

**EXPLORING PRACTICES DETERMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND
IMPROVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE FREE STATE
PROVINCE**

by

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Tsediso Michael Makoelle

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that EXPLORING PRACTICES DETERMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

T.M Makoelle

November 2011

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my grandmother, the late Alice Mojabatho Lipali, for the remarks that culminated in my courage and determination to pursue educational ideals against all odds. In January 1978 she said to my mother:

“He will grow to become the greatest teacher, the teacher of teachers; just let him follow the example of Jesus; teach him to humble himself and the Lord will do everything for him.”

My heartfelt gratitude is due to my family: my wife Palesa Makoelle, my daughter Nthabikie Makoelle, and my son Mohau Makoelle, for their unstinting encouragement and loyal support.

SUMMARY

Globally, there are numerous debates on what constitutes an effective school. Parents strive to choose what they regard as the best school for the education of their children. Historically, school effectiveness is a phenomenon associated with learner attainment. Yet, school effectiveness is measured and conceptualized differently throughout the world.

The aim of this research was to determine and define the factors contributing to the effectiveness of secondary schools in the Free State Province of South Africa. A case study was conducted on six schools selected in the Free State Province. Data were collected qualitatively by means of semi-structured and focus-group interviews with principals, SMTs, teachers, SGBs, learning facilitators and school-management and -governance developers. A documentary analysis was carried out to triangulate data from interviews.

The data collected were triangulated and supported by an extensive literature review on school effectiveness and improvement. In particular, the literature review encompassed the policy context of school effectiveness in South Africa, definitions of the concept of school effectiveness, models of school effectiveness, methods of evaluating school effectiveness, the relationship between school effectiveness and school improvement, change and school improvement, approaches to school improvement and the characteristics of effective schools. The legislative framework for both teacher and school evaluations is highlighted and their effectiveness critically reviewed with reference to current investigations in the field.

These empirical investigations, which, form part of this larger qualitative research project, show that effective schools exhibited high learner attainment, effective teaching and learning, as well as a highly effective leadership and management. Management, leadership and administration, curriculum, school governance and

school support structures were confirmed as very instrumental as far as school effectiveness and improvement are concerned. Furthermore the study indicates that the current policies are not enhancing school effectiveness and improvement, thus the study recommends the index of school effectiveness and improvement (ISE&I).

The Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement, which is a document that schools can use to review and enhance their effectiveness, is a model developed in the course of this study to assist schools in improving their effectiveness. Unlike the WSE review, which takes place every five years, the index suggests a continuous and regular review process by schools carried out by all stakeholders.

In conclusion, an overview of the challenges identified by this research project, as well as the aspects in need of further research, is highlighted.

KEY CONCEPTS

School effectiveness, school improvement and effective school, school management, school leadership, school curriculum and school governance.

OPSOMMING

Wêreldwyd is daar talle debatte rondom wat 'n doeltreffende skool sou behels. Ouers streef daarna om die skool te kies wat hulle sou beskou as die beste vir die opvoeding van hul kinders. Histories is skool-effektiwiteit 'n verskynsel wat verband hou met Leerderprestasie. Tog, word skool-effektiwiteit oor die hele wêreld in verskillende maniere gemeet en gekonseptualiseer.

Hierdie navorsing is 'n poging om die faktore wat bydra tot die effektiwiteit van sekondêre skole in die Vrystaat-provinsie van Suid-Afrika bepaal en te definieer. 'n Gevallestudie is uitgevoer op ses geselekteerde skole in die Vrystaat Provinsie. Die data is kwalitatief versamel deur middel van semi-gestruktureerde en fokusgroeponderhoude onderhoude met skoolhoofde, SBS'e, onderwysers, SBL, leerfasiliteerders en die skool se bestuur en beheer ontwikkelaars. Dokumentêre analise is ook gedoen.

Data wat ingesamel is getrianguleer en ondersteun deur 'n uitgebreide literatuuroorsig van skole se doeltreffendheid en verbetering. Die literatuuroorsig van die beleidkonteks van die skool se doeltreffendheid in Suid-Afrika, definisies van die begrip, die skooldoeltreffendheid, modelle van skool doeltreffendheid, metodes van evaluering van skooldoeltreffendheid, die verhouding tussen die skool-effektiwiteit en die skool verbetering, verandering en skoolverbetering, benaderings tot skoolverbetering en die eienskappe van doeltreffende skole word in detail bespreek. Die wetgewende raamwerk vir beide onderwyser- skool-evaluering word uitgelig en hul effektiwiteit krities hersien deur huidige studie gedoen is.

Hierdie empiriese studie toon dat effektiewe skole uitgestal hoë Leerderprestasiestrategie, effektiewe onderrig en leer, sowel as 'n hoogs doeltreffende leierskap en bestuur. Bestuur, leierskap en administrasie, kurrikulum, skoolbeheer en die skool bevestig is as baie instrumenteel so ver as die skool se doeltreffendheid en verbetering is bekommerd. Verder het die studie dui daarop dat die huidige beleid nie die verbetering van doeltreffendheid en verbetering van die

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skool, dus die studie beveel die indeks van die skool se doeltreffendheid en verbetering (ISE & I) .

Die indeks van skool doeltreffendheid en verbetering is 'n dokument wat skole kan gebruik om hul effektiwiteit te hersien en te verbeter. Dit is 'n model wat in hierdie studie voorgestel word om skole te help om hul doeltreffendheid te verbeter. In teenstelling met die HSE-hersiening wat plaasvind na afloop van elke vyf jaar dui die indeks op 'n deurlopende en gereelde hersiening deur die skole word uitgevoer deur alle belanghebbendes.

Ten slotte word 'n oorsig van die uitdagings van hierdie studie, asook die aspekte wat verdere navorsing benodig uitgelig.

SLEUTELKONSEPTE

Doeltreffendheid van die skool, die verbetering van die skool en effektiewe skool bestuur, skoolleierskap, skoolkurrikulum en skoolbeheer.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

ANC: African National Congress

COLTS: Culture of Learning and Teaching Services

CM: Contextual Model

DAS: Developmental Appraisal System

DDSP: District Development Support Project

DoE: Department of Education

DoBE: Department of Basic Education

DIP: District Improvement Plan

DSG: Developmental Support Group

EAZ: Education Action Zone

ELRC: Education Labour Relation Council

ETQA: Education and Training Quality Assurance

FET: Further Education and Training band

GAS: General Adaptation Syndrome

GET: General Education and Training band

FSDoE: Free State Department of Education

HE: Heretic Model

HIP: Holistic Intervention Programme

HIV/AIDS: Human Immune Virus/ Acquired Immune Deficiency
Virus

HOD: Head of department

IQMS: Integrated Quality Management Systems

ISE&I: Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement

LF: Learning Facilitator

MBO: Management by Objective
MBWA: Management by Wandering About
MEC: Member of the Executive Council
NCS: National Curriculum Statement
NEEDU: National Education Evaluation Unit
OBE: Outcomes-based Education
PGP: Personal Growth Plan
PMDS: Performance Management and Development
Systems
PSLA: Provincial Strategy on Learner Attainment
QA: Quality Assurance
QLP: Quality Learning Project
QLTC: Quality of Learning and Teaching Campaign
RCL: Learner Representative Council
RM: Received Model
RSA: Republic of South Africa
SBST: School Based Support Team
SACE: South African council of educators
SASA: South African Schools Act
SAQA: South African Qualification Authority
SBA: School Based Accountability
SBM: School Based Management
SDP: School Development Plan
SESA: School Effectiveness in South Africa
SGB: School governing body
SIP: School Improvement Plan
SMGD: School Management and Governance
Developer (Circuit Manager)
SMT: School Management Team
TLI: Teacher Laptop Initiative

TQM: Total Quality Management

UK: United Kingdom

USA: United States of America

WSE: Whole School Evaluation

LIST OF ANNEXURE

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- D:**Interview schedule for focus group SMT
- E:**Interview schedule LFs
- F:**Interview schedule SMGDs
- G:**Letter to Free State Education Department
- H:**Documentary Analysis Guide
- I:**Review questionnaire
- J:**Map of Free State education Districts
- K:**Permission to conduct research in Free State schools

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

When parents choose a school, especially a secondary school for their children, they usually look for an ‘effective school’ so that their children can receive what they regard as a quality education. Parents usually evaluate the effectiveness of secondary schools on the basis of their matriculation (academic) results. Parents also believe that an effective school has, inter alia, effective management structures, a strong school governing body, a healthy school environment or climate and good infrastructure, motivated learners as well as good educators. It is important to mention that these widely accepted notions have to be empirically investigated to formulate a scientific description of what really constitutes an effective school.

The history of school effectiveness and school improvement is posited by Tomlinson (2004) as having emerged from two periods; that is, during the 1960s and the 1980s. During the first period, the effectiveness and improvement of schools were measured by the competence of individual teachers in presenting the curriculum. In the course of the 1980s, there was a paradigm shift from focusing on curriculum delivery by individual teachers to focusing on whole-school processes.

The debates around the processes of school effectiveness and improvement have prompted other researchers such as Harris, Reynolds and Bennet (2005) to argue that there is a need to link or merge the two processes by, inter alia,

- developing a theory;
- adopting a multi-level approach;
- taking account of the context;
- generating case studies;
- using multiple outcome measures.

The justification for merging school effectiveness and improvement, according to Harris *et al.* (2005), is that school effectiveness ensures that learners achieve outcomes, while improvement is about changing conditions so that learners can achieve as expected. The indication is that both processes have similar objectives, but are achieved differently.

The research literature shows that the discipline of school effectiveness and improvement is very young. For example, the International Journal on School Effectiveness only came into being in 1991 (Harris *et al.*, 2005). The situation has led to the emergence of some notions in relation to the concepts. According to Leonard, Bourke & Schofield (2004), for example, with regard to the notion of school-learner effectiveness, there is a belief that schools make no difference to learner outcomes. However, there is a growing understanding in the current research literature that schools and classrooms do indeed influence the learners' achievement. The classroom factors influence cognitive and affective outcomes, while the school factors influence behaviour, attendance, attitudes and attainment amongst learners (Leonard *et al.*, 2004).

It is on the same note that South Africa also moved along the road of enhancing school effectiveness and improvement by implementing the whole-school approach to improvement and effectiveness (Department of Education (DoE), 2001). Taylor (in Townsend, 2007) highlights the fact that pre-1994 school improvement and effectiveness were dominated by the involvement of Non Governmental Organisations (NGO) with a focus on teacher-subject training. According to Taylor (in Townsend, 2007), a number of projects or initiatives were initiated by the Department of Education to enhance school effectiveness and improvement during this time, among others the following:

- The Imbewu Project (1998 – 2001) at 523 rural schools in the Eastern Cape.
- Standards-based accountability (1994–2003) when matriculation results declined. In this regard, improvement plans were drawn up to change and improve the situation in dysfunctional schools (schools attaining a less than 20% matriculation pass rate).

- The Education Action Zone (EAZ) programme (1999-2002) in the Gauteng Province where 70 schools were identified and systemic intervention applied, which resulted in improved results.
- Several additional projects were designed to align curriculum, teaching and assessment. These include, inter alia, the following:
 - The District Development and Support Project (DDSP) of 2000–2002 at 453 primary schools (in rural areas) focused on improving the functionality of districts and schools.
 - The Quality Learning Project (QLP) of 2001–2004 at 524 high schools in nine provinces.
 - The Dinaledi Project (2001 and ongoing) at 12 poor and under-sourced high schools to improve their teaching of science and mathematics.

These projects had, however, very little influence on the performances of schools in the mostly disadvantaged schools as the focus was on moderately to well-performing schools (Taylor, in Townsend, 2007).

The abovementioned developments show that there is a need to enhance effectiveness and improve schools in South Africa, in particular the previously disadvantaged ones, because intervention has not taken place in the same manner in all schools; instead, the context of each plays an important role in determining the need for an improvement strategy.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The following section provides a brief historical background to school effectiveness and discusses the literature on school effectiveness both in South Africa and internationally. The background is discussed in terms of both an historical and literature context.

