promoted to senior positions.

The study revealed that school managers experience numerous management problems which inhibit the execution of their management responsibilities, and also had a negative impact on the performance of learners and educators. Human resource challenges hampered the smooth running of the school and retarded academic performance.

The respondents were of the opinion that there was no induction in their schools. School managers sometimes disciplined them harshly and yet they were not given a performance standard. Staff members had individual talents and they needed to be managed as the most valuable resource of the organisation.

School managers and the school governing body were responsible for the process of recruitment, selection, appointment and retention of the best staff. For the school to be the best, develop and improve, it was important to have the most talented school manager available.

The participants lamented the provision of focused professional development activities which were a common challenge among participants. Managers' development programmes in leadership and managing human resource was the area of most interest. The participants also said that the appointment of school managers needed to be carefully handled by the Department of Education to ensure that people who assumed school manager's positions were capable of leading, managing and facilitating the transformation process.

This implies an ability to plan, organise, and supervise and to motivate the staff. Interviewing strategies should be effective and be the responsibility of professionals and educationists from the Department of Education. When school managers were appointed, professionalism must be observed in the name of transparency.

There was also a great need to appoint candidates on the basis of competency and not personal preference and loyalty to political organisations, out of nepotism, for being a union member, for sexual favours, out of favouritism or being a so-called “child of the soil”. School managers are financial managers as they are becoming increasingly responsible for the financial control of schools they manage. They need to be competent in managing school finances.

The study showed that in schools, great responsibility was placed on the one who guides, the school manager. Indeed, any education system was only as good as the one who manages. Lack of proper school managers’ support or management and guidance from the Department of Education made school managers feel isolated and without official guidance - especially if they beset challenges while they do not have any management experience or skills.

The Department of Education expects them to cope with human resource challenges without investing in helping them gain management skills and resources to manage schools. The research findings from school managers revealed that

some school managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal had been and are still besetting a crisis of credibility, legitimacy, authority and frustrated expectations.

Heightened tensions, uncertainties and conflicting convictions had resulted in school managers becoming victims of the changing political situation in the country. The school manager from an urban secondary school regarded being a school manager as a traumatic experience where one receives instructions from everybody, including one's assistant staff.

The government used the top-down management approach and the Department of Education should avoid imposing unilateral decisions from the top. Decisions should be finalised through workshops and management training sessions together with school managers and educators. Decisions imposed from the department were not seen by school managers as their own, and as a result they always regarded such decisions as foreign and as being imposed on them against their will.

According to the researcher, many educators who lacked management training were promoted annually to the position of school managers. The human resource management challenges were not likely to be resolved soon unless the Department of Education implements the recommendations made in this study. Training school managers in human resource management skills can be the only way to eliminate their management challenges, empower them to work with maximum effectiveness, and enhance the academic performance of their schools.

The high failure rate could be directly attributed to ongoing disruptions through human resource challenges, violence and intimidation that inhibit learners' performance. Some schools lost up to fifty school days in a year because of teachers' strikes, absence, late arrivals and early departures. Book shortages, vandalism, arson and pilfering had also resulted in many schools not being suitable for effective teaching and learning.

A culture of doing the minimum to pass was prevalent among some learners. Their study input was fragmented, uncoordinated and uncommitted. Another challenge was the learners who were traumatised, malnourished or ill. They were unable to pay proper attention or to concentrate in class.

### **6.2.3 Staff development programmes**

This study had revealed that school managers such as the Department of Education were aware of the importance of educator evaluation and development, but that there was no clear policy on or implementation thereof. As a result, attempts by schools to evaluate teachers' performance were not efficient. Educators could not be properly assisted and developed by their school managers.

Some school managers said they were not aware of laws that had a bearing on the school and on education in general, such as the Bill of Rights, Labour Law, SASA, etc. Thus they know little about their responsibilities and were not in a position to assist educators and parents with regard to school-related legal issues.

School managers also stated that they were sometimes unable to resolve school problems and conflicts affecting learners, educators and parents before these develop into crises. This was a serious shortcoming, particularly in secondary schools, given the fact that some of their schools have a long history of problems and conflicts.

School managers stated that they needed training in financial management, the management of change, the management and supervision of outcomes based education, the new methods used in the acquisition of books and stationery and other administrative duties. They revealed that they experienced numerous management challenges due to the lack of training. Clerical staff members also needed to be trained in administration.

The researcher observed that some of the school managers had lost respect for their subordinates for managing their schools poorly. Educators lost confidence in an incompetent school manager and showed disrespect. All school managers agreed that the lack of management skills and the way managers were appointed could lead to poor management and had a negative impact on academic performance.

Research revealed that all school managers needed a wide range of management skills. School managers' authority had been eroded by the greater powers of the unions and by the rights and freedoms of learners. The managerial tasks of school

managers call for expertise in human resource management. School managers need sufficient training in school management in order to avoid using trial and error methods in managing their schools.

The lack of school managers' development workshops inevitably led to lack of educator development, which had serious consequences for academic performance at schools. Certain skills and understandings were important to school managers and needed to be acquired by means of learning and experience. School managers of schools should never stop learning, striving, growing and should participate in ongoing management development programmes.

School managers' development workshops could improve their skills and to help to determine the role they were supposed to play at school. To face the human resource challenges in schools, school managers should acquire all necessary management skills to ensure that their schools function effectively and that they achieve their objectives.

There was a need for the school managers to be both responsible and accountable in line with professional management styles. To fulfil these duties, school managers need to have exemplary time management and leadership skills. This would help make support for learner academic progress possible.

School managers should have a broad knowledge of education and interest in human resource management activities. They should have common sense knowledge of all aspects of their human resource management. School managers as leaders beset a challenge to display the school vision in schools they manage to develop goals and to inspire the staff and learners to achieve those goals.

In order to improve the latter, the school managers, together with all stakeholders, needed to compile a school Code of Conduct for learners and educators that would contribute to a school atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning where all conflict situations could be addressed. Furthermore, the school managers needed the necessary managerial skills to set school academic goals and to emphasise these goals to ensure the maximum learner academic participation and achievement.

Hence, the school managers needed to display and exercise organisational, monitoring, control, delegation and evaluation skills, which should lead to school efficiency where there was evidence of an even distribution of the school workload and responsibilities between all staff members.

The school managers needed to emphasise both staff and learner academic progress. Where there was a need for the educators' academic development, the school managers should exhibit the necessary managerial skills to provide the staff

members with ample opportunities for in-service training. The school managers were encouraged to make more class visits. They needed to undertake thorough follow-ups and guidance of efficient educator classroom management if they wanted to further develop their managerial skills.

School managers needed to take control over the academic duties and to initiate the much-needed school academic policies. They needed to familiarise themselves with the relevant national and provincial policies and circulars to ensure the efficient co-ordination of curriculum-related matters and the smooth running of the school.

Furthermore, efficient school managers, together with their supportive school governing bodies, needed to ensure that the school finances were in order and that school properties were maintained and kept safe from vandalism. Hence, managers needed to develop a role through which they could efficiently manage all the school assets and resources.

Through more efficient management, the school managers could positively influence quality education in schools. Through more effective educational managerial skills, they could positively influence the pass rates in schools. Financial management was not intuitive, but need to be learnt.

#### **6.2.4 Discipline**

No other problem was more of a human resource challenge and caused so much heartache, frustration and failure among school managers as the problem of discipline in schools. School discipline and education are therefore inextricably linked (Bono 2005:16). Discipline was an important element of school and classroom management and it ensured good academic results. In some schools, learners did not accept the school managers' and educators' rights to command.

The study revealed that school managers were daily beset with a challenge of undisciplined learners. In such a situation, each manager was beset with the daunting task of trying to establish a positive school atmosphere that would enhance teaching and learning.

Undisciplined learners posed various problems for school managers such as truancy, absenteeism, tardiness, pregnancy, drug and substance abuse, dodging, insubordination, failure to complete work given by educators, vandalism and the disruption of classes.

School managers stated that since corporal punishment had been abolished, the Department of Education was taking too long to decide on alternative methods to be used in schools. Ill-discipline among learners was a stumbling block to academic performance.

School managers hold the view that some learners presented a formidable challenge to school managers because they were no longer passive recipients of educational programmes and discipline, but rebellious. Without clear guidelines on how to deal with disciplinary challenges in schools, some school managers still found it difficult to improve learners' performance.

The study revealed that school managers were guardians of future adults. It would be unthinkable for them to give up their responsibility and neglect the development of the learners placed in their care. Some schools, particular secondary schools, were characterised by non-acceptance of authority by learners, destruction of school facilities, and intimidation of those who implement discipline and quality education.

Some learners could be seen roaming in town, townships or sitting on verandas during teaching and learning hours, in full school uniform. Some learners were more outspoken, aware of their rights and easily query their school managers' decisions. It was felt that the disciplinary measures taken against learners by the Department of Education were too lenient (Cox, 2002:159).

Participants explained that the discipline they themselves had received when they were at school was humiliating and that it taught them to be fearful of authority. However, they had learnt responsibility from the discipline they received at home.

The participant educators were beset with learners that were fearless and disrespectful. When they tried to discipline them, they talked back. This reminded the participants of the way they were punished for similar behaviour. Participants explained that they learnt that if you misbehave as a child, elders and parents at home would humiliate you by calling you names. Discipline was not explained to learners.

An educator indicated that although she was haunted by her past, she was eager to use modern approaches to discipline. To her, mutual respect was necessary to assure learners of the school manager's support. That would enhance trust and sound learner-educator relationship.

The fact that some of the educators and school managers were still clinging to the past was an indication of their assistance to change. As far as she was concerned, there was no turning back to the use of corporal punishment.

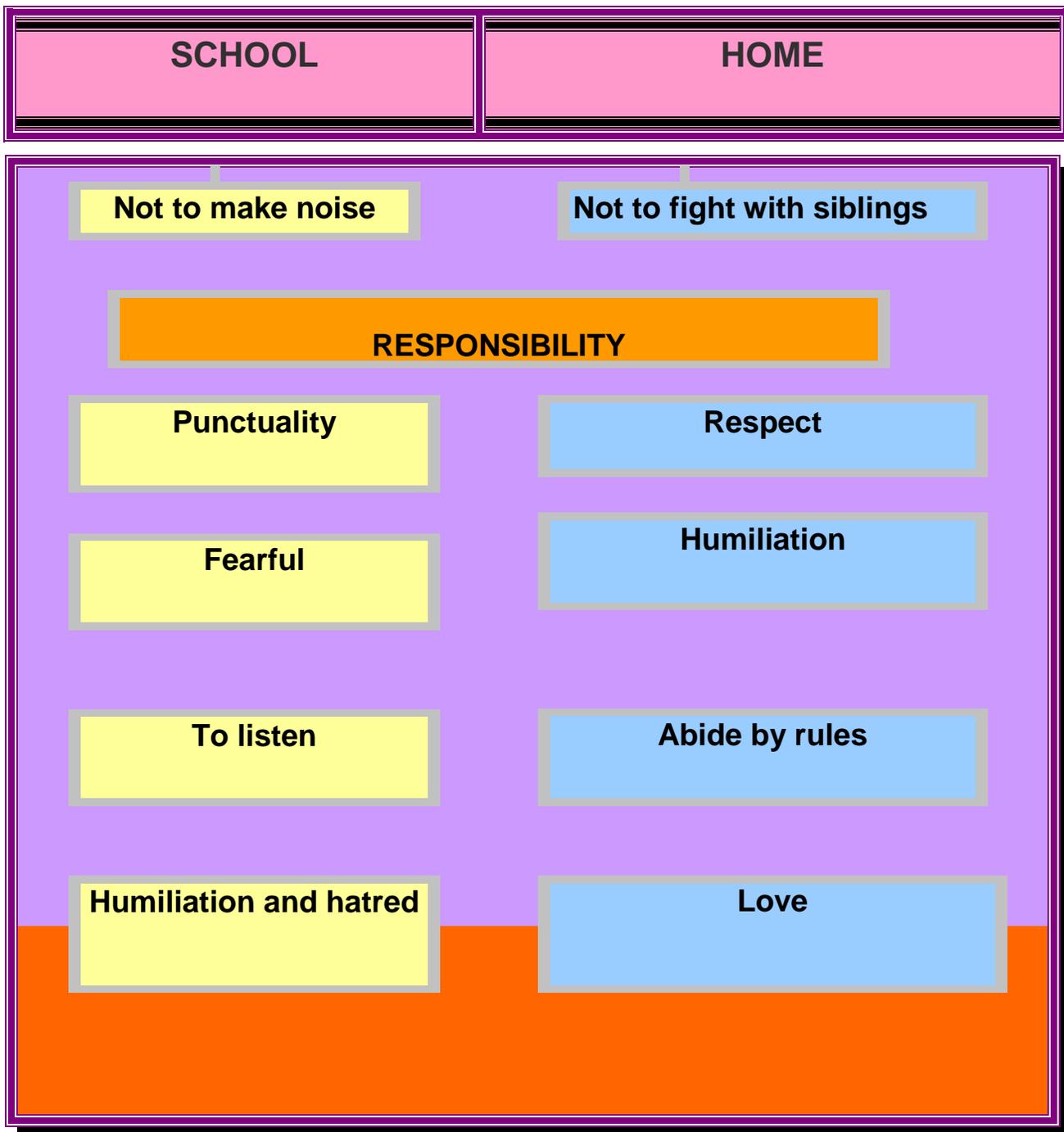


Figure 6.1: Lessons learnt from being disciplined at home and at school

#### **6.2.4.1 Discipline and punishment**

The focus of the classroom is education. Learner behaviour in some schools often displays a lack of understanding of this. It is however, the task of the school manager to manage his or her school within the framework of the school's policy and to create a culture of positive behaviour so that maximum learning can take place.

Sustained great results depend upon building a culture of self-disciplined staff. They need to take disciplined action consistent. Schools blessed with high-quality human resource management programmes and competent school managers have a small percentage of educators and learners who are unwilling or unable to achieve a satisfactory level of performance.

School managers needed to view the educator as a resource rather than a factor of teaching. They would take positive steps to maintain high levels of job satisfaction and productivity. School managers must discipline not punish the staff and learners. Those who punish the staff suffer "people problems and performance shortfalls." The outcomes highlighted the difference between discipline and punishment.

If the school manager had the right people in his or her school, the problem of how to discipline the staff could go away. Great vision without great people is impossible. Good decisions are impossible without an honest confrontation of the brutal facts.

DISCIPLINE	PUNISHMENT
Be aimed at corrective action and the development of self-discipline	The expression of power within a system of controlling through fear.
Acknowledges learners and the staff's need to function within a caring environment, characterised by love and encouragement.	Is critical, negative and leads to a feeling of rejection
Applied in a caring way, develops responsibility, independence and maturity to people.	Does not necessarily change behaviour. It just makes the learner more careful not to be caught out again.
Ensures fair actions and places the best interest of all parties first.	It is a reaction to the behaviour itself with the intention of causing discomfort or pain, and not aimed at education.
Results in creating order to realise a climate conducive to learning.	Results to the destruction of good relationships and trust.

**Table 6.1: Comparison between discipline and punishment**

Adapted from: Christians, 2001:45.

According to Christians (2001:45), the word discipline has its origin in Latin. *Disco* means to *learn* and discipline refers to the communication of knowledge to the learner. Discipline means that school managers needed to exercise their authority in the best interest of the learner with emphasis on the development of self discipline, independence and maturity. Discipline should, at all times, be firm, consistent and positive. School managers needed to discipline learners and staff, not punish them.

#### **6.2. 4.2 Lack of motivation**

A school manager in a rural senior primary school indicated that motivation was the spark which induced action and influenced the direction of human behaviour. The effectiveness and success of learning in school depended to a large extent upon the motivation of the school manager, the staff and the learners.

If the learners in the classroom were intrinsically motivated to learn, they would participate and co-operate meaningfully in teaching and learning. Intrinsic motivation, an inner drive which urged an individual on fuelled by his or her own intrinsic goals, curiosity and interests, plays a significant role in learning. Intrinsic motivation in itself sustains learning.

The study revealed that some educators' motivation and morale were low, as reflected by the lack of motivation to teach effectively. Factors such as redeployment, endless union strikes over salaries, poor working conditions in schools and shortages of basic facilities and resources were all contributing factors

to school managers, educators and learners being not motivated.

School managers stated that they were working under considerable stress caused by the need to manage learners and the stakeholders. Given the lack of motivation, they were sometimes unable to manage their schools properly. They sometimes failed to meet the expectations of both the Departmental authorities and the communities which they had to satisfy.

The research conducted revealed that there were some human resource challenges besetting school managers which resulted in a loss of culture of learning and teaching in some schools. A positive learning culture was expected from school managers. The research findings indicated that although school managers were attempting to influence their school culture, there was little support for such changes from some educators, parents and learners.

The lack of appropriate teaching and learning environment was apparent in the low pass rate of learners in Grade 12 examinations, the high drop-out rate and the high percentage of students who repeat a grade. Some learners had developed “an anti-academic attitude towards schooling” and some of them had lost their dedication and attitude towards schooling. Due to frequent disruptions in some schools by learners, the climate was not conducive to teaching hence the school managers also lost their morale.

School managers lost their professional ethos because the climate in some schools was not conducive to teaching and learning. They lost control of both teachers and learners. School managers were expected to carry out the orders from the Department of Education as a blueprint. A top-down management style was used. School managers were not involved in decision-making by the Department of Education.

#### **6.2.4.3 Inadequate parental involvement and support**

The participants interviewed lamented that they were unrealistically perceived as being experts in human resource matters and pressure was often placed on them, particularly by parents, to come up with solutions to problems experienced by students. Parents were seen as contributing factors to the behaviour-management issue.

Many participants believed that parents did not take enough responsibility in disciplining their children, but instead passed the problem on to school managers. Negative public perception of school managers led some participants to report that they felt undervalued and not respected at school and sometimes in the community.

School managers in secondary schools revealed that parental and community involvement had become a central theme in school management and governance in recent years. It was evident that parental apathy was one of the major human resource challenges in school-parent relations.

Schools belong to the community and cannot function effectively without parental involvement and support. School managers needed to establish a sound school-parent relationship as a key ingredient of success in securing mutual participation of parents in decision-making, school activities and problem solving, providing assistance and offering services to the school.

The study revealed that parents and the school shared similar educational aspirations for learners, thus involvement in and support for education was essential for the realisation of those shared aspirations. School managers were of the opinion that parental interest in the child's learning and their high but realistic expectations of him or her largely contributed to a learner's continued achievement and motivation at school.

Parental involvement in learners' work increased their affinity for the school and their school works. Some school managers mentioned that they were besetting a challenge of parents demanding a stronger voice in the governance of schools. Meeting the demands of parents and other stakeholders was a major problem for school managers.

School managers needed guidance on how to meet these demands and to maintain and maximise parental involvement and support in matters relating to the school. School managers as school leaders were beset by challenges of empowering educators, parents and the community to work together for the benefit of the school.

Participants indicated that the endless disciplinary problems in schools made some of the parents to be reluctant to come to school when invited. Some of them did not participate in activities such as meetings, sports and fund-raising. As a result, school managers and educators could not discuss with parents matters essential to the education of their children or enlist their support in combating the truancy and neglect of school work which were rife in schools and contributing factors to underachievement and failure.

During to this investigation, school managers stated that learners with no love, no internal control, no mutual understanding, interest and respect and very little or no guidance towards emancipation from the parents caused problems in schools. Some parents have little or no time for their children. Instead of close bonds between child and parent, there is distance, suspicion and lack of attachment and understanding.

School managers were of the opinion that on the other hand, some parents were unable to attend school activities because they work until late, work over weekends, work away from home and sometimes did not consider it necessary to take part in school activities.

School managers claimed that parents who did not attend school activities would not know their responsibilities with regard to their children, such as ensuring that they attend school regularly and on time, do their homework, and had all the necessary books and stationery.

The study further revealed that in some families, parents were unable to check or help their children with schoolwork because of their absence from home, inadequate knowledge and inexperience in education. Parental factors influencing children's learning were contributions by parents to language development, encouragement to learn, aspiration of parents for their children, provision of assistance in learning when the child needed it most and ways in which time was organised in the family.

The research revealed that school managers were challenged in schools by some parents and communities, who were not actively involved in the education of their children. If they were involved, this could result in higher scholastic achievement, reduced dropout rates and reduced absenteeism and tardiness.

Some parents did not provide home environments conducive to learning for their children. Some of them were not actively involved in their children's academic progress. Others were not living with their children to motivate and discipline them at home.

As a result of parental apathy, schools could not discuss with parents challenges and matters which were important to the education of their children. Schools needed their support in combating truancy and neglect of school work which were rife in schools and cause underachievement and failure. The study revealed that parental apathy was one of the major problems in school-parent relations.

School managers were of the opinion that establishing a sound school-parent relationship was a key ingredient of success in securing mutual participation of parents in decision-making, school activities, problem-solving, providing assistance and offering services to the school. School managers all agreed that most schools shared similar educational aspirations for learners, thus involvement in and support for education were essential to the realisation of those shared aspirations.

According to the researcher, there was no better teaching method in schools than school managers being living examples. The deterioration of moral values and the lack of discipline in schools made it difficult for school managers to face classroom challenges. They determined the future of their schools by successfully managing human resources. They had to show zeal, passion, and commitment to best practices within classrooms.

### **6.2.5 CHANGES IN EDUCATION**

The participants clearly stated that never before in history had so many changes regarding education taken place in such a short period of time in South Africa. The rapid changes in education had definite implications as many educators were leaving the teaching profession.

Some managers reported that they were left with the daunting task of running their schools efficiently and effectively with a reduced staff and less favourable teacher-learner ratios.

The educators viewed the abolition of corporal punishment, the introduction of Curriculum 2005 and an Inclusive Education Policy as other challenges. Extensive group work, which plays a significant role in Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and the National Certificate (Vocational) NCV, has exacerbated the discipline problems in schools. Some learners were not self-disciplined to work harmoniously without constant, close supervision.

The changes in the education system were identified by the participants from the analysis of their responses in which each respondent indicated the seriousness of the challenge. School managers were expected to know and manage numerous other administrative changes. The challenge was that even the school managers themselves did not understand some of those changes and failed to manage change.

The views of the school managers' challenges were supported by research conducted in secondary schools. The government introduced many laws and adopted many new policies which were not all easy to implement. School managers were of the opinion that resistance to change was another factor confronting them.

Introducing the changes to educators might not pose a serious challenge, but handling resistance to change was a major problem. Such feelings of frustration and emotional exhaustion were causing educators to leave the teaching profession.

The new dispensation in South Africa has intermittently introduced changes in education and in many instances school managers found it difficult to adapt to these changes. Some school managers stated that they had little knowledge of the Educators' Employees Act and did not know how to manage outcomes-based education or Curriculum 2005. They stated that only managers were trained in outcomes-based education while they were expected to manage educators' performance.

School managers stated that numerous administrative changes had been introduced and was causing confusion. Resistance to change is another factor which school managers had to deal with. There had been many changes in education without clear explanation, with the result that school managers found it difficult to understand and introduce this change to their educators or to manage it themselves.

Change in education was not correctly handled as a result; in some schools, the staff was split into three groups, namely:

- those genuinely relieved and excited by the change;
- those who waited to see, and
- those who resisted change while they hold the view that changes disregard traditional practices.

The human resource challenge besetting school managers in schools was that due to many changes in education, resistance to change was very common. Participants moved from known to unknown which might or might not be better than the previous situation. Change in education was a process that needed to be managed. School managers to a great extent determine schools' success or failure in implementing change.