1.2.1 Historical context

The ideological system of separate development (the so-called Apartheid system) in South Africa established separate education departments for different ethnic groups and those in the former black ‘homelands’; that is, for blacks, whites, coloureds and Asians (Case & Yogo, 2000). This policy had implications for the provision of education for the various ethnic groups. The allocation of resources to schools was inequitable as it favoured whites above all other ethnic groups. The legacy of the Apartheid system and its racial policies is still prevalent in South Africa, despite the political changes since the dawn of the new political dispensation in 1994 (Jansen & Sayed, 2001). This legacy continues to define how effective the schools are, and the quality of education they provide.

The understanding of what constitutes an effective school continues to be conceptualised within the context of the effects of the previous dispensation; that is, in relation to socio-economic, infrastructural, human-resources and physical-resources challenges. These challenges are still visible at some of the former black schools. For example, Chisholm (in Daniel, Southhall & Lutchman, 2006) mentions that South African schools are still confronted with the challenges of a lack of teaching and learning resources, as well as poor management and leadership – indeed, many of the changes have just been politically symbolic and have not had a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning. Botha (2004) concurs and highlights the lack of a culture of teaching and learning at many of the previously disadvantaged schools.

The history of apartheid education continues to determine the extent to which schools are regarded as effective or ineffective, as some were more privileged than others in the past. The educational changes saw the school system being transformed from a pre-1994 judgemental approach to a post-1994 developmental approach (Mazibuko, 2007). The judgemental approach, which used external evaluation to determine mistakes, was preferred to the developmental approach with its focus on development as opposed to fault-finding (Rembe, 2005).

Prior to 1994, school effectiveness was characterised by a judgemental approach to the inspection of schools. Teachers were instructed to use scheme books and follow the syllabi strictly; principals followed the principal's manual scrupulously; school boards were undemocratically elected; and autocratic, judgemental class visits that did not allow teachers the right to question the prevailing orthodoxy were carried out by the principals, inspectors and subject advisors. Ironically, this system increased the effectiveness of schools (specifically the former all-white schools) as evidenced by the fact that many schools had high learner pass rates as one of the advantages of this approach (Engelbrecht, Griessel, Verster & Yssel, 1985).

After 1994, the Inspectorate was transformed into the School Management Development Unit, and the curriculum was changed to an outcomes-based approach, with teachers designing programmes. The Directorate for Whole-School Evaluation was established to review and make recommendations for school effectiveness and development (DoE, 2001). The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) was instituted for teacher appraisal and development, and school-governing bodies were democratically elected and governed in terms of the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 (Mda & Mothata, 2000).

Given the lower pass rates that follows the introduction of the IQMS, this new approach negatively affected the quality of education – that is, if matriculation results are taken as an indicator of effectiveness. This begs the question why, despite all these political and transformative changes, some schools are still struggling to perform and how they can be assisted to become more effective?

1.2.2 Literature context

The issue of school effectiveness continues to dominate the literature of education management and administration, with the concept of effectiveness being conceptualised differently by many authors.

Beare, Caldwell & Millikan (1989), for example, equates effectiveness with the fulfilment of objectives by the school – that is, if the school is able to attain its objectives, it is effective. Conversely, Van der Bank (1994) views school effectiveness from a management perspective, averring that schools with effective management strategies, such as strong leadership by the principal, are highly effective. However, Van der Westhuizen (2002) broadens the discourse by contextualising school effectiveness within the school's organisational culture, and concludes that an organisation and its effectiveness lie in the effectiveness of its components.

Authors such as Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (1993) and Macbeth and Mortimore (2001) emphasise the significance of teaching and learning as the core determinant of school effectiveness. The concept *school effectiveness* is widely associated with learner attainment, although there are various ways of defining and conceptualising school effectiveness. According to Slee and Weiner (1998), the phenomenon is modelled in the following three ways:

- The Received Model bases school effectiveness on traditional views of how the school operates; for example, that the school, rather than teachers, influences learner attainment.
- The Heretic Model considers other contextual factors that influence learner attainment, for example stakeholders and the environment.
- The Contextual Model focuses on the unique context of each school and the relationship of context-to-learner attainment.

From the literature it is evident that a number of approaches have been applied to evaluate the effectiveness of schools. Fitz and Lee (2000) refer to inspection as an efficient way of evaluating school effectiveness. By contrast, Cuttance (1994) avers that quality assurance is crucial for evaluating school effectiveness, and other authors such as Morley and Rassool (1999) hold that an effective school is a learning school, with all its principles centred on learning by all involved in the teaching and learning process.

The role of the principal at a school is also believed to have an impact on how well the school functions. Macbeath and Myers (1999), for example, postulate a close relationship between an effective school and an effective principal. The same proposition is shared by Gunter (2005), who uses the concept *distributed leadership* to denote leadership as a collective effort by the principal and co-managers.

The literature on school effectiveness runs parallel to that on school improvement. Macbeath & Mortimore (2001) highlights school improvement as a continual process of enhancing the effectiveness of the school. Similarly, Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) theorise that schools that are improving themselves continually set goals and work towards their attainment. Hopkins (1987) addresses the significance of change in the improvement of schools, arguing that change is a process that should be managed carefully as it could determine the success or failure of the school. Harris, Bennet and Preedy (1997) use the systems analogy to explain how the school as a system could effectively change the way it operates. Systems analogy looks at the school as consisting of parts that are interdependent for the school's functioning as a whole. Fullan (2004), on the other hand, articulates two models of change, namely evolutionary change, which is change over time, and complexity, which is a more interactive approach to change.

Change and school improvement are underlying concepts in all definitions of leadership. Change in school leadership and management entered an intense global discourse on educational reform towards the end of the last century, and well into the 21st century the debate continues unabated, if not vigorously. Preoccupation with change that underscores educational reform has been motivated by the growing demand for school improvement (Marishane & Botha 2011).

School improvement is pursued by, among other things, seeking ways which will strengthen the management and leadership capacities of those working in schools to ensure that learners are provided with and experience quality learning opportunities. As an important component of management, school leadership is pivotal in determining the success of school improvement.

The relationship between change, improvement and leadership in an era of educational reform can be described in a simple way, namely: Educational reform is about change and change in education is about improvement. In order for change to bring about sustainable improvement, effective leadership is required to lead change and direct it towards this end.

It is evident from the literature that there are also different approaches to school improvement. For example, a number of approaches suggested by authors such as Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutto and Kleiner (2000), Sun, Creemers, Bert and De Jong (2007), and Hargreaves and Hopkins (1994) all refer to the significance of regarding the school as a learning organisation. Central to learning is the process of school-development planning, which is important for learning. By contrast, Harris *et al.* (1997) and Botha (2000) highlight the importance of Total Quality Management (TQM) as a strategy for improving quality at schools. TQM refers to improving the school in all its areas, ensuring that quality is found in all activities and processes. Middlewood and Lumby (1998), on the other hand, believe that strategic management within TQM enhances the chances of improving efficiency and effectiveness. Schmuck (2004), supported by Stoll and Louis (2007), posits that action research, through which teachers form teams and reflect on their practice as an alternative strategy, could improve their practice.

In South Africa, the Apartheid legacy continues to influence the manner in which school effectiveness is conceptualised (DoE, 2009). However, since 1994, a number of legislative frameworks have been put in place to deal with this legacy and to improve the situation. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (SASA) laid the foundation for how a school should be managed and governed. In terms of SASA, the management of the school rests with the principal and the governance of the school with the school-governing body (SGB). The evaluation of teachers and school remains a contentious issue in the quest to improve school effectiveness. According to the National Education and Evaluation Development Report (NEEDU) (2009), the following three systems were designed to provide the basic evaluation framework:

- The Whole-School Evaluation Policy provided a framework for evaluating schools (DoE, 2009).
- The Development Appraisal System (DAS) was designed as a tool to respond to the development and needs of teachers.
- The Performance Management and Development System (PDMS) was aimed at measuring performance for remuneration purposes.

The three systems were later consolidated into the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), which was a response to both teacher evaluation and performance management. This study was conducted after the implementation of the above mentioned systems and there are currently strong indications that they are not in any way improving teaching and learning at schools (NEEDU, 2009).

The implementation of outcomes-based education (OBE) once again raised some concerns about quality at schools. Authors such as Kruger (1998) and Vermeulen (1997) see it as a curriculum intended to transform the education system by articulating learner-centeredness. However, it is questionable whether this is the case. Finally, the most recent report of the task team appointed to review the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (October, 2009) clearly states that OBE has failed, and that it has to be replaced with a new system to try to improve the effectiveness of our schools (Makoelle, 2009). The recent announcement on 6 July 2010 by the Minister of Education, Ms Angie Motshekga, that OBE has to be reviewed is an indication that its implementation affected the manner in which schools operate and function. The report recommended, *inter alia*, that teachers should have only one file instead of many; that learner portfolios should be scrapped; that the number of projects must be reduced; and that the importance of the textbook should be emphasised (DoE, 2009).

The role of the education district has also raised the issue whether or not its support to schools actually enhances school effectiveness and improvement. Chinsamy (2002) avers that, if the district provides adequate support to schools, they are likely to do better than expected.

Currently, very little support is given to schools; therefore, to improve the situation, the districts should provide management training to principals, build the capacity of school-governing bodies (SGBs,) and train teachers in curriculum delivery (DoE, 2009).

1.3 MOTIVATION FOR STUDY

The fact that numerous secondary schools cannot produce the expected results calls for the identification of strategies, guidelines and practices that the Department of Education could put in place to ensure that more secondary schools perform at the expected standard. Clear guidelines should be given to the principals of dysfunctional schools to ensure improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. The review tool for school effectiveness and improvement developed in this study could prove most useful in the identification of strategies, guidelines and mechanisms for the improvement of school effectiveness throughout South African schools. The outcome of the study lays the foundation to policy development and thus could be used as bases for training of principals in improving the effectiveness of schools. Furthermore the study has contributed to the existing literature on school effectiveness and improvement.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Free State Department of Education attained a 79% pass rate for Grade 12 learners in 2003 (FSDoE, 2003:1–3). This was regarded as a great achievement by the Free State Education Department, and a reflection of how effective secondary schools are in the Free State. The Department held achievers' functions to reward the top 50 schools with incentives such as playing fields, halls and a prize of R150 000. The learners who had excelled at these top schools were given bursaries (Grobler, 2003:12). Fifty of the 341 (less than 15%) secondary schools in the Free State are regular recipients of these awards every year and most of their learners in the top 100 positions receive bursaries. However, out of the 341 secondary schools only these 50 are regarded as highly effective; the remaining 291 (more than 85%) are not in the same league. There are also other schools that show very poor learner performances

and are regarded as totally dysfunctional – for example, schools that achieve a lower than 20% matriculation pass rate (Grobler, 2003:12).

The 2009 Grade 12 results declined by 2% to 60,7% nationally, and the Free State Province also recorded a decline of 2,4% from 71,8% to 69,38% (DoE, 2009). This situation gave rise to the following main statement of the problem for the study:

Which practices could contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools in the Free State Province?

The following FIVE secondary research questions were developed to provide an answer to the aforementioned question:

- What are the characteristics of effective schools?
- What does secondary-school effectiveness and school improvement in the general context entail?
- Which factors (may) contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools?
- What entails school effectiveness and school improvement from a legislative perspective in the South African context?
- How can Free State secondary schools be assisted to improve and become more effective?

1.5 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The main aim with the study is to explore practices that could contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools in the Free State Province. This aim with this study leads now to the following sub-aims, namely to

- define and discuss the concepts *school effectiveness* and *school improvement* in the general context (to be addressed in Chapter 2);
- determine and describe the characteristics of effective schools (to be addressed in Chapter 2);

- identify factors that may contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools (to be addressed in Chapter 2);
- establish what constitutes school effectiveness and school improvement from a legislative perspective in the South African context (to be addressed in Chapter 3); and
- develop strategies (a model) for improving secondary-school effectiveness in the Free State Province of South Africa (to be addressed in the empirical research in Chapters 4 and 5).