The respondents stated that all school managers should be trained in advance and be well-informed about the changes they had to implement and manage at their schools so that they could assist educators in understanding the complexity of change and to implement it. They need to understand the nature of resistance and to identify the true source of resistance in specific situations. They had to be able to manage resistance and those staff members who were not prepared for the demands made on them.

The absence of learning culture and bad behaviour among learners in some schools had a direct bearing on the high failure rate. Some learners became unmanageable because they were aware of their extensive democratic rights. Peer pressure made some learners engage in anti-social behaviour and the lack of discipline made them to fail examinations. School managers themselves had to be lifelong learners to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They were challenged in reasserting their moral autonomy to provide space and time for improving the learning

outcomes of learners. They were required to use the learning-centred spirit to improve their skills, knowledge, attitudes and competencies.

#### **6.2.5.1 Turnover in the teaching profession**

According to Rosendal (2000:4) turnover is the voluntary and involuntary permanent withdrawal of staff from the organisation. This study revealed that many educators resign, die, are sick, are promoted or leave the teaching profession due to stress, low salaries and unfavourable working conditions.

The high rate of turnover in schools disrupted the efficient running of schools by school managers because knowledgeable and experienced teachers were leaving the profession. The study showed that the loss of dedicated teachers was causing schools to be uncontrolled. In most cases, the right and responsible people in education were leaving the teaching profession.

This caused a situation in which teachers and school managers with higher skills and motivation were replaced with educators and school managers who were underperforming and inexperienced. Increased promotion opportunities were a great challenge in schools as educators were promoted and sometimes resigning.

All school managers lamented the fact that to hire and to retain teachers was a traumatic and painful challenge. To fill the vacancies, school managers had to

develop a plan for mentoring new educators and retaining the expertise of their veteran educators. As school managers, they beset a challenge of understanding how young educators were different from the previous generation and understanding what they needed and expected from them.

The respondents mentioned that school managers needed to be aware of the talents and demands that young educators brought to their first job, what to avoid, and how to make the most of their talents. Knowing the characteristics of each generation in the teaching force, their unique strengths, their unique needs and how to lead multigenerational staff could help them to successfully lead and to retain their staff.

Deputy principals revealed that school managers guided and direct the educational occurrence, regulate, organize and create. They further mentioned that school managers manage the educational infrastructure, plans, implement, manages, controls, and evaluates the educational programme. Without the ability to lead, a school manager could not be effective even though he or she may be an erudite person.

#### **6.2.5.2 Strikes in schools**

Some school managers revealed that they were faced with complicated and demanding work and leadership initiatives to service and help students as well as to continuously provide effective teaching and excellent learner performance. They stated that the right of educators to strike needs to be revisited.

The conditions of the staff who could be engaged in strikes must be highlighted. Like the police and the health services which are some of the essential services guaranteed as human rights, education needs to be classified as an essential service in order to avoid having a generation which cannot be properly educated.

The teaching profession needed to be included as one of the essential services of which the members were not allowed to go on strike. These rights needed to be examined and adjusted to the benefit of the learners whose education and futures are entrusted to the educators. Educators left learners and go on strike but that time lost was not properly recovered by all educators as no one was concerned about it.

Most schools were managed by the unions. Educators leaving classes and going on strikes disadvantage the learners. Educators were taking “blue-print” instructions from the unions. They were expected to follow the instructions without question. Sometimes the unions made schools unruly.

Some educators were ill-disciplined because they had unions to talk for them. Some educators were promoted to senior positions because they belonged to certain unions. They got positions they did not qualify for. Educators were expected to take instructions from unions rather than from their school managers. They attend union meetings and left learners in classrooms without educators attending them or work to do.

### **6.2.5.3 The School Governing Body as a challenge**

There are two roles played by the school manager, as *ex officio* member of the school governing body on the one hand, and on the other, as employee of the Department of Education.

The school manager is paid for his or her position but the school governing body members are not paid, notwithstanding the powers invested in them. They were a challenge to school managers because the manager cannot make decisions without informing the school governing body members.

In some schools, particularly in rural areas, the school governing body often included uneducated parents. School managers were compelled to keep them informed and to keep financial records. School governing bodies were not usually familiar with the accounting procedures needed in the collection and disbursement of funds.

Some of them lacked knowledge about education, budgeting, cash-flow management, preparing a financial report and the appointment of staff members. This led to questions about the credibility and accountability of the school's financial reports and statements. Since financial management was a relatively new concept in most South African schools, it might be vital to provide training programmes and advice for school managers and school governing body members.

School managers were accountable for all school income and expenditure, and make decisions on financial matters in the day-to-day running of the school. Judicious management of funds enables managers to articulate their schools' needs clearly and to be creative in finding potential new resources to support their schools' programmes.

School managers needed to:

- understand the relationship between the school's programmes and the budgeting process;
- be able to make realistic estimates of financial needs;
- adhere to established guidelines governing income and expenditure of the finances they manage, and
- observe the cost-effectiveness of the school.

The research conducted revealed that in some schools, the school managers and the school governing body did not collaborate in managing the school's finances. Some managers did not want parents to be involved in how finances were managed. Section 19 of the South African Schools' Act stipulates that the Head of Department should provide introductory training for the newly-elected governing bodies to enable them to perform their functions.

They should also be provided with continuous training to promote the effective performance of their functions or to enable them to assume additional functions. This was not happening in all of the schools investigated.

The findings revealed that there was a need to train the members of school governing bodies with respect to financial management. Some of the school managers objected to the cascading model of training and found the contents of the workshops to be too theoretical. Some trainers from the department did not have a sound financial background and seemed to be unsure of their training content.

It was revealed that according to Section 15 of the South African Schools Act, the school governing body may delegate some duties to the school manager and thus hold the manager accountable. The challenge with the delegation of duties from the school governing body to the school manager was that the manager was generally better informed with regard to the delegated tasks than the school governing body.

The danger was that the school manager might use the information to pursue his or her own objectives at the expense of the school. This implied that the school manager was in a position of power while the members of the school governing body were either illiterate or have little knowledge when dealing with financial matters.

There were many human resource challenges besetting school managers in schools when creating effective learning environments. They had to meet the changing needs of the community they serve. School managers needed to use innovative skills to cope with these demands.

These skills were achieved through reflective practice, action learning, self-directed learning and co-operation within schools.

The duties and responsibilities of the school governing body included, *inter alia*:

- drafting policies, mission statements, the constitution of the school and curriculum matters;
- the development and regular revision of the Code of Conduct for learners in co-operation with parents, educators and learners;
- the creation of a well-disciplined and goal-orientated environment to ensure teaching and learning;
- ensuring that the disciplinary practices of the school take place within the framework of the South African Constitution and the SASA;
- appointing a disciplinary committee;
- conducting fair hearings in which the focus is on positive intervention as a restorative opinion;
- keeping full minutes of disciplinary hearings, and
- holding regular meetings with parents to discuss disciplinary matters (South African Schools Act).

Some of the research participants revealed that the duties were many and some of the school governing bodies were not performing as expected. They still needed workshops on their duties and responsibilities for effective and quality teaching and learning in schools.

#### **6.2.5.4 School Management Teams as a challenge**

Based on interview questions and observation data, the study confirmed that team management through school management teams was generally in place in all seven schools investigated. Schools work effectively in teams with a team spirit. The school managers were committed to making it work. The findings pointed to the challenges and the benefits of school management teams.

The overall picture that emerged from this study about the school management team was that most school managers welcomed and seemed to practice team management. School managers pointed out the benefits, and threats were clearly identified. Some school managers trust their colleagues while other were being let down by them.

School management teams were generally welcomed and even celebrated by some school managers, but faced challenges. In big schools the many educators in management positions become a group. In most cases, there was difference of opinions and personality clashes between staff members. Some school management team members did not accept any resolution if they were not part of the solution.

It was revealed by the participants that in some schools, school management teams usually rejected and opposed some decisions to ensure that decisions and planning were taken by them, not the school manager alone. If the manager had called a

staff meeting without having consulted the school management team members, they could boycott the staff meeting. All staff meetings were to be sanctioned by them.

During the interviews with the participants, they revealed that the challenge with school management teams in secondary schools was that some of the educators were lazy. They wanted to do the absolute minimum, saying: "That's where my job description ends". Sometimes other educators were negative towards school management teams. In some schools, 'sabotage' was a threat to teamwork.

School management team members would sometimes support the manager on what he or she agreed on with the school management teams, but later change position in front of colleagues. Other school management team members just keep quiet in the discussion and then go out and cause problems. Some school management teams lack confidentiality.

Sometimes in schools, school managers might not share the same vision as the school management team and then find disruptive elements within the team. They work as a team, but without a team spirit. These were present dangers and challenges besetting school managers. Some school managers preferred to do things themselves because they did not trust all team members.

One school manager confirmed: *“The job may not be done the way you like it, you may not get the personal work ethic and satisfaction you expect.”* Some school management team members did not practice what they preached. The participants agreed: *“Sometimes we get school management teams who could tell you the most beautiful and constructive ideas in a meeting situation, the most beautiful ideas; but when it comes to reality, it is not implemented.”*

School managers in some schools revealed that sometimes teamwork was time-consuming. Things were not done quickly enough because of the process of consultation and talking. It took a long time to agree or arrive at an acceptable opinion.

Sometimes things that needed urgent attention didn't get it due to many people involved in decision-making. The school manager recommended that it was wiser sometimes to take decisions and to inform the school management team members later if the matter was very urgent and if the manager could come up with the resolution.

The researcher in this study concluded that the role of school management teams was to provide opportunities for personal growth and this is an attitude school managers feel should be encouraged. Schools needed to be learning organisations and clearly one of the best ways of learning how to work together was through doing precisely that in teams and committees within the school structure.

### **6.2.6 Challenges besetting females**

With the acceptance of South Africa's Constitution, the implementation of the Labour Relations Act, No. 66 of 1995, and the Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998, most school managers knew that discrimination in the workplace on the grounds of sex and other forms was prohibited.

With more women entering the workplace as a result of the implementation of the Employment Equity Act, sexual harassment was becoming more prevalent and this new dimension of discrimination was causing concern to management. This study revealed that the promotion of equality and the prevention of unfair discrimination were still not practical in some of schools.

Sexual harassment was still a widespread human resource challenge in most of the schools. Three female respondents reported that they had experienced some form of unwanted attention on the job. Women are more exposed to sexual harassment and discrimination than men. The study also found that only a few men and women who had experienced harassment chose to report it.

The findings indicated that many female educators and managers had experienced some form of harassment at work. The respondents stated that they knew of sexual harassment in their schools. It was also found in the survey that the victims were females and the perpetrators males. Females indicated that when they reported the

case to their managers, the incident was considered a joke. A female manager mentioned that she reported the case to management but no action was taken because of the harasser's seniority. A female educator said that when she reported the incident to the school manager, the issue was discussed in a staff meeting.

The participants were of the opinion that the ultimate consequence of allowing sexual harassment to go unchecked was that it leads to the underperformance of employees subjected to this form of conduct. Female victims revealed that they often experience depression, frustration, nervousness, fatigue and hypertension, which in turn leads to decreased productivity and increased absenteeism.

The research revealed that in this modern age, there were still people who believed that women were incapable of leading and were required to imitate their male counterparts. In some schools, some female school managers found themselves undermined especially if they happen to climb the social strata, as they were regarded as lacking management skills as compared to males.

One of the research findings was that some female school managers beset a human resource challenge where they found themselves not fully accepted as leaders in the schools they manage and the communities they work with, even after a lot of hard work and sacrifice. They were managing and expected to only manage junior primary schools because the staff members are females.

Sometimes they were appointed as senior primary school managers. In rare cases they managed secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Hyleen (2005:12) states that sometimes women are included in higher positions just for window-dressing and compliance with affirmative action. This research revealed that some males find it difficult to submit to the authority of a female school manager.