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section highlights the research approach, with specific reference to the following elements of the research: population, sampling, data-collection instruments and techniques. A brief explanation of how the data were collected, analysed, interpreted and triangulated will be given.

1.6.1 Research approach

The case is not a methodology but a choice of what is to be studied.

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2003:442)

The basic design for this study is that of a case study of secondary schools within the Free State Province. A detailed description of each of the cases is given qualitatively. The researcher utilised a qualitative research approach since it involves more open-ended, free-response, unstructured and structured interviews, observations or diaries and allows the subject to speak for himself/herself (Neuman, 1997:14). The qualitative research approach was used as it afforded the participants the freedom to present data from their perspective while data collection was open and flexible, taking into account the relationship between the researcher and the participants.

1.6.2 Population and sampling

1.6.2.1 Population

The research population comprised all secondary schools in the Free State Province.

1.6.2.2 Sampling

For logistical reasons such as resources and time, only six secondary schools in a specific district of the Free State Province were purposefully selected to take part in the project. The six schools were selected according to their relative effectiveness.

These six schools, namely three were highly effective schools and three less effective schools were purposefully selected on the basis of learner achievement (on the basis of their matriculation results). These schools were drawn from public schools in four towns of the Free State. An average of a more than 80% pass rate for highly effective and less than 60% pass rate for less effective schools in the matriculation examination during a three year period (2007-2009) were considered as the basis or mode to distinguish between highly effective and less effective schools.

A documentary analysis of the six schools was done, and the sampling of schools was carried out in a random manner using a quota-sampling technique. Neuman (2006: 220) describes quota sampling as ‘... getting a preset number of each of several predetermined categories that will reflect the diversity of the population using haphazard method’.

1.6.3 Instrumentation and data-collection techniques

The following qualitative techniques were used: documentary analysis; and unstructured interviews with the principals of selected schools, school-management developers, learning facilitators, focus groups of teachers and school governing bodies.

1.6.3.1 Research instruments

a) School-based interviews

School-based one-on-one interviews with principals and school-based focus-group interviews were the first phase in the qualitative phase. During this phase, six (6) semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the six principals of the selected schools ($1 \times 6 = 6$). School-based focus-group interviews with three different focus groups, also purposefully sampled, consisted of six SMT members, six SGB members and six teachers from each school followed. During this phase 18 (6×3) interviews were conducted. In total, 24 ($1 \times 6 + 6 \times 3 = 24$) school-based interviews were conducted during this phase.

b) District-based interviews

District-based one-on-one interviews were the second phase in the process. During this phase four (4) school-development and -governance managers (school-management and -governance developers or circuit managers) and four (4) learning facilitators were purposefully selected and unstructured interviews were conducted with them. From the same district, eight (8) district-based one-on-one interviews were conducted in total ($4 + 4 = 8$).

1.6.3.2 Data-collection techniques

a) Phase 1: preparations (two weeks)

The initial preparations were done to obtain permission from the Free State Education Department to carry out the research project, which involved writing an official letter to request such permission (see Annexures G and J).

b) Phase 2: data collection (two months)

(i) Semi-structured interviews with principals

The researcher conducted semi-structured one-on-one interviews with the six principals of the six schools to obtain information on the state of effectiveness of their respective schools. Open-ended questions were asked to allow the respondents to give detailed answers and to share their opinions on the subject. To guide the discussion, the researcher used an interview guide (see Annexure A). A total of six interviews were conducted with the principals, one from each school ($1 \times 6 = 6$).

(ii) Semi-structured interviews with school-management and -governance developers and learning facilitators

The researcher conducted semi-structured one-on-one interviews with four (4) school-management and -governance developers (see Annexure F) and four (4) learning facilitators (see Annexure E) to gather information on the state of effectiveness of the selected schools in the district. School-management and -governance developers are school inspectors who monitor the progress and implementation of government policies at schools, while learning facilitators are specialised professionals who provide subject guidance to teachers at the schools. The researcher once again used open-ended questions to allow the respondents to provide detailed answers and to share their opinions on the subject. To guide the discussion, the researcher used an interview guide during the interviews with the four school-management and -governance developers and four learning facilitators (see Annexures E and F). The school-management and governance developers and learning facilitators are the ones assigned officially by the education department to work in the six schools participating in the study. A total of eight (8) interviews were conducted with these district officials, four with the developers and four with the learning facilitators from the district ($1 \times 4 + 1 \times 4 = 8$).

(iii) Focus-group interview with SMTs, school-governing body members and teachers

A focus group is a group of 5 to 12 people brought together for a discussion (Laws *et al.*, 2003). To gain insight into the thinking of the groups the following were interviewed:

- The school management team (SMT) which is the top management of the school consisting of principal, deputy principal and heads of department,
- The school-governing body (SGB) which consists of 11 to 14 persons elected democratically to govern the school; that is, seven parents, two teachers, two learners, two non-teaching staff and the principal.
- The teachers.

The focus-group interview sessions were held as follows: six (6) SMT members each per school (see Annexure D); six (6) SGB members each per school (see Annexure B) and six (6) teachers each per school (see Annexure C), this means three (3) focus group interviews per school, meaning 18 focus-group interviews were conducted in total in the six sampled schools (6x3=18).

(iv). Documentary analysis

A documentary analysis of each school's management and administration records, whole-school evaluation records, policies, minutes, and books of all committees was conducted (see Annexure H). The Whole-School Evaluation records were studied as a guide to all the other documents that had to be analysed. Whole-School Evaluation is a method used in South African schools to evaluate how effective the school is by the standards of the Directorate of Quality Assurance. Documentary analysis is used because it produces data with high validity as the data are readily available and (unlike interviews and observation data) not prone to manipulation by research subjects. However, documentary analysis data cannot react and could therefore be misunderstood (Mouton & Marais, 1993:79).

1.6.4 Data analysis and interpretation

According to Mouton & Marais (2001:108), the aim of data analysis is to understand the components of data and determine the relationship between variables, patterns and themes.

1.6.4.1 Analysis of data

The researcher set about analysing large amounts of qualitative data collected in the course of the research. This data included unstructured interviews, interviews conducted with learners and SGB focus-groups, and documentary analysis data. The researcher used a systematic set of procedures to develop and inductively derive theory about the phenomenon, a principle borrowed from grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:24). Development data analysis is characterised by a series of steps during the actual process. The following steps formed the basis of the process of analysis (Laws, Harper & Marcus, 2003:395):

- **Step 1: Reading and rereading all collected data**
Reading data ensures that the researcher is familiar with the data, thus making the process of analysis more manageable.
- **Step 2: Making a preliminary list of themes arising from the data**
The process of categorising data into themes, referred to as “coding”, is conceptualised by Miles and Huberman (1994) as labels or texts assigned to units of meaning or pieces of data collected. Similarly, Neuman (1997) refers to the process as organising raw data into conceptual categories in order to create themes that will be used to analyse data.
- **Step 3: Read data again to confirm the themes**
It is crucial that data be studied closely to ensure that the interpretations are correct and valid.
- **Step 4: Link themes to quotes and notes**
The researcher then writes themes next to the quotations and notes as he/she reads through the data.

- Step 5: Look through the categories of themes to interpret them
The researcher draws logical conclusions from the meaning attached to the interpretations of themes.

1.6.4.2 Presentation of data

The data from the interviews were coded as follows, and then transcribed and presented in tabular form:

- In semi-structured interviews with principals, they were given alphabetic codes (e.g. A, B, C) and the table made provision for columns for codes and the responses of the principals.
- In semi-structured interviews with school-management and -governance developers and learning facilitators, they were also given codes (e.g. A, B, C, D) and the table was adjusted as explained above.
- In focus-group interviews with SMTs, SGBs and teachers, the same modus operandi was followed.

The transcriptions were followed by interpretative discussions.

The data from the documentary analysis were also presented in tabular form, with provision being made for the results of each analysis. The data were presented according to the following topics, as they are the critical structural areas of the organisation of a school:

- functionality
- management and governance
- teaching and learning
- learner achievement
- school safety
- resources
- employee wellness
- teacher discipline.

Each table contains columns for the type of document and the discussion of evidence found.

1.6.4.3 Data triangulation

Data triangulation means supporting the findings of the empirical research by using data from different sources (White, 2005). The empirical research data were triangulated with data culled from the literature, semi-structured interviews, focus-group interviews and documentary analysis. The triangulation was done by analysing how each set of data answered the research question. For example, one of the research questions was the following:

Which factors contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools in the Free State?

The analysis examined each set of data in relation to the question. The findings were presented in relation to the following themes that guided the collection of data:

- management, leadership and administration
- curriculum
- governance
- support structures.

1.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS, RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF RESEARCH

Qualitative research findings are the results of a naturalistic observation of the object of study as lived and experienced by participants (White, 2005). The way in which objectivity, reliability and validity of research are conceptualised and the basis for the three concepts differ from that of quantitative research.

Objectivity in qualitative research is regarded as high when participants fully participate through providing input and sharing their experiences during the research process (Niemann, Brazelle, Van Standen, Heyns & Dewet, 2000).

1.7.1 Reliability

Qualitative research values internal reliability and external reliability. Internal reliability depends on how reliable and systematic internal research processes are. This can be carried out in a number of ways, for example by means of triangulation and member checking (White, 2005).

External reliability is the ability of the research to be transferred to another context; this could be achieved by giving a thick description of processes to support choices and decisions made with regard to process, instruments and participation (Bryman & Teevan, 2005).

1.7.2 Validity

Validity indicates how systematic and credible the research findings are. Qualitative research measures this in two ways, namely by examining the internal validity (the evaluation of the content of research using processes like member or audit trail) and external validity (whether findings of the research could be applied in another context) (Niemann et al, 2000).

While the abovementioned methods seem sufficient to evaluate qualitative research, the concept *trustworthiness* is considered more appropriate and justified.

1.7.3 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in qualitative research is central to four concepts, namely credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Krefting (in White, 2005:206) refers to *credibility* (truth value), which is how confident the researcher is about the research

findings based on context, informants and research design. To assess trustworthiness in this research, the researcher determined credibility by representing the experiences of the participants as accurately as possible through intense observation and using member checking.

Member checks were carried out by engaging in open dialogue with participants on the nature of the data. Secondly, to evaluate *transferability*, the researcher provided a dense description of the research process by giving the finer details of all aspects observed. Thirdly, to assess *dependability*, the researcher conducted a dependability audit, checking if all processes had been handled properly, by giving a dense description of each process engaged in. Lastly, the researcher tested *confirmability* by reflecting on the research process together with the participants by way of open conversation (Lincoln & Gubba, 1985).

1.8 PLANNING OF RESEARCH

The chapters of this research study are structured as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides an orientation and background to the study.
- Chapter 2 will give a brief overview of literature that focuses on the concepts *school effectiveness* and *school improvement* in the general context; determining and describing the characteristics of effective secondary schools and identifying factors that may contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of schools in general terms.
- Chapter 3 will establish what constitutes school effectiveness and school improvement from a legislative perspective in the South African context and provides an overview of the literature on school effectiveness and school improvement debates in South Africa. School effectiveness is conceptualised by reviewing two recent reports, namely the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) Report (2009) and the School that Work Report (2007), as well as linking quality to school effectiveness. The concept

school improvement is contextualised as a process linked to school effectiveness within the South African context.

- Chapter 4 focuses on the research design. The chapter justifies the choice of research methods and highlights both the advantages and disadvantages of the techniques used.
- Chapter 5 focuses on the results of the empirical study, summarises the discussions of responses, and provides a possible interpretation.
- Chapter 6 deals with the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.9 DEFINITION OF MAIN CONCEPTS

1.9.1 *School effectiveness*

School effectiveness is defined as ‘the process by which the school accomplishes its objective’ (Beare et al, 1989:11).

Macbeath and Mortimore (2001:9) indicate that school effectiveness is a process that includes effective teaching. In this research, school effectiveness is viewed as a process that determines how well the school enhances learners’ achievements through effective teaching, leadership, management and governance.

1.9.2 *Secondary school*

A secondary school is conceptualised as a school that offers tuition from Grade 8 to Grade 12. A secondary school could also refer to a Further Education and Training Institution (FET school) (DoE, 1998).

1.9.3 Free State Province

The Free State Province is positioned in the centre of the Republic of South Africa. The province consists of five educational districts, namely Thabo Mofutsanyana, Motheo, Xhariep, Lejweleputsawa and Fezile Dabi.

1.9.4 School improvement

School improvement is conceptualised as a process by which schools implement change towards an ideal state. Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) understand it to be a process by which with the long-term goal of moving towards an ideal type of a self-renewing school.

1.9.5 Learning facilitator

The concept learning facilitator can be defined as a person who facilitates learning in the classroom (Austin 2007) or the official based at education district who guides teachers on the teaching methodology and content of a specific school subject (Makoelle, 2004). For the purpose of the study the latter meaning has been adopted.

1.9.6 Induction

Induction is regarded as a process that normally occurs at the beginning after an individual has assumed a new job. The new employee is socialised and oriented usually by an experienced mentor towards duties and responsibilities of the job (Van der Westhuizen, 1991).

1.9.7 Teacher

The concept teacher refers to a knowledgeable person formally trained to impart knowledge to the less knowledgeable learner in the classroom.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided an introductory orientation to the thesis; outlined the political-historical context of school effectiveness in South Africa; highlighted the provincial context in the Free State; formulated the statement of the problem; listed the research questions and objectives; explained the research-methodological approach by outlining the theoretical framework, the research design, sampling strategies, data-collection and analysis techniques; and discussed the significance and trustworthiness of the study. The chapter concludes by providing the research outline and defining the basic concepts.

Chapter 2 will give a brief overview of literature that focuses on the concepts *school effectiveness* and *school improvement* in general context; determining and describing the characteristics of effective secondary schools and identifying factors that may contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools in general.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUALISING SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

While the main focus of the study is clearly on school effectiveness *per se*, this phenomenon is inseparably interrelated with school improvement and cannot be studied in isolation. According to Macbeath and Mortimore (2001), the preoccupation with school effectiveness came into being as a result of inequality in society, which sparked a move towards education for all. In fulfilling this goal, schools are hard pressed continually to revise and improve their performance. Schools that succeed in this quest gain in confidence, are self-critical, and understand how people learn. This inevitably leads to the general conclusion that the goals and intentions of school effectiveness and school improvement are inseparable and should be studied accordingly.

This chapter consequently presents a critical review of the literature on school effectiveness and school improvement. It gives a brief overview of literature that focuses on the concepts *school effectiveness* and *school improvement* in general context, determines and describes the characteristics of effective secondary schools and identifies factors that may contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools.

The question of what school effectiveness is and how the construct is defined is firstly addressed before some of the factors contributing to school effectiveness, the characteristics of effective schools, some exemplary models of school effectiveness and methods used to evaluate school effectiveness are discussed.

For the reasons cited, the concept of school improvement will then be conceptualized and defined while the relationship between change and school improvement will be analysed. The approaches to school improvement will then be contextualised followed by a discussion on the way school improvement could be assessed or evaluated. In conclusion, the relationship between school effectiveness and school improvement is addressed.

The South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 (SASA) was a starting point by the National Department of Education of South Africa to articulate a new management and governance framework for schools. As such, the Act (1996: par1/chapter 1) signalled the transformation of the school-management system as stated in the following extract from the Preamble:

... whereas it is necessary to set uniform norms and standards for the education of learners at school and the organisation of governance and funding of schools throughout the Republic of South Africa ...

This statement signals the beginning of an intention by government to raise the standard of education of all learners in public schools. It follows that this vision as articulated in the SA Schools Act will not be achieved unless schools as centres of educational provision are effective and deliver according to the expectations of South African society. In terms of the Act, the management of the school is vested in the principal of the school, while the governing body of the school is charged with the governance of the institution. While SASA is clear on the role of the SGB and the principal, it follows that both parties have to collaborate to ensure that the school functions effectively.

Indeed, since the inception of SASA, there have been moves to organise workshops and train both principals and governing bodies with a view to ensuring effectiveness in schools. However, ten years after the promulgation of the SA Schools Act, some schools are still ineffective (Christie, Butler & Potterton, 2007). This begs the question what school effectiveness is and how it can be measured – a question that will be explored in the following section.

2.2 THE CONCEPT OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

2.2.1 Introduction

This section will define school effectiveness, discuss the factors contributing to school effectiveness, highlight the characteristics of effective schools, and discuss the effective management of the school. The section will further give an exposition of exemplary models of school effectiveness, and conclude with a brief discussion of how school effectiveness is evaluated or assessed.

2.2.2 Defining school effectiveness

When an organisation accomplishes its specific objective, it is said to be effective (Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989:11). As this clearly holds true for schools as well, it is necessary to distinguish between school effectiveness and school efficiency. School efficiency refers to accomplishing an end without a waste of effort or resources (Beare *et al.*, 1989:11). School efficiency is a distinct characteristic of an effective school.

By contrast, the much broader concept *school effectiveness* could mean different things to different people in different contexts – indeed, there has been global and international debate around the meaning of the concept (Mortimore, 2000). The concept is mostly associated with learner attainment, but it could also be associated with how well the school functions. Davies (in Ainscow, 1999:97), had the following to say about school effectiveness:

... the myth [is] that everyone from the government downwards would like school effectiveness, but there are just too many materials or attitudinal constraints on the implementation. In fact, government do not want effective schools in the academic or vocational sense. The last thing a fragile state wants is too many articulate, well qualified students.

The notion of school effectiveness is usually associated with the notion of an effective school. Bennet, Crawford and Cartwright (2003:176) define an effective school as one '... in which students progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intake'. This definition has similar elements to those advanced by Mortimore (in Sammons, 1999), who stresses that the school has the responsibility to ensure that the success of all its learners will be measured by how well the school attains its objectives, and how well its learners achieve the expected outcomes. According to Sammons (1999:76) the process of school effectiveness is affected by numerous factors, such as the sample of schools, choice of outcome measures, and the methodology and time scale.

These factors also indicate why some schools succeed while others fail. Some schools are more effective than others; even learners from different schools achieve different outcomes. Morley and Rassool (1999:68) highlight the fact that school effectiveness as a paradigm is based on two distinct discourses; that is, management and organisation. The organisation of the school often has a predestined structure prescribed by the education authorities. In other words, the effectiveness of the school could be imposed by the government by virtue of the design of evaluation tools such as checklists and inspections, which may not necessarily enhance effectiveness but seek to determine learner attainment. Conversely, Harris, Bennet and Preedy (1997:1) highlight the political nature of school effectiveness by noting that governments determine how schools should function because of the value-for-money idea as a considerable amount of investment could have gone into the education budget.

However, the dominance of the government view is challenged by the view that, in the management of the school, three dominant aspects are at play, namely leadership, marketing and the role of the parents and school community. School effectiveness could indicate how well the school is managed by the principal, how well parents and the community are involved in its activities, and how well the school is known (Hajnal, Walker & Sackney, 1998).

In most countries, the management politics of school effectiveness is often associated with effective leadership. Bennet *et al.* (2003:176) contest this notion but nevertheless choose to list the main characteristics of an effective principal as the leader of the school, pointing out that he/she should:

- be an experienced teacher;
- understand children;
- be firm;
- be able to manage the environment;
- be accountable for the functioning of the school;
- inspire the school community;
- be an example;
- be inclusive in his/her approach;
- treat everyone equally.

These varied contextualizations of school effectiveness seem to expose a multiplicity of understandings, which suggests that the [prevailing?] definition of school effectiveness may not be conclusive as context plays an important role. However, for the purposes of this study, school effectiveness will be assumed to mean the state at which the school functions properly in all respects and experiences high learner attainment.

To elucidate the concept of school effectiveness further, the next section will discuss the different factors that influence school effectiveness by first asking which factors contribute to school effectiveness.

2.2.3 Factors contributing to school effectiveness

2.2.3.1 Introduction

This section will discuss factors contributing to school effectiveness within the context of management and leadership, motivation, delegation, decision-making, conflict

management, effective communication, self-management and employee management with reference to their impact on school effectiveness.

2.2.3.2 Management and leadership

Effective schools are known to have highly effective managers and leaders (Monnane, 2002); consequently, effective school-management has a close link with school effectiveness and improvement. The reason is that effective leaders and managers have the capacity to enhance school effectiveness, which puts the concept of school management into perspective.

Principals – head teachers or headmasters, as they are also called – are usually in charge of the leadership of the school. For the purposes of this study, the concepts *school leadership* and *management* will be used interchangeably. Bush and Coleman (2000:4) state that school managers and leaders are actually the same, and the creation of a dichotomy between the two concepts should be avoided. Leadership and management address the key elements of the basic operations and functioning of the school. The school leader has the demanding task of leading and managing the school in the changing social, technological and economic circumstances to which the school is often expected to adapt by the government and society at large. The school leader often has to deal with difficult issues and challenges. Bennet *et al.* (2004:282–293) mentions the following three dilemmas for tensions associated with school leadership and management and arising from: firstly, Individual versus group interest: when the leader has to decide against the majority; secondly, service versus efficiency: when the leader wants to implement changes to service methods to enhance efficiency and thirdly compassion versus rules: when the aspect of being subjective and considerate influences the application of strict rules.

The school leader is a strategist who must give direction and purpose in dealing with matters such as vision and mission, transformation, quality assurance, improvement of results, and the implementation of developmental projects at school (Bush & Coleman, 2000). The school leader has to direct instruction at the school by monitoring and guiding the teaching practices of the teachers and the learning processes of the learners (Bush & Clover, 2003).

According to Gold, Coleman and Evans (2005), the school leader also has legal responsibilities with regard to educational laws, governance, curriculum, discipline, inclusiveness, admissions and human rights. In relative terms, the role of the school leader has changed and is perceived to have become more complicated than in previous years. Gunter (2001:97) quotes one head teacher as saying, 'There has been such a great increase in the workload and so many changes to manage that I have not been able to be involved in teaching.' The statement clearly shows how the work of school leaders has become transformed over the years. While acknowledging the increase in the workload of school leaders, Hoyle and Wallace (2005:76) caution against using management in a manner that could hamper the progress of the school. In particular, they refer to the concept *managerialism*, which is defined as 'leadership and management in excess'.

They believe that not all emergent problems at school necessarily need a management solution; too much emphasis on using management creates a management overload that is detrimental to the school itself. Hoyle and Wallace (2005) give examples of the following three ways in which over-management could be practised:

- neo-tylorism: managing in a top-down fashion, with powers centralised in the hands of managers;
- entrepreneurship: managing by devolving powers to subordinates but indirectly controlling processes from the distance, entrenching competitiveness between subordinates;

- cultural management: aligning the beliefs and values of subordinates to those of managers through cultural strategies such as MBWA and MBO which, once entrenched, create a powerful drive for all school activities.

Despite the challenges, the outcomes of all processes at the school are strongly associated with the quality of leadership at the school (Dean, 1995). The school leader is always faced with the following difficult tasks: decision-making; recruitment and appraisal of staff; conflict management; the drafting of organisational plans to manage resources, teams, curriculum, health and safety, transformation and management of change. School leaders are expected to be highly effective, efficient, orderly and productive. The school community puts all its trust in the leadership of the school. There is considerable pressure on school leaders to meet deadlines, improve the quality of the learners' results, manage resources, control the work of teachers, and to maintain standards set by both the government and society.

Dunham (1995) stresses the importance of whole-school management. Such management starts with identifying the training needs of middle management, identifying the most effective ways in which management can enhance learning, choosing the appropriate management style for the context, building and managing effective teams, making proper use of decision-making, listening and delegating, managing continual professional development, managing time and change, as well as maintaining employee wellness and managing stress. These activities are the responsibility of the school management team. Effective schools are known to be using team work in management (Masitsa, 2005).