Sometimes female school managers were criticised by other females who were supposed to support them. Such thinking devalues human liberation efforts. Brunton (2003:36) says: "*The absence of women from political life and leadership positions undermines democracy and women's empowerment.*"

The study revealed that some women in leadership positions found it hard to make a significant impact in terms of knowledge due to the prejudices that were prevailing even in their communities. Some people did not encourage females to occupy leadership positions and they did not support them irrespective of the level of their education.

The research revealed that some women had to define first who they were in the community by being more professionally qualified than males in order to compete favourably with males. Brown (2004:56) states that some female school managers are regarded as lacking in assertiveness and confidence.

Female school managers found themselves doubly disadvantaged in the sense that they had to prove to their colleagues, subordinates and communities that they were capable of leading successfully and also had to work harder than their male counterparts.

Barry (2002:87) stresses that female school managers sometimes tend to manage by emotions. An effective gender policy should not only be legislated but should also be practically incorporated in the appointment and promotion of educators. It was the responsibility of the government to promote gender equity in school management. The challenge for school managers was thus to develop guidelines for the management of sexual harassment and discrimination in schools. The focus should be on its prevention.

#### **6.2.6.1 Violence in schools as a challenge**

The research findings showed that there were many incidents of crime and violence still occurring in some schools. Violence in schools underscores recently published studies attesting to the exceptionally high levels of violence to which most schools were exposed.

The armed robberies that were taking place in schools, as well as vandalism and burglaries, needed to be addressed by the National Department of Education. Feeling safe in schools and success in learning are inextricably linked. According to

the research findings, twice as many learners were the victims of crime, theft, fraud and violence as adults. Some schools in KwaZulu-Natal were experiencing high levels of violence. There had been senseless killings within school premises and even in classrooms in front of learners and also instances of rape that affected the whole schooling system.

In this study, it became clear that some educators contributed to the culture of violence in schools. Though corporal punishment in schools was prohibited, the study showed that some learners were still assaulted by their educators. This showed that corporal punishment was still an integral part of attempts at maintaining school discipline. Such attempts were teaching learners that violent acts were legitimate and that authority figures use violence to achieve their aims.

It was observed that learners of different ages are kept in the same classroom. This creates strong possibilities of bullying and other forms of violence, including sexual abuse. A lack of effective remedial, psychological and guidance services and school social and welfare support at institutional level was still lacking in some of the schools investigated.

The school managers stated that they were challenged by educators, who neglected their work and annually fail to complete syllabuses. They furiously stressed that this problem of incomplete work was very common to educators who were teaching learners who wrote internal examinations.

They cover very little content with learners and assess them on that work at the end of the year. Some educators never completed the syllabi to prepare the learners for the following grade. This resulted in a high failure rate in schools as learners do not have enough knowledge from the previous grade to have a chance at successfully completing the following grade.

Some school managers were of the opinion that educators had to move on to the next grade with their learners, all the way up to grade twelve, in order to make them responsible and dedicated. Some educators and learners were often absent and arrive late.

They were also concerned and challenged by truant learners who neglected their school work and whose academic performance is below standard. As school managers, they should not only be knowledgeable about various goals and objectives proposed for their schools but should also develop some vision and conviction about the directions that their schools should take in future.

The study revealed that school managers needed to meet the expectations of the authorities and the community, to ensure academic performance their schools in and to properly manage their schools. Some school managers complained that they were always blamed for the failures of both educators and learners. The human resource challenges, expectations, demands and their daily responsibilities were a burden that could cause severe stress to them.

School managers stated that sometimes they were working with educators who did not do their work properly nor come to school regularly. Some of the learners also imitated their educators and did not come to school every day because if their subject educators were absent, learners were not taught that subject.

Some educators and learners neglected their school work and produced very poor results. School managers had to meet the expectations of the learners and the community. They had to ensure improvement in their schools' academic performance and achieve proper management of their schools.

Sometimes school managers were blamed for failures of either educators or learners. The daily challenges, expectations and demands and their daily responsibilities caused stress. The study revealed that the heavy workloads to be completed during normal working days and the day-to day frustrations, staff, learner and parents' problems resulted in administrative problems. Feelings of frustration in school managers and emotional exhaustion might cause stress.

Some of the school managers in schools suffering from violence generally work under considerable to high stress. Consequently, they were at risk as their profession might be hazardous to their health. High job demands might cause declining morale and lack of enthusiasm in managing the school effectively and efficiently.

Work-related stress may result in job dissatisfaction, emotional and physical exhaustion and a general inability to cope effectively. Some school managers needed to receive training and to acquire skills in coping with violence and stress.

Some school managers were challenged by learners who bunk classes and leave schools without permission during teaching and learning periods. Some children stayed at their homes without adequate supervision from parents or guardians and therefore there was no responsible adult to monitor their school attendance.

The research showed that some learners were arriving late as a result of the tasks that parents gave them or the distance they had to travel to school. Child-headed families were very common. Some learners were orphans and had to look after their siblings. Others from female-headed families had to stay at home to look after younger siblings while the mother went to work or was ill. Other learners do not like to learn but they were compelled by their parents to go to school and then create problems for school managers.

The research identified something which was common and unacceptable in schools. Teenage pregnancy had become a norm in South African society, including schools in KwaZulu-Natal province. The Department of Education was losing the fight against teen pregnancy, with learners who were pregnant and others already having given birth to more than one child while still at school. School managers and educators were challenged by girls who were rude, defensive and aggressive.

Some of the pregnant learners were unwilling to do their school work, disobedient to some educators, moody and prone to outbursts. Serious behavioural problems and staying away from school, sometimes without apparent reasons, made them miss some lessons. They sometimes experience complications with their pregnancy. School managers are expected by the Department of Education to treat them fairly.

This study revealed that some learners who were pregnant and sometimes ill were unable to pay proper attention or concentrate in class which resulted in drop-outs. Others were uncontrollable, rude to educators and often misbehaved. Those with babies arrived late and sometimes found it difficult to concentrate in class as a result of little or no sleep the previous night.

The respondents were of the opinion that learners were likely to become sexually active during the ages fifteen to nineteen years or even earlier. This could be detrimental to their well-being if safe sex was not practiced. School managers were expected to meet the expectations of the pregnant learners and their individual differences.

The study showed that there were many contributory factors to the increased number of teenage pregnancies like the lack of sex education, drug and substance abuse, access to a child support grant, etc. Teenage pregnancy changed teenagers' lives forever and in most instances, in a negative way. Some girls left schools and

some never return because of the need to care for their children. The participants in schools investigated were of the opinion that some girls were forced to take mediocre jobs to earn an income for their children. Some no longer had the potential that they had before pregnancy because of their increased responsibilities and challenges.

Educators interviewed mentioned that sometimes career dreams and goals were shattered. Some learners from poor families fell pregnant in primary schools and were exposed to poverty, crime, HIV/AIDS and unemployment at a very early stage. Learners from rich families were still able to continue with their education. Social grants had resulted in a high pregnancy rate and absenteeism as a result of learners going for payments or taking their babies to clinics.

The participants were of the opinion that to be effective in school management, school managers needed to develop their own leadership and administrative practice because their schools are unique. As effective administrators, they should acknowledge be flexible in thinking, and to trust each other's judgment in order to manage human resource effectively.

### **6.3 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS**

According to the research findings, some schools in all levels from junior primary, senior primary and secondary schools were characterised by the apparent absence of a culture of teaching and learning.

Some of the more important factors that had led to school managers' challenges in schools included the following:

1. the undermining of authority, bad attitude and lack of discipline by educators, parents and learners;
2. financial and provisioning problems;
3. failure on the part of the school managers in assuming responsibility for the creation of a culture of teaching and learning;
4. recruitment, selection, motivating and retention of staff, and
5. discrimination.

Some rural schools were characterised by a desperate lack of resources and qualified subject specialist, school managers and teachers. The emphasis on learners' rights with no associated responsibilities contributed to the collapse in the culture of teaching and learning in schools.

Some factors that have led to school managers to beset challenges in schools were the following:

- a. lack of discipline and authority and the absence of the Code of Conduct for both teachers and learners in some schools, and
- b. the lack of adequate parental involvement in the education of their children.

School managers were challenged by educators, learners, parents, the department, the community and the education system. They were also challenged by learners from lower socio-economic homes characterised by poverty, a disharmonious family life, lack of family support, parental control and discipline.

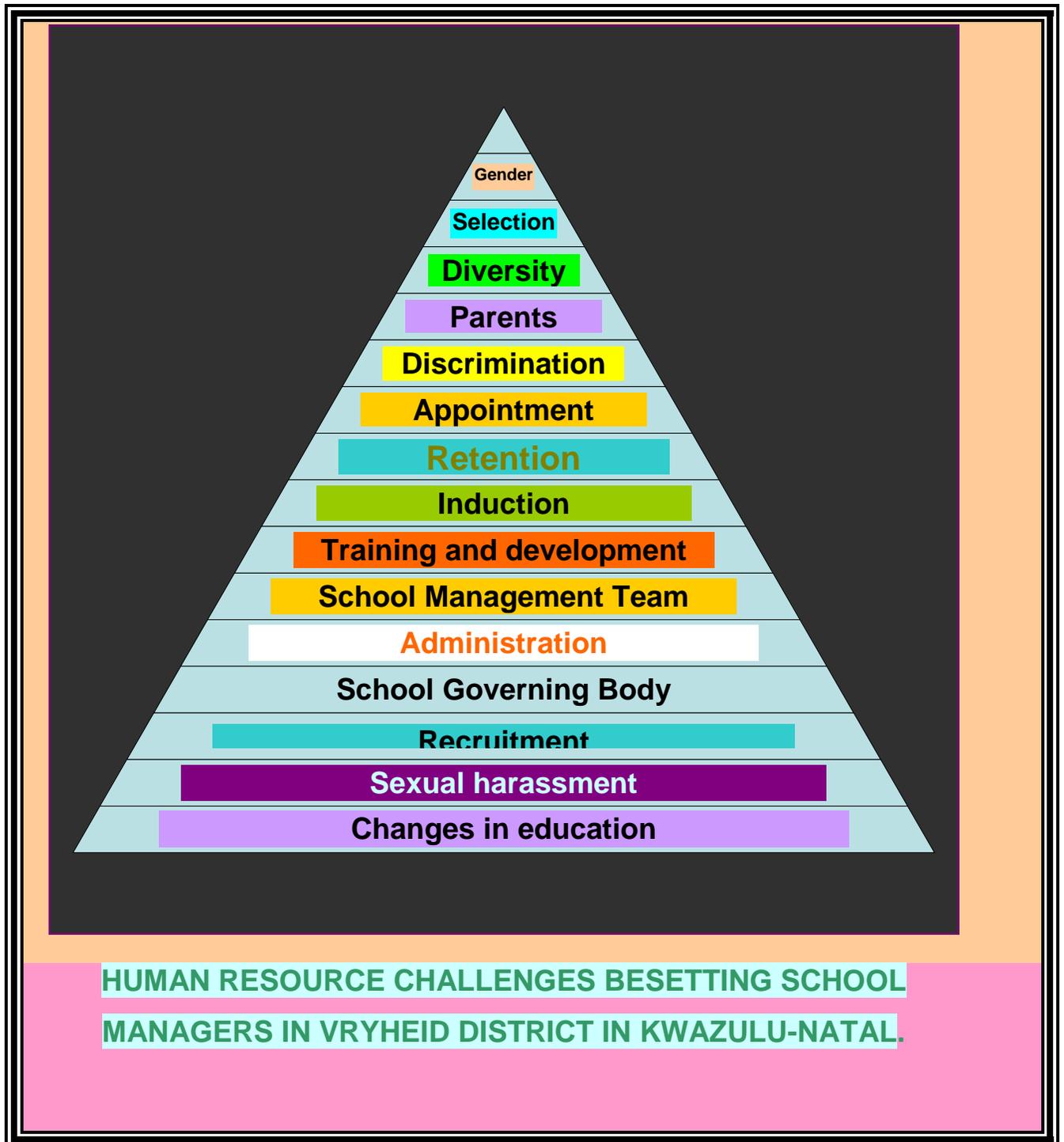


Figure 6.2 Summary of research findings

## **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the light of the findings, the following recommendations can be made:

The Department of Education should address the backlog in the shortage of physical and human resources at schools as this would facilitate their effective functioning. A survey should be done to identify areas that experience problems and this should be addressed without delay. Regarding staff shortages, the Department should devise a model for the allocation of teaching posts as soon as possible.