The role of the SMT has far-reaching implications for school effectiveness and improvement. Effective management of the school can be influenced by how well the departments are run by departmental heads. According to Harris *et al.* (1997:115), the role of the departmental head is to ensure that:

- the climate is suitable for change towards improvement;
- his/her department has a vision;
- there is collegiality among members;
- there is proper organisation and resource management;
- there is proper monitoring and evaluation;
- teachers are effective in their teaching duties;
- there is effective teaching and learning.

The role of the departmental head could ultimately influence the entire operation of the school and consequently its effectiveness (Haydn, 2001).

As the leader of the management team, the principal has to ensure participation by stakeholders and, as an instructional leader, monitor the performance of teachers (Teddle & Reynolds, 2000:144). Leadership should have a command of the curriculum, be familiar with the most effective teaching methods, and evaluate student learning (Centolanza, 2006).

Everard and Morris (1996) argue that effective school management is a cornerstone of effective schools, and that the objectives of effective management are the following:

- setting direction, aims and objectives;
- planning how progress will be made and goals achieved;
- organising resources;
- monitoring and controlling the process; and
- setting and improving organisational standards.

These objectives are to be realised within the context of an effective management system. However, Giles (1999) states that, although management consists of processes of planning, organising, and directing and control, planning is sometimes marred by

contradictions evident in the nature of the school setting. According to Giles (1999), contradictions could arise because:

- short-term planning and multiple innovations influence rational planning;
- long-term planning is different from strategic planning;
- planning is part of a process of change;
- planning is understood differently by the proponents of school effectiveness and improvement;
- it is difficult to plan in response to innovation.

While effective management influences school effectiveness, it is important to note that there are different management approaches that have different effects on the running of the school. There are four dominant management approaches in schools, namely autocratic, laissez-faire, democratic and situational leadership. According to Khothule (2004), the four management styles are predominant in South African schools.

Everard and Morris (1996), in turn, describe the following management styles:

- autocratic: a style characterised by the manager often telling the subordinates what to do, his/her own way usually being final;
- paternalistic: a style where the manager firstly popularises his/her position about how things could be done, selling his/her ideas to subordinates;
- consultative: when the manager involves all stakeholders in the management process, leading to a decision that most agree with about what needs to be done;
- democratic: the democratic manager co-determines all management aspects with subordinates, resulting mostly in collective decisions about how things should be done;
- situational: management is responsive to the context, situation and professional maturity of those managed.

- Transactional: leadership where compliance is influenced by the provision of reward and punishment.
- Transformational: leadership which works towards organisational renewal through innovative and creative ideas.
- Instructional: where the leadership is involved with curriculum, teaching and learning aspects in order to influence the attainment levels of learners (Joyner, 2005)

Everard and Morris (1996:15) also indicate that some managers are guided by the principles dominant in their understanding of what makes a good manager; for example:

- The assertive manager, like the autocratic manager, tells subordinates what to do in his own way and does not listen to the opinions of others; he/she is usually aggressive if challenged and believes in strict control of subordinates.
- The solicitous manager cares about subordinates, likes to be popular, avoids open conflict, praises and supports the subordinates, and manages through a committee.
- The passive manager does the minimum required, does not like change, can be less productive if not monitored, and usually blames a third party for poor performance.
- The political manager is concerned about status and position, is quick to criticise and draw attention to the mistakes of others, and usually finds political solutions to all problems.
- The administrative manager operates by the rules, regulations, policies and laws of the system, does not question any of those and will never try to be creative or flexible in his/her approach.
- The motivational/problem-solving manager sets goals and works towards achieving them, is driven by the vision of the school, is calm and measures achievement by goals, takes delegation seriously, makes decisions carefully and keeps to his action plans.

The preceding exposition elucidates the significance of school leadership and management for the basic functioning of the school, which has a profound influence on school effectiveness. However, school effectiveness is not only derived from leadership traits: the management of school effectiveness as an integral role of effective management and leadership creates further responsibilities for the school leader.

It should therefore be asked how we know that the manager and his /her management style are effective. In order to answer this question, it is important to discuss the determinants of the school leader's school-management effectiveness within the context of the management approach and collaboration with stakeholders.

The performance of the principal as the leader of the school could be used as a yardstick for evaluating school effectiveness. For example, Free State Deputy Director-General, Mr Khoarai (Principals' Conference, 2002), had this to say about the influence of school principals on school effectiveness: 'Principals look like the schools they manage: unorganised principals lead unorganised schools, and the opposite is true'.

Effective principals are distinguished by their achievement-oriented attitude, transformational leadership approach, task-oriented style, and effective time-management skills (Engels, Notton, Devos, Bouckenoogte & Aeltermann, 2008). The leader is important in enhancing school effectiveness as he/she is charged with the responsibility of planning, monitoring and controlling all the educational activities of the school.

Macbeath (1998:140) argues that there is a close relationship between an effective school and effective leadership. Consequently, Macbeath and Myers (1999:3) identify the following characteristics of a good school leader (principal):

- readiness to confront authority;
- readiness to take risks;
- resilience in the face of failure;
- confidence in his/her own instincts and intuition;

- ability to visualise the bigger picture;
- devotion to moral commitment;
- appropriate timing and reflection.

The above-mentioned characteristics suggest that the principal's thinking, actions and behaviour reveal a great deal about how effective he/she is and how well the school will be run. The principal is, however, not immune to being influenced. The school leadership is influenced by the three activities: relationships, listening skills, and the ability to communicate effectively. This can be diagrammatically represented as follows:

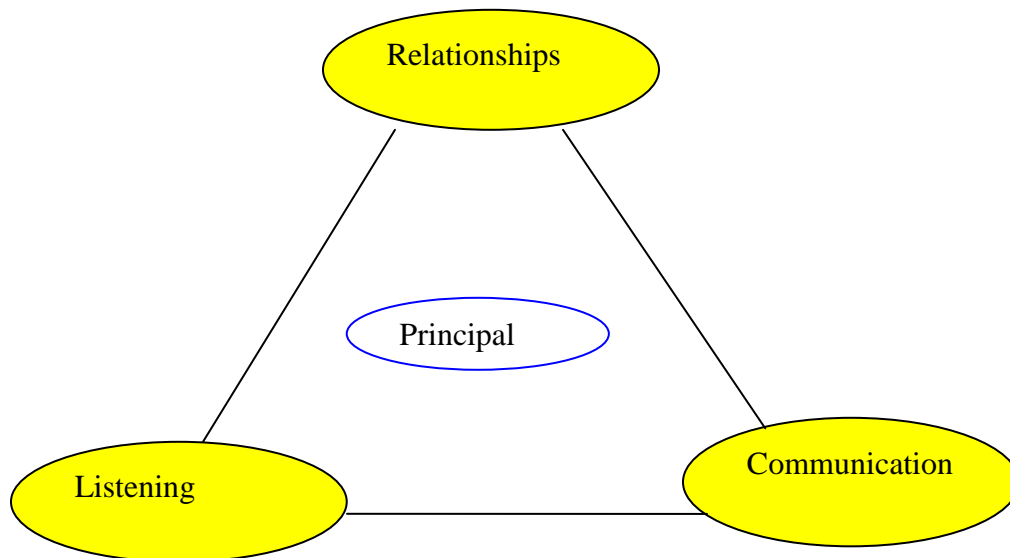


Figure 2.1: Aspects influencing school leadership

The good leader involves all stakeholders in the running of the school activities and is a good follower of others by seeking understanding of the self before seeking understanding by others. Listening to critical friends and peers assists in the enhancement of a clearer vision and goal achievement. However, school leadership could encounter

profound dilemmas such as incompetent staff, impracticable benchmarks, or the setting of unrealistic outcomes that must be achieved in a given curriculum.

The decision-making processes by the principal seem to depend to a large extent on the opinions of others, and there are always troubled learners who require a great deal of effort from the principal. While the principal could be influenced internally at school, there could also be external influences from beyond the school.

In addition, the leadership of a school is often influenced by the political climate in the country. The democratisation of South Africa, for example, has had a profound influence on the way schools are managed and run. Davies and Harber (1997:15) indicate that school leadership in developing countries is influenced by factors such as:

- politics: involvement of government in determining the curriculum and providing funding;
- resources: the availability of both human and physical resources;
- violence: violent situations such as uprisings, xenophobia and civil wars;
- health: the prevalence of epidemic diseases such as HIV/AIDS;
- culture: beliefs and values about education;
- skills: the availability of skilled teachers.

To demonstrate the significance of leadership in evaluating school effectiveness, the following section deals with the manner in which different types of leadership exercised by the school leader could influence the way the school is managed. The discussion will focus on the autocratic style of school leadership, distributed leadership, leadership authenticity, collaboration in leadership, and team leadership.

During the apartheid education system, leadership was a matter of carrying out the instructions of the authorities without question; however, since 1994 there has been an attempt to shift from autocratic leadership to democratic leadership at schools (Morley & Rassool, 1999:98).

Gunter (2005:3) argues that leadership should not be imposed on the school but that the exercise of leadership at a school should be characterised by a culture of participation by co-leaders. The participation of co-leaders in collaboration with the principal is crucial for the attainment of the vision of the school. The significance of school leadership in the achievement of school effectiveness is emphasised by Gunter and Spillane (2006:2), as well as Earley and Weindling (2004), who all refer to the notion of distributed leadership, which means the process where leadership is shared between the leader and co-leaders of the school. Before leadership can be shared or distributed, the following factors should be taken into consideration:

- the function to be performed;
- subject matter;
- school type and size;
- the development stage of the school.

Distributing leadership, according to Earley and Weindling (2004), could be done in various ways; that is, by the division of labour, the co-performance of tasks, or by parallel performance. Distributing leadership is influenced by a number of factors such as the following:

- design: agreement between the members of the leadership group;
- default: assigning leadership tasks based on official authority;
- crisis: assigning leadership tasks in response to an emergency;
- collaborated distribution: team of leaders work together;
- collective distribution: team of leaders work separately but interdependently;
- coordinated: team of leaders work independently but meet on crucial aspects.

Distributed leadership influences school effectiveness negatively or positively. If well practised, distributed leadership could have a positive influence on school effectiveness as it enhances the management of the school.

Other authors such as Walker and Shuangye (2007) add the caveat that leadership should be authentic if it is to enhance the effectiveness of the school. Walker and Shuangye (2007) refer to authenticity within the context of leading a multi-cultural school climate compounded by diversity. They believe that while leadership authenticity is not actually attainable, the school leader's purposeful engagement of the school-community stakeholders in order to understand the essence of the school culture is very important. It is an open-ended process, without prescriptions, through which the leader continually learns from the new strategies that are based on the values, norms and beliefs of the school community. While understanding the cultural influences affecting the school, the school leader has to lead authentically.

Starratt (in Walker & Shuangye, 2007) postulates three crucial aspects in describing the school culture: firstly the context within which the leadership is being exercised; secondly, the realisation that authenticity is not about mastering skills, strategies and techniques for better scores, but that it should also focus on the meaningfulness of the learning process for the learners and lastly, the fact that authenticity cannot be developed in isolation from the social context.

However, according to Walker and Shuangye (2007), it is not clear whether school culture influences leadership, or vice versa. The leadership of the school has a responsibility to ensure that the school responds to cultural values, beliefs and norms within the society.

The leadership at a school has to learn to lead authentically (which is the leadership that enhances the effectiveness of the school) by engaging in self-directed learning, discovery and reflection through interaction with different cultural values and their influence on the school culture. Leadership should reflect on previous beliefs about earlier experiences and view the school through the lenses of the society that the school serves (Kratzer, 1997).

Beyond leadership, there are other factors that have a direct bearing on school effectiveness. The leadership of the school mediates between and operates within a particular milieu and conditions that in a way create a culture and climate in which management and leadership operate. The following section will synthesize and conceptualize the salient factors or variables that influence school effectiveness.

Rubin (2002:13) indicates that beyond good leadership and standards, collaboration among all stakeholders of the school has far-reaching implications for school effectiveness. The principal, school governors, and the district office need to work together towards a common vision (Binkowski, 1995). The collaboration of the school management team, based on a shared vision and good interpersonal relationships, could have positive consequences for the enhancement of school effectiveness. This collaboration could take place at various levels of functionality (Binkowski, 1995:56), for example:

- thinking strategically: thinking about the future;
- ensuring professional credibility so that all activities meet expected standards;
- managing physical resources;
- planning and timing activities properly;
- building consensus among stakeholders;
- enhancing effective communication skills;
- resolving conflicts diplomatically;
- interacting with other organisations;
- basing decisions on data;
- respecting diversity.

Collaboration among all leadership stakeholders could enhance the exchange of ideas and opinions, leading to proper decision-making (Esp & Suran, 1995; Reynolds, 1995; Gray, 1996). Indeed, Myers (1996) posits that collaboration could even be extended to other

neighbouring schools. The more affluent schools could share their expertise with the less affluent ones.

Similarly, Sallis (2001) believes that collaboration is enhanced by a good relationship between the principal and the school-governing body. The involvement of parents in the running of the school enhances efficiency, provided:

- each party recognises the role of the other ;
- the expectations of both are compatible;
- the roles and boundaries are clearly identified;
- there is proper consultation; and
- communication is effective.

The collaboration of stakeholders enhances the formation of a community based on shared values and norms. Sergiovanni (1994:15; 2000) refers to developing school communities in relation to *Gemeinschaft* (a community) and *Gesellschaft* (a society). The school exists within a particular societal context and, if the school fits into that society, its relevance to the needs of the society eventually determines how willing the society is to regard the school as effective. The development of the school community is enhanced by a democratic culture where all stakeholders are effectively involved in the management and administration of the school (Gross, 1994). The implication is that, when all stakeholders are involved, all activities of the school are carried out, leading to a higher level of school effectiveness.

The concept of collaboration seems to overlap with that of ‘developing a community of leadership’, as proposed by Sergiovanni (1994), which seems similar to notion of ‘capacity building’ coined by authors such as Saunders (2000), Harris and Lambert (2003), and McEwen (2006). The concepts all refer to working together. Leaders have to generate collegial relations, collaboration, and mutual inquiry through building a community based on trust and good relationships.

To generate leadership capacity is to afford members of staff with leadership ability and potential the opportunity to contribute to the leadership vision, learning and constructing meaning and knowledge together and collectively as a team. The learning process for capacity building, according to McEwen (2006), has to be guided by four principles:

- clarity and well-defined values, beliefs, assumptions and perceptions;
- enquiry into practice;
- constructing meaning and knowledge;
- framing action and developing implementation plans.

The notion of building the community of leadership influences how well all school leaders are prepared to lead and manage. This implies that collective leadership enhances the effectiveness of all the members of such a community. Consequently, this influence of leadership can in turn have a positive influence on school effectiveness. Harris and Lambert (2003:25) illustrate the effects of stakeholder involvement in the development of leadership capacity as follows:

<p>Low involvement <u>Stuck school</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head is autocratic • Co-dependent • Norms of compliance • Lack of innovation • Learner achievement is low 	<p>High involvement <u>Fragmented school</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head is laissez-faire • Undefined roles and responsibilities • Norms of individualism • Erratic innovation • Learner achievement static overall
<p>Low involvement <u>Moving school</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head and key teachers as purposeful leadership team • Polarised staff pockets of resistance • Norms of reflection and teaching excellence • Effective innovation • Learner achievement shows slight improvement. 	<p>High involvement <u>Improving school</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head, teachers as well as learners are skilful leaders • Shared vision • Norms of collaboration and collective responsibility • Reflective practice consistently leads to innovation • Learner achievement is high, leading to steady improvement.

Table 2.1: Stakeholder involvement and leadership (Harris & Lambert, 2003:25)

The table shows the school that is stagnant and the school that progresses in relation to how far each articulates stakeholder involvement. The analysis indicates that the more involved the stakeholders are the more effective the school is as involvement fosters collaboration and team work. Boyle and Clarke (1998) concur that development of a community is pivotal to the improvement of any school. The continual learning process has to be characterised by a frequent 'audit' of events, processes and activities by all stakeholders in the school community. This auditing, according to Boyle and Clarke (1998), is a continual process comprising the following steps:

- identification of key issues from a diverse range of data;
- paying attention to what is happening and not happening;
- being sensitive to strengths and weaknesses;
- staying focused even under severe pressure;
- living day-to-day experiences and sharing successes.

Boyle and Clarke (1998) refer to auditing as a reflective process about improvement, with specific reference to the following areas:

- curriculum;
- learning;
- teaching;
- professional duties;
- school culture;
- change and processes of change;
- team work.

The auditing process is integral to the control-management role of the school leader and largely determines the quality of the management processes. The aforementioned discussion demonstrates that school effectiveness depends to some extent on the

character, knowledge and management skills of the school leader. Such leadership is also influenced by the school culture and the ability of the school leader to foster collaboration among the stakeholders. The ability of the school leader to sustain the stakeholders' commitment requires ingenuity and motivational skill. The next section therefore discusses motivation and its effects on school effectiveness.

2.2.3.3 Motivation

It is believed that a major factor that may contribute to better performance is the motivation of learners and teachers. People have certain needs that motivate them to reach specific goals. In the fulfilment of needs, motivation is the process through which motives are provided by, among others, a management of situations in order to bring about certain actions such as learning (Makoelle, 2004:63).

Principals as managers and leaders of schools should be able to motivate their staff and learners. Backer (2005) argues that when trained school principals can motivate the staff, it has implications for the effectiveness of the entire school.

Pretorius (1998) distinguishes between two well-known types of motivation that may influence peoples' will to work: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The former comes from within: subordinates work because they value their work and are driven from the inside to achieve their goals. Extrinsic motivation, by contrast, is characterised by the willingness to work hard because of a reward for doing so – for example, a certificate or money. According to Frazer, Loubser and Van Rooy (1990), motivation increases people's need to be involved in certain activities. Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (1993) posit that people's involvement in and willingness to work is influenced by the needs they have at a particular moment in time. Everard and Morris (1996), like Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (*op cit.*), similarly use Maslow's hierarchy of needs to illustrate how people are motivated by different levels of needs. The following pyramid illustrates the different levels of needs at which people are motivated:

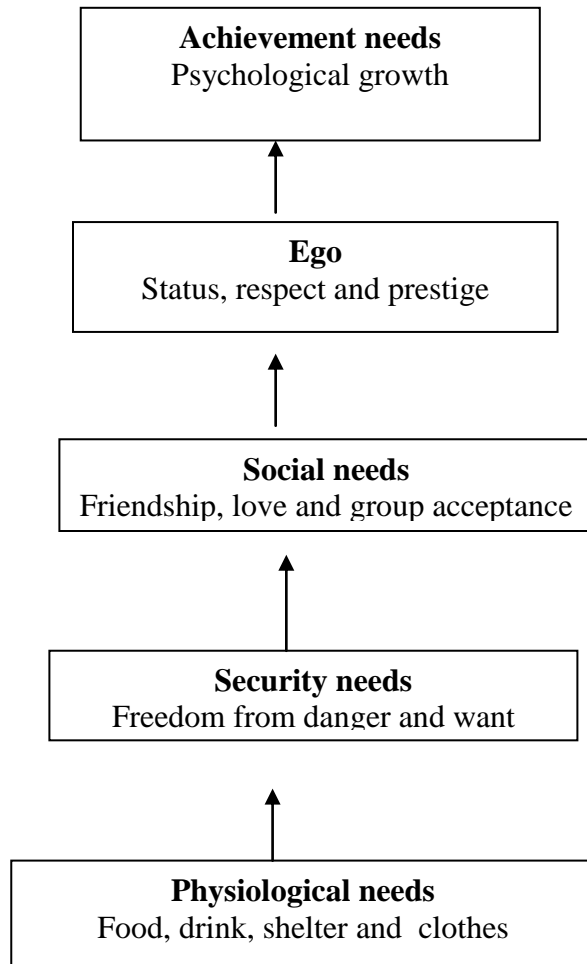


Figure 2.2: Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Everard & Morris, 1996)

There are certain basic needs that should be met for a person to be motivated; for example, physiological needs (food and clothing), the need for safety and security (protection), the need for respect, self-esteem, appreciation or recognition (fair treatment as a person), and a need for self-realisation (self-fulfilment and becoming the person one wants to be). Spiritual needs are natural in all people and are cultivated by means of education and aroused by faith and religion. The satisfaction of needs ensures the motivation of people. These are needs in the form of obligations, responsibilities and callings (Makoelle, 2004). When teachers' needs are satisfied, their level of motivation increases and their teaching becomes more effective. The ability to motivate presupposes

the ability to assign tasks to the right persons and take correct decisions.

The next section discusses delegation and decision-making as aspects that could influence effective management and school effectiveness.

2.2.3.4 *Delegation and decision-making*

The principals of effective schools use well-planned delegation and decision-making strategies that lead to the effectiveness of their schools (Masitsa, 2005). Delegation is a process by which the manager assigns tasks to co-managers. This process is characterised by choosing the right person to do the task. The manager usually considers the abilities, potential and expertise of the subordinates before delegating the duties – the more capable the delegate is, the better the chances of delegating the duties. Delegation is characterised by constant monitoring and feedback; the frequency and intensity of monitoring and feedback usually depend upon the familiarity of the task on the part of the delegate (Van der Bank, 1994; Everard & Morris, 1996).

Decision-making is also a process by which the manager arrives at making a decision. The effective manager is distinguished by his caution and sensitivity when making decisions. To arrive at the best decision in any situation, the manager has to define the problem or the situation clearly, establish the criteria for decision-making, generate alternative solutions, evaluate each and decide on the best one for the situation (Van der Bank, 1994; Everard & Morris, 1996).

The ability of the school leader to resolve/manage conflict as well as embark on effective communication is also important. The next section focuses on conflict management and effective communication and how they influence SE.

2.2.3.5 *Conflict management and effective communication*

Conflict represents a form of disagreement between persons or parties in the work environment. Minimal conflict is necessary in any organisation but could cause severe

disruption of it gets out of control.

There are three main types of conflict according to Van der Bank (1994), namely:

- intrapersonal conflict: conflict occurring inside the person; a clash of ideals and motives;
- interpersonal: conflict between two persons;
- inter-group: conflict between different groups.

Ineffective schools, according to Mortimore (2001), are characterised by a high level of conflict, which mostly takes away the energy that could be used positively for work. The following methods could be used to resolve conflict:

- Coercion (force): the method where force is used to bring about peace between conflicting parties;
- Negotiations: the process of give and take between conflicting parties;
- Avoidance: trying to 'let sleeping dogs lie' by avoiding conflicting situations;
- Compromise: bargaining for consensus between the conflicting parties;
- Problem-solving: attempting to find appropriate solutions to the conflict situation through the evaluation of alternatives (Everard & Morris, 1996:89).

Effective communication is linked to highly effective management styles. According to Masitsa (2005), effective communication is one of the skills principals require in order to improve the effectiveness of their schools; thus, effective communication enhances school improvement. Effective communication is one of the characteristics associated with effective schools. As such, it can prevent the wasting of resources and prevent conflict. Communication at school could be verbal or written, but a great many non-verbal cues could convey an impression or message to the onlooker. The school has to have an effective communication system. It is important that members communicate clearly with one another during staff meetings. This is generally how the management of the school conveys instructions, obtains feedback from stakeholders, and gets tasks completed (Van der Bank, 1994).

To manage school communication, the system manager has to have a good sense of self-management and be in good health and socially well-connected. The next section deals with self-management, employee wellness, and their influence on school effectiveness.