The Department of Education should ensure that changes taking place in education are essential, well-planned and pedagogically justifiable. Changes need to be discussed with relevant stakeholders and correctly and professionally implemented. They must first be clearly understood by the persons who must implement them and those who will monitor their implementation; otherwise they will not be effectively implemented or taken seriously. Care should be taken not to introduce too many changes simultaneously.

School managers should be given clear guidelines on educator assessments to regularly evaluate and supervise teachers and to develop their staff so that the school may perform with maximum effectiveness. The delay in the use of an assessment tool allowed educators to think that schools can do without assessing their performance. This will make it difficult for the instrument to be used in future because people resist change.

#### **6.4.1 Recommendations to school managers**

- School managers should in the first place ask themselves to what extent they are competent in managing schools. This reflective exercise can help them to begin to identify areas that need support and training so that they can act on them. They need to be trained on school management.
  
- School managers need to be trained in diversity awareness.
  
- School managers should rely on teamwork with teachers, parents and learners through the formal and legal structure (SRC, LRC and SGBs) to develop management strategies targeting problem areas, especially those emanating from unacceptable learner behaviour.
  
- According to the research results, schools with challenges did not provide learners with the expected quality education and atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning. For quality education, school managers should be developed by means of proper selection as well as ongoing evaluation and development of their management skills.

Furthermore, the following recommendations are aimed at the improvement of quality teaching and learning in schools.

- School managers are to be trained to cope with stress so that they may alleviate stressors in their work and help teachers to cope with stress, thus avoiding stress-related illnesses in schools.
- Training in motivating educators and learners will enable school managers to motivate educators and learners. This will boost their morale so that they can be able to their work with maximum effectiveness.
- Conflict and problem solving skills will enable them to resolve challenges before they develop into conflicts and minimise human resource challenges.
- It is assumed that parents know their children better than anyone. It is therefore recommended that school managers should develop and come up with a way of involving parents closely even when there is not yet a problem calling for parents' attention. Waiting until there is general parent meeting is too late to contain mushrooming problems.
- School managers should do the same with learners. Some potential problems can be diagnosed long before they occur. As much as school managers can prioritise meetings with their staff, they need to keep talking to the learners, especially through the Learner Representative Councils which are historically known to potentially cause disruptions if kept at bay. This approach to management and leadership can help close loopholes that breed problems and improve learner performance.

- Somehow school managers must find a way to encourage learners and parental communities to develop a sense of ownership of the school properties. Once that has been achieved, vandalism and break-ins will most probably stop because school managers will have increased guards and police in learners and parents.
  
- Many educators found it difficult to cope with transformation, just like school managers. They depend on school managers to guide and support them. In this sense, school managers should choose to be agents of change and strategically devise ways to empower their staff to approach change as an asset through which they can thrive, rather than an enemy.
  
- Good discipline in schools depends on effective human resource management by school managers both within the school as a whole and within the classroom context. School managers are ultimately responsible for establishing a safe and orderly environment, planning for positive discipline begins with the school manager. Discipline, as a way of learner and staff control, needs to be planned and implemented by the school manager in an organised manner.
  
- Moreover, school managers need to empower themselves by studying educational policies around management and governance. These are very instrumental in guiding school managers to manage schools more comfortably.

#### **6.4.2 Recommendations to Department of Education**

- The approach that DoE has adopted to seek accountability from school managers needs to be revisited. It is robust and harsh. It is recommended that expectations about accountability first be communicated to school managers, coupled with quality training or workshops. Each case to be handled on its merit to the extent it deserves.
  
- An induction for newly-appointed school managers or in-service training for experienced school managers to be designed to upgrade their knowledge or to keep them abreast of new developments. School managers needed to attend seminars and workshops about effective school management.
  
- Networking must be the priority. There is a need for school managers to be linked with various schools or districts so that they may share concerns, ideas and effective practices on a continuous basis. The majority of the topics to relate to their management duties.
  
- The Department of Education should extend a helping hand to empower parents regarding their educational responsibilities rather than leave everything in the hands of school managers.
  
- The Department of Education needs to organise initial training programmes to empower the school governing body members to perform their functions as well as further training to promote and boost their effective performance.

School managers need to be trained in managing change so that they can assist educators in understanding and accepting change.

- The qualifications and the ability to demonstrate a sound knowledge of school management should be a significant criterion for the appointment of school managers. The Department must intervene in all human resource challenges besetting school managers in schools to ensure that the climate of all schools should be conducive to teaching and learning.
- The study revealed the lack of skills in motivating educators and learners and boosting their morale. Managers need skills in resolving conflicts and problems before they become disruptive to their schools. This skills would enable school managers to manage their schools effectively, as well as to improve both educators' and learners' performance.
- Schools ought to be free to select the educators they need. If there are no suitable candidates among educators redeployed, they should be allowed to advertise posts until they find appropriately qualified candidates.
- The Department should improve the conditions of work for managers and educators by means of salary increases on an ongoing basis, and not wait until they go on strike. This could be done in order to motivate educators and to boost their morale.

- All stakeholders must do their best to encourage parental involvement in schools and to ensure that learners are brought under control. Parents need to be trained on how to monitor their children's school progress. They need to ensure that their children attend school and are disciplined. They should keep in touch with their children's teachers. Teachers and school managers should inform parents regularly about the progress of their children.
  
- The DoE should introduce and facilitate the training of school managers at all types of schools in all aspects of school management. Such training would produce skilled school managers who will perform their work with maximum effectiveness.
  
- "The best the human resource management by the manager, so the best is the school". It means that DoE remain influential on the daily running activities in schools. That further means school managers remain the chief educational managers and leaders in schools.
  
- School management courses for school managers are to be introduced at tertiary institutions. This would help to minimise the promotion of unsuitable educators to the positions of school managers.
  
- Learners are very complex and dynamic beings. School managers were frustrated by seeing their educators blamed for learners' poor performance. The impact of social factors stemming from the community should never be

negated by expecting educators to perform miracles even in instances where the learner cannot give good academic output because of abusive parents.

- Some school managers were lacking the technical skills required to complete requisitions for textbooks and stationery or school returns, to determine staff shortages or do filing. Some of them are not computer literate and often cannot cope with new developments in school management. The Department of Education should ensure that school managers receive training in these skills and ensure that they receive practical training by relevant people.
- As far as management skills were concerned, staff evaluation and development, managing change, dealing with school-related legal issues and coping with stress must get the necessary attention.
- The school manager should involve others in his/her decision-making, namely parents; the governing body; learners; educators; teacher unions and the Department of Education. Democracy must be part of school management. A manager needs to adjust his managerial style so as not to come into conflict with the rights of the stakeholders.
- Non-discrimination and equality are important building blocks. The system of education should not be based on race, ethnicity or colour. Some managers and educators were challenged by unfamiliar cultures, languages and behaviours. The education planners and other relevant bodies need to plan

and provide professional management and teacher training programmes in school management. The role of the school manager, school policy, school rules, practical curriculum and the training of educators must be emphasised.

- Boardroom sessions where school managers are called to account should be informed by the promised support rather than threats of dismissal. The question to ask is: How can school managers whose job is threatened and who lives in fear as a result of that, really focus and perform to the best of their ability?

School managers need to exhibit positive and dynamic leadership skills, especially when implementing school policies and learner rules and regulations, in order to facilitate learner academic achievement. They need to meet the high academic expectations for all learners and, through effective communication, to encourage active parent participation in learner academic matters.

The researcher recommends that the implementation of the recommendations of this study will establish a sound foundation for the improvement of conditions in human resource challenges besetting school managers in schools. Human resource challenges besetting school managers should be the main objective of all schools particularly in South Africa.

School managers need to strive together for its attainment. Once the school environment is improved, and school managers are well equipped to beset the challenges, the South African society as a whole would reap the benefits of school managers who are well prepared to serve and to contribute to our economy.

In the long term, the DoE should conduct a needs analysis of the management skills required by school managers and their school management teams and their school governing bodies in schools under its control, and structure skills management training programmes on the basis thereof. School managers, SGBs and the SMTs should be trained on an ongoing basis.

The Department of Education should ensure that newly-appointed school managers receive training in school management skills or at least had been deputy school managers before they assume duties as school managers. They should also engage in ongoing staff development training to keep managers abreast of developments.

School managers should be advised to study school management courses at University level as this would enhance their ability to perform their human resource duties effectively as school managers. Therefore, there is an urgent need for school managers to provide efficient managerial and effective leadership roles focused on commitment to improved learner academic achievement. Poor school management and administration have

a negative impact on the overall functioning of the school and, in particular, on academic performance.

## **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The researcher recommends that further qualitative or quantitative research be undertaken with the aim of addressing the human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal:

- Research to be conducted on a broader spectrum regarding the contentious issue of human resource challenges besetting school managers in schools.
- The main challenge in securing a high response rate related to the fact that some school managers were busy with their own administrative challenges like schedules. There was also a possibility that school managers did not want to report on matters that they perceived could have legal implications for their schools, despite the promise of confidentiality.
- Verification of the results of this study can be obtained on a larger scale, not only in Vryheid District, KwaZulu-Natal, but in South Africa for a similar qualitative study in schools in other provinces and the challenges school managers face when implementing quality teaching and learning.
- The researcher might be biased.