2.2.3.6 *Self-management and employee wellness*

According to Masitsa (2005), principals can improve on their school effectiveness if they can manage themselves. Self-management is crucial to good management and leadership, which are good ingredients for school effectiveness and improvement. Self-management is the ability of an individual to manage himself/herself in the working environment. This includes the following crucial aspects:

- Time management: the ability to be punctual and meet obligations in terms of due dates;
- Action diary: the ability to record future due events in a diary to aid memory and general preparedness;
- Daily objectives: the ability to set achievable daily objectives and constantly monitor oneself against them;
- Project management: the ability to handle personal projects, monitor progress and meet targets (Everard & Morris, 1996:111).

A healthy and a satisfied staff will be highly motivated to work and improve on their practice, which will in turn influence the effectiveness of the entire school. The ability of staff to work effectively goes hand in hand with their health and well-being. Often staff members face challenging social, psychological and financial circumstances, which could elicit stress and cause poor performance. Stress at schools, if not properly managed, could influence production negatively.

Stress has become a common topic in the world literature on psychology. Stress is defined as the inability to cope with work pressures, which often affects the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of the person's body (Cooper, Dewe & O'Driscoll, 2001). The leader of the school is charged with the responsibility of managing all sectors of the institution, which include faculty members, learners, parents, as well as liaising with the stakeholders that have the interests of education at heart. The principal must plan all the school activities, which include curricular, extra-curricular, and managerial and governance matters relating to the functioning and operation of the school. All this responsibility, as well as the considerable accountability attached to the leadership position, sometimes poses serious challenges.

Stress is generally believed to have a negative impact on teachers and thus compromise their effectiveness, which in turn affects the effectiveness of the school (Van der Bank, 1994). On the other hand, a less effective school as the result of stress among teachers could stall progress and hinder school improvement, leading to stagnation. The following section will discuss the causes of and theories related to stress in more detail.

Stress as a phenomenon is understood in different ways, giving rise to different theories of stress. Edworthy (2000:3–6) postulates that there are four different perspectives with regard to stress development. Firstly, stress affects the individual physiologically. Besides nervous tension, the person's body will show a triphasic response called General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). If prolonged, this could trigger an alarm reaction whereby the body tries to fight back by producing adrenalin, which mobilises sugars to provide energy for the body while simultaneously reducing the blood flow to other parts of the body. The production of chemicals is then maintained at a lower level as the body gets used to the stressor. Finally, the body becomes exhausted when the resources of the body are depleted.

Secondly, stress is viewed from the point of view of the stimulus-based approach, which refers to environmental factors affecting the person's body unfavourably. Factors such as work overload, role conflict and poor working conditions figure prominently in this theory (Edworthy, 2000:3–6).

Thirdly, Edworthy (2000:6) refers to psychological stress, which is regarded as a reaction within individuals when faced with demands that exceed their resources.

Fourthly, the transactional model of stress development defines stress as an individual perceptual phenomenon and suggests that it arises when there is an imbalance between demands as perceived by the individual and his/her ability to cope with the demands. It is imperative to recognise that these four approaches to stress are interrelated and interdependent.

Cartwright and Cooper (1998:3) articulate a definition of stress derived from the Latin word *stringere*, which means to draw tight. According to Cooper (1998), stress theories vary in context and approach. Cooper discusses stress from the point of view of an occupational context, because the phenomenon is classified according to where it takes place and whom it affects. Within this occupational context, the following four approaches to stress figure prominently: Firstly, the medical approach to stress usually begins with the premise that it affects the physical health of a person negatively because of the physiological reaction. The second other major theory is counselling, which usually regards stress as a factor in psychological dysfunctions such as depression and anxiety. Thirdly, the engineering approach emphasises that, if the organisational environment is not conducive to working in a safe, comfortable context, it could elicit an uncomfortable psychological reaction. Finally, the organisational approach, stresses the extent to which the organisation is responsible for the manifestation of stress.

Stress theories vary in terms of context; however, it is important for the sake of this research to give a brief overview of the main occupational stress theories. Occupational

stress is prevalent among teachers in the work place and could have a profound influence on the overall effectiveness and consequently on school effectiveness.

Occupational stress theories view the concept in relation to work, or the work environment, the perceptions people have about the work environment, and how it affects their emotional, physical and psychological well-being. Cooper (1998:6) indicates that the meta-organisational theory of stress assumes that the phenomenon is dependent on the person, environment, the stress process itself, and the consequences of the process. Cooper elucidates the extent to which the person and his environment contribute to the causation of stress. The theory of person-environment-fit explains that stress arises when the environment does not provide adequate supplies to satisfy the person's needs, or when his/her ability falls short of demands that are a prerequisite to receiving supplies. The theory also explains how factors other than the environment and the person are implicated in the process of stress development.

The multidimensional theory of burnout explains job burnout as a prolonged response to chronic interpersonal stressors in the job situation. Burnout is usually associated with exhaustion, a feeling of detachment from the job and a sense of ineffectiveness or failure. The theory encapsulates stress from different dimensions, namely the emotional aspect when stress results in emotional depletion and depersonalisation, which happens when the person loses touch with others, cannot manage his/her personal relationships, no longer achieves personal success, and becomes incompetent at work.

Stress is also regarded as a culturally-bound concept. Shupe and Macgrath (in Cooper, 1998:86) view stress from the perspective of being a foreigner (sojourner) in a particular culture. Stress could emerge if foreigners cannot adjust to cultural issues such as language, customs and traditions. They might also feel uncomfortable because of negative stereotypes and prejudices in the foreign culture.

The person's immediate life world constitutes his/her ecosystem, which is also inhabited by others. The ecosystem approach to stress outlines the cybernetic theory of

organisational stress, which briefly basis its argument on the balance (homeostasis) between systems (organisms, plants and things), which adjust or adapt their actions to cope with disturbances from goal achievement. The person wants to do away with that which will prevent him/her from achieving his/her goals and develops the necessary coping mechanisms to deal with such disturbances (Cooper, 1998:122).

Every job has a whole range of factors that could be regarded as stressors. Job stressors are those factors that cause anger and frustration, and the person is supposed to have control of these stressors for him/her to be functional. If the stressors are out of control, the stress level escalates. This is what is called the control theory. Personality traits also to some extent influence the development of stress. Cooper (1998:171) illustrates the causal relationship between stressors, innovation and personal initiative. The person's level of creative innovation and initiative could be put to better purpose, or to develop new approaches to problem-solving, thus reducing the level of stress.

If the person is not innovative enough to deal with stressful situations, his/her level could reach alarming proportions and get completely out of hand. Motivation also contributes to how the person will manage stress. Cooper talks about the theory of health-effort reward, which emphasises the development of stress as a result of less reward for doing a demanding job.

This position is also supported by Theorell (in Cooper, 1998:205) who highlights the importance of the position one holds at work (the ethological theory of stress). If the position is that which influences the decisions of the work environment, it is unlikely that the work would be stressful. The support that one receives in doing one's work also has a direct bearing on the work situation. The more support one receives, the less the strain and stress will be. Any job situation is characterised by a particular routine, with a set of rules, traditions and procedures that a person gets accustomed to.

The demand-control-support theory's underlying assumption is that, in order to avoid a stressful situation, people usually attempt to maintain the status quo, trying to prevent

changes to their familiar situation (Cooper, 1998:220). The understanding of stress by all stakeholders at school provides a healthy environment without which there would be little effectiveness and quality work.

2.2.3.7 Conclusion

The preceding section discussed factors contributing to school effectiveness within the context of management and leadership, motivation, delegation, decision-making, conflict management, effective communication, self-management and employee management, and their impact on school effectiveness. The subsequent section discusses the characteristics of effective schools as this will shed more light on the factors determining effectiveness in schools.

2.2.4 The characteristics of effective schools

2.2.4.1 Introduction

This section defines the concept effective school and discusses the characteristics of an effective school with reference to the following: Vision, mission and expectations; teaching and learning; management and leadership; assessment of learners; school-home relationship and relationships with other schools. The synoptic discussion of what constitutes an effective school is provided.

2.2.4.2 Identifying an effective school

The concept *effective school* is understood differently throughout the world. Given the varied conceptualisations of the term, the following question is often posed in an attempt to arrive at a clear, if not definitive, understanding of what the term means.

What are the characteristics of an effective school? According to Edmonds (in Van der Bank, 1994:208), effective schools have five major distinguishing characteristics, namely:

- strong leadership by the principal;
- emphasis on mastery of basic skills;
- a clean, orderly school environment;
- high educator expectations of learner performance;
- frequent assessment and reporting of learner progress.

It is important to note that there are many factors contributing to the effectiveness of schools. As formal organisations, schools are purposeful and have a vested interest in achieving certain goals (Van der Westhuizen, 2002:86). The organisation of a school is critical to its effectiveness, and most effective schools are known to set realistic organisational goals. Their aims are enshrined in their visions and missions within the context of a highly organised educational environment. Realistic organisational goals ensure that the school is managed with a vision in mind, which enhances its effective management and determines to what extent it will improve in striving to accomplish its goals.

According to Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (1993:3), the teaching and learning task is carried out mainly in the classrooms of a school. Effective schools are known by their sound teaching and learning cultures. MacBeath and Mortimore (2001:9) indicate that school effectiveness begins with effective teaching in the individual classroom where the educator provides a useful starting point for determining effectiveness. Teachers must embark on proper planning, choose appropriate teaching content and teaching resources, and deliver the content through appropriate methods. Teachers must encourage collaborative learning among learners through group work, peer tutoring and cooperative learning.

Day, Elliot and Kington (2005) postulate that teacher commitment is an ingredient of quality work determined by personal, institutional and policy contexts. They assert that commitment is influenced by personal beliefs, images of self, role and identity – all of which are often challenged by change.

Effective schools provide quality teaching and opportunities for their learners. The teachers as managers in their own classrooms have to be effective in managing time, ensuring that there is effective classroom organisation and delivery of effective teaching, and that those conditions are conducive to effective learning. According to Teddlie and Reynolds (2000:146), teachers are effective when they:

- focus on learning by using maximum teaching and learning time;
- generate a positive school culture; that is, collaboration, consistency and collegiality;
- express high expectations of achievement and behaviour;
- monitor progress at all levels;
- emphasise learner responsibility and rights;
- embark on staff development initiatives and parental involvement.

The implication is that effective teachers will enhance the functioning of the school and make it more effective. The subsequent section deals with the characteristics of effective schools. The fact that effective schools achieve good results explains, albeit rather self-evidently, why they are regarded as good schools. For the purpose of this research, the characteristics of effective schools will be highlighted with special reference to how such attributes enhance or add value to the scholastic achievement of learners.

There are similarities in how the characteristics of effective schools are defined. The following exposition provides a discussion of characteristics of effective schools as postulated by Beare *et al.* (1989), Van der Bank (1994), Sammons (1999), Macbeath and Mortimore (2001), Oakes and Lipton (1990), Bookbinder (1992), Monnane (2002), Bihm (2004) and Makoelle (2004).

Effective schools are characterised by the following:

a) Vision, mission and expectations

Effective schools are known of well articulated visions and missions. The school community usually show signs of high expectations. There is a general expectation that both the educators and learners will perform beyond. The school's vision is spelled out well collectively by all stakeholders. Effective schools usually maintain the image of a professional community. Teachers share the responsibilities and act collaboratively.

b) Teaching and learning

Effective schools are known of quality teaching. Teaching is usually executed in a positive learning environment, with well planned learning and instructional programmes. Teaching emphasises purposeful teaching for learners to experience new knowledge and be able to apply it contextually. It takes into consideration the learner's cultural life as an important aspect of classroom learning and, as a result, the possibility of academic success is enhanced. During teaching teachers are encouraged to work collaboratively with one another and with the administration to teach learners effectively. Teaching is learner-centred and makes an effort to serve all learners, involve them in school affairs, and respect the differences among them.