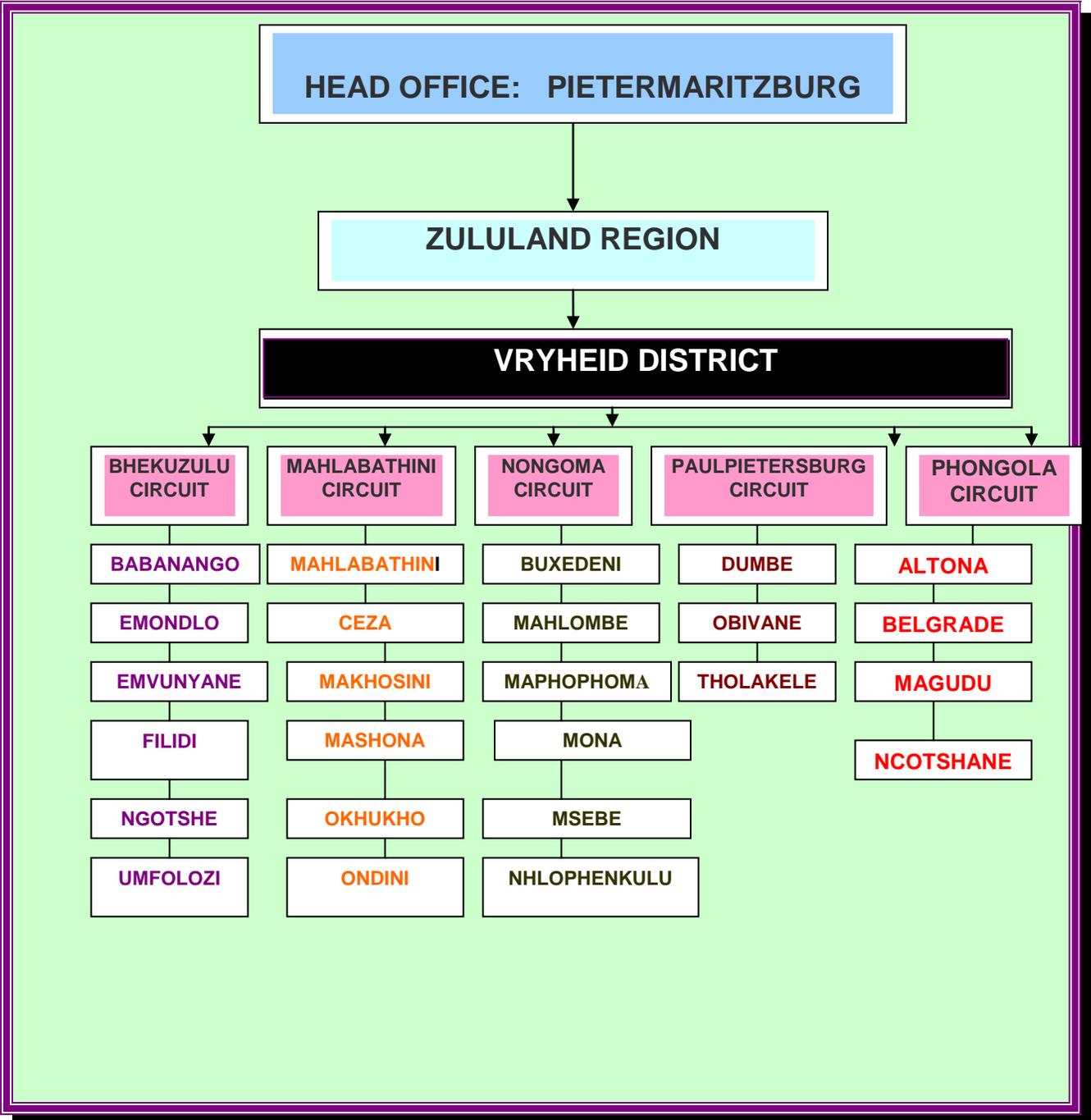
## **6.6 SYNTHESIS**

Challenges besetting school managers run deep. This study attempted to explore them. The interviewed participants including school managers shared their views in terms of the kind of challenges they beset. Learner behaviour surfaced prominently. That suggests constraints on school managers in their efforts to manage schools effectively.

## ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE	HEADING
1. ANNEXURE: A	Vryheid District Organogram
2. ANNEXURE: B	Permission from the District Director
3. ANNEXURE: C	Research Questionnaire
4. ANNEXURE : D	Permission from the Circuit Manager
5. ANNEXURE: E	A letter to schools
6. ANNEXURE: F	Statement of Consent
7. ANNEXURE: G	Interview Schedule
8.	List of References
9. ANNEXURE: H	Interview transcript for a school manager
10. ANNEXURE: I	Interview transcript for an educator

**ANNEXURE: A**  
**ORGANOGRAM OF KWAZULU-NATAL**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



**ANNEXURE B:**  
**PERMISSION FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR**



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI  
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO  
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

Telephone : 034 989 9800

Fax : 034 982 1666

Private Bag X 9330  
Vryheid  
3100

Cnr South & West Street  
Vryheid  
3100

Vryheid District

Vryheid District

Vryheid District

ENQUIRIES: Dr G T Mnguni

REFERENCE:

DATE : 22. 06. 2006

TO: CIRCUIT MANAGERS

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Kindly grant Ms Phumzile Debra Zwane a teacher at Sekethwayo High School to conduct empirical research in your schools toward her studies.

Please find attached supporting documentation on the research.

Thanking you in anticipation.

District Director

**ANNEXURE: C**  
**RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE**

**“EXPLORING HUMAN RESOURCE CHALLENGES FACING SCHOOL  
PRINCIPALS IN VRYHEID DISTRICT, KWAZULU-NATAL:  
AN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE**

NUMBER:

**INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS.**

***The following information will be treated in strict confidence:***

1. Please do not write your name or the school’s name on the questionnaire.
2. This questionnaire is confidential. You can be assured that no individual school manager’s or educator’s or school’s name will be published.
2. Please be honest when giving your opinion.
3. Summary of the main findings and recommendations will be sent to the institutions of the participating schools on request.
4. Unless otherwise stated, please complete questions by making a cross “X” in the appropriate block.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION !!!**

## SECTION 1: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Country of origin:

First language :

What other languages are you able to speak?

1.1 Gender: Male  Female:

1.2 Age in completed years:

1.3 Home Language:

1.4 Present post:

1.5 Nature of Post:

1.6 Teaching / management experience in completed years:

1.6 Do you have prior teaching experience in subjects you are teaching:

Yes  No

1.8 Highest Academic Qualification (choose only one answer).

B.A.	B.Sc.	M.ED.	Doctorate	Others
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1.9 Highest Professional Qualification.

U.E.D	S.T.D.	S.P.T.D.	J.P.T.D.	Others
-------	--------	----------	----------	--------

1.10 Type of school you manage / teach:

1.11 Is right sizing the correct solution ensuring that the correct number of teachers is employed: Yes  No

1.12 If your answer to the above question (1.11) was “yes”, please state how the department of education can remedy the above situation?

---

1.13 How can you rate the need to hire and retain well qualified and quality teachers in the teaching profession?

## SECTION 2: CULTURE OF TEACHING

As a school manager / an educator of the school:

2.1 What are your views regarding education in South Africa?

2.2 What are the common challenges you face as a manager / teacher?

2.3 How do you recruit and retain your staff?

2.4 How do you manage diversity and discrimination?

2.5 Are there any challenges faced by females in you school?

2.6 How do you motivate educators?

2.7 How do you discipline your staff and learners?

2.8 Do you have any conflicts in your school? Give some specific examples. Elaborate where possible

2.10 How do you ensure job satisfaction in your staff and learners?

**THANK YOU !!!**

**ANNEXURE D:  
PERMISSION FROM THE CIRCUIT MANAGER**



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI  
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO  
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Telephone: 034 9809491  
Fax : 034 9808715

Private Bag X 9318  
Vryheid  
3100

116 Landdrost Street  
Vryheid  
3100

BHEKUZULU CIRCUIT

BHEKUZULU CIRCUIT

BHEKUZULU CIRCUIT

Enquiries:  
Imibuzo :  
Navree : MR T.M ZITHA

Reference:  
Inkomba :  
Verwysing: **Permission to conduct research**

Date :  
Usuku:  
Datum: **26.06.2006**

## MEMO

TO : PRINCIPALS

### PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Ms Phumzile Debra Zwane (student number 313 – 814 – 6) a post graduate student at University of South Africa has been granted permission to conduct empirical research for the fulfilment of the requirements for her Doctor of Education in Educational Management. The empirical part of her thesis is entitled “**challenges facing school managers and educators in multicultural schools in South Africa.**”

Kindly allow her an opportunity to interview you and your staff members. However her research project must not disturb normal teaching and learning.

Your kind assistance is appreciated.

  
CIRCUIT MANAGER

**ANNEXURE: E**  
**LETTER TO SCHOOLS**

Dear Sir / Madam

**Re: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RESEARCH**

I am a Doctor of Education (Educational Management) student in the University of South Africa (UNISA). I am also an Assistant Director in Research at Mthashana Further Education and Training College. I am undertaking a study titled: Exploring human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal: An educational management perspective.

Your participation in the research is voluntary. It will not take more than two hours of your time. I undertake to ensure strict confidentiality with the information collected and all respondents will remain anonymous. A copy of the report will be made available to the Department of Education or made available to individual schools on request. I trust that this will be given your kind consideration and time.

I thank you in anticipation of your kind co-operation.

Yours faithfully

---

Phumzile Debra Zwane

Student number: 3139 814-6

**ANNEXURE: F**  
**STATEMENT OF CONSENT**

As part of a dissertation for the Doctor of Education: Educational Management Degree through the University of South Africa, I Phumzile Debra Zwane is conducting a research project entitled: "Exploring human resource challenges besetting school managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal": An educational management perspective.

To gain further understanding of this subject, I would like to interview school managers only in Zululand Region in Vryheid District in KwaZulu-Natal. These interviews will take the form of interviews.

You are guaranteed complete anonymity during this project. At the time of the interview, you will be given a pseudonym. This is the name which shall be used in the research paper. Although verbatim use will be made of comments recorded during the interview, the identity of the participants will not be disclosed at any time. The name of the Province, the Region and also the District will be protected.

The analysis of the data will be included in the dissertation and may be used in the future in articles published in professional journals.

If you are willing to participate in this interview, under these specific conditions, please sign below to indicate your consent.

Participant: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date : \_\_\_\_\_ Fax or e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNEXURE: G**  
**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

**EXPLORING HUMAN RESOURCE CHALLENGES BESETTING SCHOOL  
MANAGERS IN VRYHEID DISTRICT IN KWAZULU-NATAL:  
AN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

*Kindly read the following general instructions before the interview.*

- Please do not write your name or the school's name on the questionnaire.
- This is a confidential questionnaire. You can be assured that no individual school manager's name or school's name will be published.
- Your assistance in responding and returning it as soon as possible will be appreciated, as this is vitally important to the study.

**FIVE PEOPLE WILL BE INTERVIEWED**

- The school manager;
- Deputy manager
- Head of department; and
- 2 Post level one educators.

The interview will be conducted to school managers and educators as individuals (for confidential information) to answer the questions in the survey questionnaire.

I trust that this will be given your kind consideration and time.

I thank you in anticipation of your kind co-operation.

Yours faithfully.

---

Phumzile Debra Zwane

---

## LIST OF REFERENCES

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## **ANNEXURE H**

### **INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT FOR A SCHOOL MANAGER**

**I: INTERVIEWER**

**SM: SCHOOL MANAGER**

**I: Good morning Mr. D.**

**SM: Good morning.**

**I : Can we start with the first question?**

**SM: Yes we can start, I am ready.**

**2.1 I: Thanks. The first question is: As a school manager, what are your views regarding education in South Africa?**

**SM:** I think that is a good move. I think personally, it is a good move. It was a provincial directive from the National Department of Education. It is a good move with quality education in making sure that there is this kind of understanding and respect from different people with different backgrounds and that there is that knowledge in terms of our backgrounds. It is a positive move, and at least, I think, we have a brighter future.

Many changes have taken place in South Africa since 1994. These changes impact on South African education in a unique way since the country is inhabited by multi-ethnic, multiracial, multi-religious and a multilingual population. It actually puts one in a situation whereby we obviously face the situation of different things.

We have different groups amongst the staff. I have thirty five educators and I end up having more than ten groups within the school because I am actually dealing with mature and professional people.

Staff members and learners actually understand and observe very well when it comes to discriminating. You find yourself in trouble, unaware. Staff members sometimes misinterpret what you say or do. As a school manager, you sometimes initiate good behaviour as a living example. You discover that in an institution now you have different groups with something in common. Some educators favour me because they are thought to be (of) my own group. I am not expected to have a friend. They want me to be isolated or a friend to them all.

**2.2 1: *Thanks. Question number two: What are the common challenges besetting you as a school manager?***

**SM:** It is evident that the introduction of quality and equal education in South Africa does pose a problem to all individuals who are involved in the education system. Well it is the issue of cultural differences. That one is a big challenge. As a school manager, I need to get to grips; I need to come to an understanding that I am not dealing with people from only your own culture. I am dealing with people from different cultures.

A major challenge, therefore, has been the shift from a racially segregated education system to a multicultural education system. Undoubtedly, all managers have been exposed to huge and rapid changes in a very short period of time. This has brought about problems for school managers, educators and learners.

Another area of concern is the lack of contact between parents and educators. Some parents felt alienated from the school and are reluctant to make contact because of feelings of inadequacy. As a school manager, I am not sure what approach to adopt when dealing with parents. Even if you call them they send uncles, aunts, friends, relatives, older brothers and sisters. Parents are always busy with their work. Sometimes no one comes. You only see the biological parent when the learner is coming for registration.

I am actually facing a challenge in terms of religion and discipline. So it poses a challenge to me as a manager to make sure that there is this kind of an understanding among different educators and learners. Absenteeism and late coming is also very common. Religions are a challenge. Teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, violence, learners heading families, poverty, eh, you count them – all social problems posed challenges us as school managers.

Education is one area of reconstruction to which the government has given a high priority. It has been attended as a matter of urgency. However, it has become clear that effecting a major transformation in a very facet of education

cannot be achieved overnight. The system of education in South Africa is in a state of flux, with shifts and adjustments taking place month by month. This being the case is a challenge.

**2.1 I: Thank you. *How do you recruit and retain your staff?***

**SM:** Eh! I only recruit as posts become vacant. I implement employment equity policies. The purpose is to acquire applicants who are available and qualified to fill positions in the school. We select to identify and employ the best qualified individuals for specific positions. We choose, from a group of applicants, the individual best suited for the posts.

Recruiting good applicants has always been challenging; however, political, demographic and economic factors require us as school managers to use more flexible and innovative recruitment methods. The so called 'designated groups' who are females and persons with disabilities, play a major role in filling in the new and vacant posts.

Equity is a great challenge and that also affects the performance of educators. Promotions might result in educators not having confidence in me as a school manager. It makes the educator develop an attitude against me because at the end of the day they may be aware that you do not really like him/her. The

educator that you like might develop a very... might start to undermine other educators.

He/she develops a superior attitude. In most of the cases the educator sometimes becomes lazy when it comes to doing their duties because he/she knows that the manager will understand whenever he/she comes with an excuse to say why he did not do his/her duty. That the school manager likes me – and it affects the educator in one way or another, even management. This results in the school manager failing to control the whole school. It has a negative impact, more than a positive impact, on the side of the manager and teaching and learning.

Educator qualifications and recruitment are some of the major human resource challenges besetting schools in South Africa. The government needs to put in place recruitment strategies to make teaching in schools attractive. Salaries we are paid should be made attractive with more benefits that are normally applicable to educators.

#### **2.4 I: Okay. *How do you manage diversity and discrimination?***

**SM:** Are you actually referring to managing the staff? Human resource management is a great challenge. Every individual in my school is unique. At the same time, every individual shares biological and environmental characteristics

with others. I am able to understand the schools' and the staffs' needs and I ensure that both are met. I manage all educators and learners fairly. In other words, I mean there is no discrimination in my school. I try my best to be fair. I am transparent.

If they have conflicts, I solve those problems. I am not biased. If a person is wrong I just say that. As far as I am concerned, my staff is happy but then you cannot satisfy them all. There are those who always complaint. Conflict and discrimination issues are sometimes constructive.

There are human differences that are inborn in us like age, ethnicity, gender, race, physical abilities. As staff members, they differ in education, marital status, religion and experience. Diversity programmes are needed. The challenge is that there were no follow up activities after the workshops. But all in all, attitude towards diversity in my school depends on the people being asked. Diversity has made management a challenge and I recognise a need for more diversity workshops.

**2.5 I: Sir. Do you have any challenges besetting females in your school?**

***Please give some specific examples. Elaborate if possible.***

**SM:** Are you referring to female educators or learners?

**I:** Any.

**SM:** Well, yes, definitely, one would then probably say that politically, even though it has been addressed by the Equity Act. When managing resources, you need to be fair. There are widely held beliefs about the way males and females behave. It is still there when it comes to positions, I mean management positions.

You discover that there is still a mentality to say that good managers have always been men instead of women. Male educators expect female educators to do duties like supervising cleaning, those related to females, while males want to help with administration duties. This causes conflict as females are more qualified than males.

Male educators and learners tend to behave in ways which are ambitious, aggressive, dominating, self-confident, competitive, assertive and independent. Females, on the other hand, tend to behave in ways which are emotional, affectionate, gentle, fond towards children, tender, warm, caring, nurturing and understanding.

Sometimes older boys and male educators do not want to listen to female educators. When you look around, most schools are being managed by male educators. Discrimination of women, even in our school, towards both educators and learners is the main cause of conflict. Male educators and learners want to control females and actually sometimes use force when it comes to a head.

The goals of education are not easily accomplished. We may believe that they may never be fully realised. However, if one accepts the fact that education is a lifelong pursuit, then perhaps it is also true to say that gender equity must also be a lifelong endeavour. With our patriarchal culture, female behaviours are not necessarily as valued as (those of) males. The community females only receive male recognition when they are twice as good as the males.

Achieving the goal of gender equity, non-class and democratic society, involves a process of unlearning and relearning; of reconceptualisation and creativity. Change is not easy as it involves dispensing with old and familiar ways of doing things. We need support as we attempt this so that we do not lose motivation along the way. A conscious and definite strategy is required to bring about the paradigm shifts necessary to enable us to create a new society in which all differences and similarities amongst people are recognised and drawn upon.

## **2.6 I: Thank you. *How do you motivate educators?***

**SM:** Some of my staff members have intrinsic motivation while others need extrinsic motivation. I work together with those educators who are motivated to motivate the other staff members. As schools, we do not have money. I motivate an educator by engaging him or her to a job that uses the skills the educator possesses.

I determine what the educator needs for quality teaching and offer it as a reward to the educator for good performance. For example, if an educator is a science educator, we buy all the teaching and learning aids he or she needs. Determining the needs of educators and creating an environment in which those needs are satisfied is one of my most challenging tasks. In addressing that challenge, we as decision-makers must know the common techniques for motivating the unmotivated.

I also involve them in decision making. I keep them informed about the school developments. I also reward good work and I am generous with praise. I do my level best to treat all the educators equally and that motivates them. I am very sensitive to their problems. I help them to grow and develop. To deal with unsatisfactory performance, I apply positive discipline.

### ***2.7 I: Good. How do you discipline your staff and learners?***

**SM:** In effect, discipline is the school managers' last resort to improve the performance of the staff. I work very hard in my school to build a culture of self-disciplined staff who take disciplined actions. My primary objective of disciplinary action is to motivate the staff and learners to comply with the school's performance standards.

I want to create and to maintain mutual respect and trust between me and the staff. I give my staff freedom and responsibility. As a school manager, I wish to have self disciplined staff (members) that don't need to be managed. I want to manage work, not people.

The staff member receives discipline after failing to meet some obligation of the job. School rules and regulations define proper conduct at school. Improperly administered discipline creates problems such as low morale, resentment and ill-will among the staff.

Sometimes, improvement in the employee's behaviour is short-lived and as a school manager you need to discipline the staff member again in the near future. As a school manager, I know that I cannot fire any staff member. All I have to do is to work together with them.

My proper administration of discipline improves their unacceptable behaviour and minimises future disciplinary challenges through a positive manager-educator relationship. Generally, I don't discipline staff members for problems beyond their control, for example, failure to meet output standards caused by lack of teaching and learning aids. I apply discipline only when it has been determined that the staff member is the cause of unsatisfactory performance.

**2.8 I: Thanks. *Do you have conflicts in your school? Give some specific examples. Elaborate where possible.***

**SM:** Yes, often. My staff members are all educated. There is a conflict of interests sometimes. That shows that they are all reasoning and actively involved in school activities. Conflicts are between the learners, educators and myself and the officials, the staff, learners and parents. Educators have conflict with learners and also educators and parents.

I mean, conflict is part of our package. As a school manager, I work with different types of people – all with their own beliefs, values, cultures and work ethics. Having to work under stressful conditions can cause conflict in all relationships. Some conflicts are unresolved. They cause anger and high staff turnover and absenteeism. I do my best to resolve conflict.

As a leader in my school, I handle conflict properly and sometimes conflict is of great benefit in my school. Sometimes educators will disagree about the educator (fit) to teach a specific learning area. The Result analysis allocates the best educators for specific classes as identified. All staff members are involved in decision-making.

When conflict is managed well, it can lead to new ideas, improved team work and commitment. Conflict can help the school manager to better understand the people with whom he or she works. As a manager, I need to know the root cause of the conflict to use it as a springboard to higher achievement.

With moral values, more especially, I think culture comes in but it is also another challenge too, because, as I have indicated, we are all coming from different backgrounds where we have different norms and values. We believe at home that you are not showing respect if you are acting in some way like an adult person.

In another family they actually believe that that is a sign of intelligence. Those indicate that we are coming from different values and norms and our morals as well. As school managers I am besetting the situation of making sure that there is this kind of understanding to the educators and the learners.

**2.9 I: The last question is: *How do you ensure job satisfaction in your staff and learners?***

**SM:** As I have mentioned before, when I was talking about conflict, there are some other things that you may do as a school manager, unintentionally or unaware that you are actually discriminating against certain individuals. Sometimes there are conflicts within institutions which are caused by me. I

believe that at work you must have people around you that you can trust but you cannot satisfy all of them.

But sometimes I am not aware that as much as I need people who I can trust, I am actually discriminating against certain individuals and it may cause some dissatisfaction. Yes, so it actually makes one understand that, when we talk of discrimination it is broader than one specific thing. Those little things count more than those things that we have considered being more important in our institutions.

In some cases, there are some educators who want me as a school manager to follow their rules. When they want to be late or absent, they expect me to understand. They want to do what they feel like doing. Also those minor things result in conflicts. I do my best to manage the school fairly and justly. In whatever I do, I consider individual differences. I can't satisfy their wants.

There are a number of things like colour. As a school manager, there are times when you associate yourself with a certain clique/group of people. It may be because of your qualifications or because of your social background or influence, sometimes like that you end up having your own people amongst your own staff. These also cause the staff to be dissatisfied because the staff is discriminated against on social level.

Here at school, I employed educators from different races, as we have a mixed brand of learners. The relationship is excellent with those of my race and culture. Those of other cultures sometimes show some actions of being discriminated. I think I know the reason why – most of the time I use Afrikaans to address both the educators and learners. Some of them hate Afrikaans and I like Afrikaans.

No one can make me do something different as I am not prepared to change anyone. We are here for one thing – to educate the learners. I am so sorry, for some of the things are spontaneous. Otherwise our relationship is good. We are all working together as a team.

**I: *Any more comments on all the questions I have asked?***

**SM:** No, nothing more.

**I: *Is there more that you want to say?***

**SM:** No, for now that is all.

**I: Thank you very much for your participation.**

## **ANNEXURE I**

### **INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT FOR AN EDUCATOR**

**I : INTERVIEWER**

**ED : EDUCATOR**

*Interview between interviewer and respondent thirty five: Educator.*

*I: Good morning Mr. Z.*

*ED: Good morning Madam.*

*I: May I please know, are you ready for the interview questions I gave you two weeks back?*

*ED: Oh! Yes, Madam, we can start.*

**2.1 I: Thanks. The first question is: *What are your views regarding education in South Africa?***

**ED:** It's fine, its fine, at our school, it works but it's definitely extra work if the learners don't understand... for instance, use English as a medium of instruction, while we have learners with other mother tongues... they struggle with everything. They cannot understand, not to mention speaking and we as educators must work harder, give extra lessons and give extra everything with no extra pay.

So many changes in education pose challenges, and school managers' leadership styles have to adapt accordingly. School culture must become innovative, open and receptive. As educators, we have to act as innovative agents of change, in order to ensure the effective functioning of our schools. I think also socio-political changes have brought about major changes in the education system of South Africa. This unpreparedness has led to many human management challenges besetting school managers.

The Department of Education must set possible, practical and realistic goals. There must be more management workshops and we must realise that this is a process. Changes have to be dealt with slowly and effectively and they must not just leave us like that. There are lots of things that the department expects from us that are not realistic.

Quality education and many things they expect from us must be user-friendly. All these kinds of assessment and extra paper work are confusion. We want to concentrate more on what we are here for... to educate the child. Not just to be a clerk and to do a lot of paper work. Our classes are too big, I mean overcrowded. Individual attention is impossible.

You find that especially the older boys are very arrogant and they are not very respectful to educators, including the school manager. Some of them are abusing drugs. You feel unsafe to confront them. Sometimes the staff or learners express

their views in an assertive manner which is unacceptable. Affirmative action is a challenge and is a reverse discrimination as it has an inclusive character. When it started, it was said that it was a temporal intervention but now it is more than sixteen years but it's still there. There are so many sudden changes in education. The curriculum is changing annually.

**2.2 I: Thank you. *What are the common challenges you face as an educator?***

**ED:** I think some of them I have mentioned in the previous question, like overcrowded classrooms, drug and substance abuse and undisciplined learners. Other challenges are language, a high failure rate, a shortage of qualified educators, absenteeism, teenage pregnancy, learners bunking classes, late coming, truancy, learners heading families, violence in schools, poverty, HIV /AIDS in both learners and the staff and more.

Teaching methods are a challenge because we cannot use the old methods that we used previously in subjects in OBE and the learning areas. With the lack of resources, we have to change our methods and strategies. That has an added a burden – surely academic – I think quality education is an adaptation for us. We have to be aware of the ins and outs of education. I am talking about being sensitive in some way.

I am not saying that you have got to teach learners – but be sensitive. With changes in education we must always be prepared for change. That is just my opinion, yes, to change within yourself. Different cultures and the socio-economic state are challenges. Sometimes you find that there is far less parental involvement – some parents are not willing to take responsibility for their own children in terms of checking whether the child is tidy or dressed neatly etc.

We get some parents who send their children to school in dirty school uniforms. It makes the work load on the teacher even more. Instead of being just an educator you become a parent and a social worker. Some parents have really taken steps back in their children's education in that they place much more – the workload – on us.

We are facing the challenge of providing appropriate teaching-learning opportunities to learners who are not willing to learn. There is a great need for in-service and pre-service teacher training with a view to preparing them for the challenge to meet the diverse needs of learners in schools, thereby maximising learners' quality learning.

**2.3 I: Okay. How does your school recruit and retain the staff?**

**ED:** In my school, there is a chronic shortage of qualified and dedicated educators. Marketing and recruitment are therefore important to make sure that the school gets many applicants for staff vacancies. To get the best people to

apply, the best people must be recruited. Our contact with other people and unions motivate people to apply.

For quality education in our school, the priority is the process of recruiting and selecting the new staff. Posts are advertised by the Department of Education. Applications are centralised. They are recorded at the Circuit Office and hand-delivered at schools with vacant posts. Short listings and interviews are conducted at school level in the presence of all Union representatives and School Governing Body Members.

My manager prefers independent people who work under little or no supervision. Our selection process works the best. We find attractive those candidates who resemble the present staff in style, assumptions, values and beliefs. They are the best people hired. Newly appointed staff members attend special induction training or indoctrination sessions which are a staff development programme to learn the important cultural values and assumptions of the school.

The staff is retained by team building to increase trust and openness among team members. My manager uses a democratic leadership style. Transparency and active involvement in decision-making is practiced. We all participate in reviewing school rules and policies. There is high mutual trust among the staff members. As staff members, we believe in integrity, character and the ability of

each other. All staff members are treated fairly without favouritism or discrimination.

**.2.4. I: Mr. Z, *How is diversity and discrimination managed in your school?***

**ED:** To state the facts, (there's) no departmental special training for diversity and discrimination. If you speak of workshops from the Department of Education, nothing at all. Here at school, we have developed our own staff development programmes about diversity. We are expected to do something we don't know. The reason is that educational planners are not in the real teaching and learning situation as we are. No one cares about the challenges we face in the areas of language, cognitive, inter-personal, and intra-personal development.

Cultural differences are acknowledged in our school. All forms of diversity are incorporated into the school's culture and values. To be honest, although legislation prohibits any form of unfair discrimination, and requires compliance with human rights' principles like redress and equal opportunities, the practice in our school among the staff and learners is not always in line with legislation.

In my school, we are all unique. Our manager realises that we are different. People joining our school are made aware before they are appointed that our school has a specific culture and climate and that there will be demands on the candidate to make certain changes, if necessary, to fit in with the school. Our

school promotes diversity and therefore we, as staff, must be willing to make certain changes to accommodate new educators. Our diversity training and revamping programmes is user friendly to all staff members.

**2.5. I: *Are there any challenges besetting females in your school?***

**ED:** Yes. A lot. I mean many.

**I: *If yes, can you please explain?***

**ED:** Some of the male educators see female educators as threats and they feel humiliated when they are being managed by them, for example as HODs or deputy principals. Much has been said in our school in favour of female managers and their management styles. They are assumed to be fairer and (more) democratic than males. Females are believed to manage differently to males.

Other staff members suggest that there are widely held beliefs about the way males and females behave. Such stereotypes can be dangerous because they can seem to seal people in behaviors linked with their own genders. How females behave is a self-fulfilling prophecy to them. When a behaviour associated with males is displayed by a female, it is considered inappropriate and sometimes unacceptable.

As far as I am concerned, to be a man or to be a woman allows us to be a distinct personality without regard to gender stereotyping. This should be true to all of us here. Some educators believe that women are incapable of providing a firm and directive framework of leadership. Some females devalue themselves while others are undermined.

What I have experienced in promotional posts is that some males and other females are the greatest barriers in females' career progression. In the School Management Team, positions are predominantly male. Covert and overt discrimination against females is here in our school. More attention and redress is needed.

**2.6 I: Thank you. How are you motivated by your school manager?**

**ED:** Our school manager motivates and challenges us as educators. His own visible behaviour has a great value to motivate us as the staff members. He remains optimistic even in the face of adversity. He exists at all levels. He generates development, change and improvement. Our manager motivates us for long term goals. Promotions, performance appraisals and discussions with our school manager about what our school values and what the school punishes, is a powerful coaching mechanism.

My manager prefers internal motivation because he believes that motivation from within a person has a stronger driving force than external motivation. He acknowledges what we do. Our own drive to succeed is more important for long term success. With my experience, internal motivation has a longer lasting influence on the performance of an individual. As educators, our manager does not have money to motivate us. Even if he had money, we would need frequent salary raises.

We are also motivated by the fact that he knows us as individuals, but also considers the group context. We do our best to achieve sustained quality education in our school. The best educator in a learning area is given rewards like merit certificates or trophies. To ensure that the school values and assumptions are learnt, we created a reward, internal promotions and status system that is consistent with those values. The rewards are allocated in terms of the staff members' daily behaviour.

**2.7. I: Thanks. How are you disciplined and how do you discipline learners?**

**ED:** In theory, the responsibility for discipline falls upon the educator's immediate supervisor, the head of that department or the deputy manager. She or he is the one to correct the educator's performance problems. Some school managers,

like mine, want discipline to be uniform. He and the staff are responsible for discipline with his SMT and SGB.

As educators, we are managed in a way that prevents the behaviour that needs to be disciplined. Our school manager (and the SMT) practices preventative discipline as a result – he creates a school climate conducive to high levels of job satisfaction.

As staff members, we are free to address our problems to our manager through an open-door policy and management-employee relationship. If we have made a mistake, discipline is administered politely and fairly by our disciplinary committee without revenge, punishment or abuse.

With the abolishment of corporal punishment, learners are disciplined by detention, suspension, calling their parents or reporting the matter to the school manager. Positive discipline is recommended. It depends on the seriousness of the case. School and classroom rules and school policies serve as guidelines for discipline.

Some of the learners are violent and in some cases we call the police, eh, I mean if it is beyond our powers. Some of the learners abuse drugs and we cannot handle them. We work hand in glove with our manager. Some learners need police intervention as a way of disciplining them.

**2.8 I: Sir, Do you have any conflicts in your school? Please give some specific examples. Elaborate if possible.**

**ED:** Yes conflict is natural, we can't avoid it. The skills of leadership are really put to test in times of crisis when there is a need for both cool judgement and a decisive action. As the school does not exist in vacuum; a number of potential conflicts are possible. The opportunity for conflict exists in and among all the major dimensions of the school.

It is natural and is there between the staff and the principal and even among the learners themselves. The rapid changes currently taking place in South Africa have definite implications for education. The diversity of cultures and the complex composition of the population, each cultural group having its own traditions and values are making high challenges of conflict on educational leaders, school managers and to us as educators.

There is conflict between us as educators and learners and between the school manager and the community. It's common, because our respective expectations are not met. Conflict has been highlighted many times in our school. The changes in education naturally result in the development of conflict situations. Intergroup conflicts are the product of problems experienced between groups.

Other causes are the interdependence of groups, the curriculum, politicizing of education, their different perceptions and their aims and objectives. There are also conflicts between us staff members. The school manager is sometimes in conflict with teachers. I mean, it's like we are at home. We are staying together but we disagree sometimes.

That shows that we are all thinking and reasoning. Conflict of interests is at the advantage of team building and sharing of ideas. The school manager has the responsibility to promote the smooth implementation of quality education and the prevention and management of conflict.

***2.9 I: Thank you very much. How is job satisfaction in educators and the staff ensured?***

**ED:** My manager considers affirmative action. Some females have roles such as being a parent, deputy principal and sometimes a wife. As a result, they find themselves in conflicts when not personally suited. For them to be satisfied in school, the school manager holds true to practices of effective leadership.

For the staff to be satisfied in conflict, he keeps firm control, with clear-cut decisions and directions. In our school, the new educators are expected to conform and to respect established patterns which are school rules and policies.

We also, as staff, are open to new ideas from new staff members. We learn from them and they also learn from us. We compromise to reach harmony. Jealousy, mistrust and the spirit of competition is avoided.

As a school, we work together as a team. We try our best to ensure that we share perceptions; we have a common purpose with agreed procedures, commitment, and cooperation. Disagreements are resolved openly by discussion. Yes, we are a team; we work together with a common goal. All the stakeholders at school are expected to fit into our team structure.

**I: Okay. *Is there more that you want to say?***

**ED:** Yes, it is recommended that educators receive in-service training to equip them for quality education in the new dispensation. Although attempts are being made to provide enough suitably qualified educators, the problem is still far from being solved.

**I: *Any more comments on all the questions I have asked?***

**ED:** No. Thank you.

**I: Thanks a million for your participation.**

**DOKTORSGRADE - DOCTOR'S DEGREE**  
**FAKULTEIT OPVOEDKUNDE**  
**FACULTY OF EDUCATION**

**Doctor of Education Degree (DEd).**

**PHUMZILE DEBRA ZWANE - 3139 814 6**

**SUMMARY OF THE THESIS**

This study is embedded in human resource challenges besetting school managers. They are challenged by learners' and educators' absenteeism, late coming, high failure rate, student drug abuse, changes in education, school violence, physical conflicts among learners, lack of parental involvement, poverty, learners disrespect for educators, alcoholism, behaviours and negative attitudes of learners.

Educators are to be at the right place at the right time to teach effectively and efficiently. Through the selection process, suitable candidates are appointed, inducted and retained. Affirmative Action must be implemented to achieve equal employment opportunities to previously disadvantaged people. Racial and gender stereotypes and expectations should be managed and monitored through workshops and work appraisal.

They are to utilise and manage the school as effectively as possible. Managers who resist change and diversity are beset with higher educators' and learners' turnover and higher recruitment and staff development costs. Management depends on staff communication to produce quality education and best results.

To remedy the situation, school managers must not discriminate unfairly on grounds of ethnicity or culture and to motivate and develop individuals with talents. They need to provide a safe haven in which quality teaching and learning

occurs. Managers must see all stakeholders in terms of their common humanity rather than their cultural differences. Educators' and learners' contributions are to be managed. They have a role to play in human resource policy making and implementation. To manage diversity, they need to recognise cultural diversity without judging it and to perceive differences where differences exist to create a unified citizenship. They need to recruit and to ensure that suitably qualified candidates are attracted and apply for vacant positions.

### **TITLE OF THE THESIS**

**“Exploring human resource challenges besetting school  
managers in Vryheid district in KwaZulu-Natal:  
An educational management perspective”**

### **PROMOTER:**

**Professor MW LUMADI**