Learning is regarded as shared responsibility by the learners themselves. Learners participate in school activities. Rewards and incentives are used to encourage learners to work. Effective schools provide instruction that promotes learning and focus on academically rich programmes are relevant to the needs of all learners. A positive school climate that encourages learners to work is maintained.

c) Management and leadership

Effective schools have sound instructional leaderships. The professional leadership of effective schools is characterised by visionary principals with a sense of purpose and determination to succeed, to bring about change and positive team-building among the staff. Teachers believe in their own abilities to influence learners' attitudes, communicate their expectations to them and adapt instructional programmes to their needs. Effective schools offer practical, shared leadership. School leaders understand and use a leadership style appropriate to professionals; they solve problems through collaborative group decision-making, delegate authority, communicate and promote cohesiveness, and use their positions to recognise and record staff and learner accomplishments. Effective schools foster creative problem-solving. Staff members at effective schools are not prepared to settle for mediocrity.

d) Assessment of learners

Effective schools monitor the progress of their learners. They have adequate systems to monitor the work of both learners and teachers to ensure quality results. Effective schools emphasise positive outcomes. The assessment is done regularly and constant feedback is provided to the learners. Formative assessment is maintained to diagnose learning problems at an early stage in order to intervene where necessary.

e) School-home relationship

Effective schools have a sound relationship with parents. Parents take full responsibility for the education of their children and provide adequate support to the school.

f) Relationships with other schools

The school should to some extent collaborate and cooperate with other schools. The main purpose of such collaboration is free communication between educators on matters

relating to teaching and learning in order to improve the quality of education.

2.2.4.3 Synopsis or discussion

The following discussion on the characteristics of effective schools includes brief commentaries by the researcher to draw attention to significant aspects of the topic.

Effective schools are known to select and appoint the best teachers to their staff – that is, teachers who exhibit a high level of effectiveness in their teaching, which in turn influences the effectiveness and improvement of the school. Staff recruitment is one of the aspects taken seriously by schools that want the best and most committed instructors who will contribute to the success of the school. Consequently, the recruitment process must be handled with care (Van der Bank, 1994; Everard and Morris, 1996).

Effective schools are known to have effective teacher-development systems, which in turn improve their effectiveness (Masitsa, 2005). Staff development is therefore a continuous process that affords members of the staff the opportunity to reflect on their practice with a view to improving it.

Effective schools are known to have disciplined teachers and learners. High levels of staff discipline influence the effectiveness of teachers and therefore the effectiveness of schools (Van der Bank, 1994; Makoelle, 2004).

Effective schools are known for their well-articulated curriculum management. According to Makoelle (2004), effective curriculum management enhances school effectiveness. It follows that ensuring excellent curriculum delivery has a direct bearing on learner attainment and therefore on school effectiveness in general. Effective schools are also known for managing their resources well. The management of resources entails ensuring that the school yields the best results with the limited resources at its disposal. This can only take place when the school's human, material and financial resources are properly managed.

Human resources management is the most important component of the school's administration. The reason is that aspects such as leave, conditions of employment, promotions, new appointments, the code of conduct, and disciplinary procedures must be handled with care because they influence the effectiveness of the management of the school. Human resources circulars, the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act*, *Labour Relations Act*, and the South African Educators' Council are all policy guidelines in the management of human resources in schools. The availability of material resources and their optimal usage could have a negative effect on the delivery of quality education. The school has to have good maintenance, usage and retrieval systems to keep track of material resources such as books. This includes maintenance, repair and stock control to avoid loss (Clarke, 2007).

Financial management is a sensitive aspect of school administration that influences the entire operation of the school. The legal right to control the finances of the school is vested in the SGB and the principal as the chief accounting officer. The financial procedures start with the school budget, a document which determines how the moneys of the school will be used. The budget reflects the income (all the revenue collected for use), and expenditures (how the money will be spent) over a specific period of time.

The income and expenditure need control through aspects such as a cheque-requisition system, internal auditing, and an effective financial committee. The use of school money need stringent control because it is public funds which require a high level of accountability in terms of the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 and the Public Finance Management Act, no. 1 of 1999. At the end of each financial year, the school's financial books have to be audited by a qualified chartered accountant (Makoelle, 2004).

Effective schools seek to create a safe environment. A healthy and a safe school environment leads to an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning and, therefore, to secondary-school effectiveness and improvement. It is important to ensure that there are effective safety policies and that the staff and learners have been trained in the safety measures. The training should include the duties and responsibilities of the school safety

committee and members of the school community. There must be clear guidelines for emergency procedures, and hazardous areas should be identified and dealt with.

2.2.4.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that four main pillars of school effectiveness emerge from the literature. The following illustration summarises the structure of an effective school.

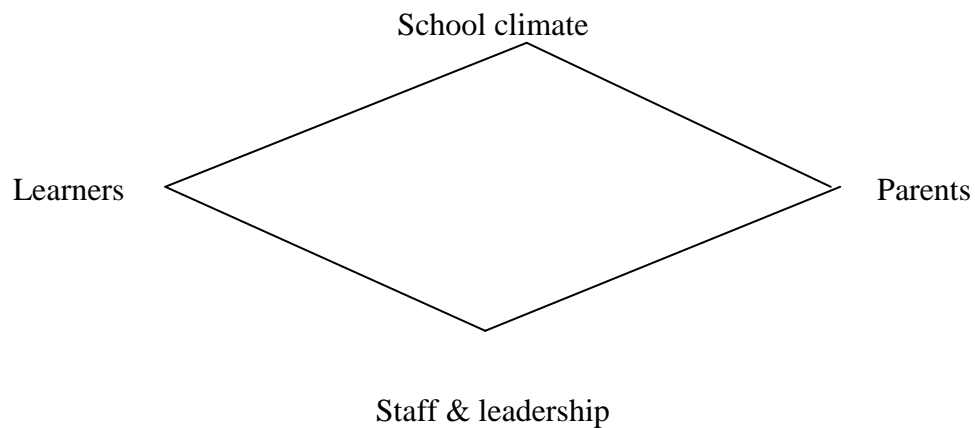


Figure 2.3: Elements of an effective school (Adapted from Makoelle, 2004)

To be effective, learners should be motivated to achieve within a school climate that is conducive to learning. Van der Westhuizen (2002:119) further postulates that the organisational culture of the school is important in defining school effectiveness. Parents should support their learners, and the staff and principals should exercise quality leadership. Schools should endeavour to achieve their goals and utilise their available resources.

While the characteristics of effective schools appear to be similar, according to the literature, suffice it to point out that the varied contexts of schools make it difficult for all the characteristics to suit all the different contexts. Consequently, the conceptualizations clearly suggest that the characteristics cannot be universal.

Given the focus on school effectiveness, it should be noted that school effectiveness is determined by the effectiveness of the model adopted. As previously pointed out, the varied contextualizations of school effectiveness inevitably lead to varied models of school effectiveness being adopted.

To further elucidate the concept of school effectiveness, in the following section attention will be given to exemplars of school-effectiveness models and the conceptualisations of school effectiveness within these models.

2.2.5 Exemplary models of school effectiveness

2.2.5.1 Introduction

This section discusses the examples of school effectiveness models. The discussion focuses on the received model, heretic model and contextual model. The phenomenon of school effectiveness has been widely researched, and therefore the models described in this chapter are examples among the many in the literature. However, these models simply summarize the three opposing views when it comes to school effectiveness.

These views are highlighted by Slee and Weiner (1998) in their critical work entitled *School effectiveness for whom?* The authors assert that the dominant discourse in the field of school effectiveness has been the one of an over-emphasis of learner pass rates in the examinations. The authors claim that this discourse is characterised by political opportunism as governments vow to label schools that are known for their high pass rates as effective. The authors further draw attention to the notion of ‘performativity’, which is an emphasis on the production of results expected from schools in terms of the so-called benchmarks.

Slee and Weiner (1998) distinguish between three models of school effectiveness that have dominated the current debate around school effectiveness, namely the Received Model (RM), the Heretic Model (HM), and the Contextual Model (CM). While there are

other models of school effectiveness, these three will be discussed as they appear to be representative of most models on school effectiveness.

2.2.5.2 *Received Model*

The Received Model (RM) was developed in England by Rutter, Ouston, Mortimore and Maughan (Slee & Weiner, 1998:52). The RM is based on the traditional view of how a school operates as an organisation, and demonstrates the following set of assumptions:

- Schools as organisations, rather than teachers alone, influence student performance.
- RM research could benefit examination success and enhance school effectiveness in general.
- Staff and learners respond to the school's systems of sanctions and rewards for improvement; however, this depends on the value system of both learners and teachers.
- Schools function within a particular structure, such as the Department of Education or the government, and the performance of such structural units affects the performance of the school.
- Schools' performance could be influenced by external factors.

The above assumptions point to the fact that the school as an organisation influences the performance of both teachers and learners through the way it operates. The RM seems to focus particular attention on the structural influence of both the school and the official structures within which it is operating.

2.2.5.3 *Heretic Model*

By contrast, the Heretic Model (HM) is a critique on the RM in that there is a shift from assuming that the school by itself, rather than a host of different factors, influences

learner performance. Drawing on the work of Ball, Slee and Weiner (1998:25) summarise the essence of the Heretic Model as follows:

Schools are complex, contradictory sometimes incoherent organizations like many others. They are assembled over time to form a bricolage of memories, commitments, routines, bright ideas and policy effects. They are changed, influenced and interfered with regularly and increasingly. They drift, decay and degenerate [sic].

The above quotation seeks to clarify the fact that, because of the range of interdependent factors in the school environment, schools cannot be understood in a mechanical way. Schools are composed of a number of stakeholders and systems that rely on one another for their smooth operation. Above all, the schools should be a moral community whose organisational structure reflects their nature. Schools are multi-faceted and unique, and the success of each school depends on its situation and context.

2.2.5.4 Contextual Model

While the RM emphasises the school as an influencing structure, and the HM accepts the structural influence of the school on performance (while further indicating the significance of other factors influencing school effectiveness), the Contextual Model (CM) focuses on the context of each school as a unique institution. Slee and Weiner (1998:63) argue:

Schools in different contexts will have different capabilities, potentials and limits. The contextual model's purpose is to determine under which conditions can the school perform and how can they be held accountable.

The authors (Slee & Weiner 1998) postulate that the following questions are the cornerstones of the contextual model:

- What impact does a school's community and intake have on its performance?
- What impact does the educational market have on school performance?
- Under what conditions could schools perform better?
- How can the criteria for holding schools accountable be developed?

To provide answers to the above questions, the researcher carried out a contextual analysis using quantitative approaches to gather quantifiable data about what influences the effectiveness of a particular school. This made it possible to identify good practices, give a qualitative description, and design a school-improvement plan.

2.2.5.5 Conclusion

Taking each school's context into consideration in determining its effectiveness is important in mapping out the tailored plan of improvement according to the school's context (Thrupps & Lupton, 2006). It must be understood that the models of school effectiveness provide only the basis for debates and discussions.

A multi-model approach to school effectiveness could perhaps provide a base for varied contextualizations of school effectiveness. As school effectiveness is measured or evaluated differently, various models have evolved. It is pivotal at this stage to determine how school effectiveness is measured. The following section gives a detailed discussion of the evaluation of school effectiveness.

2.2.6 The evaluation or assessment of school effectiveness

The generally understood criterion for measuring the effectiveness of a school has been the use of learner attainment. The school can make a difference and help learners overcome the effects of socio-economic status through committed teachers focusing on student learning (Wendel, 2000). Reynolds and Cuttance (1992) mention three levels at which learner performance could reflect how effective the school is:

- Standard model: the school usually sets its own standards of performance; however, there could be a national curriculum requirement for particular standards to be met; and comparing the performance of learners to that of other schools could determine to what extent learners are meeting the set national standards.
- School-level intake: at the level of the school, individual learner attainments could be compared to those of other learners in the school to indicate how well an individual is meeting the school's standard of performance.
- Learner level: learner attainment could also be evaluated by how well the learner meets the typical end-product requirement of the school as a typical finalist.

Learner attainment is one of several methods used to evaluate school effectiveness. During the apartheid era, school inspections were possibly the most common method used, and inspections were at the order of the day. Indeed, the history of school effectiveness cannot be divorced from the notion of inspection. The Inspectorate, according to Fitz and Lee (2000), was considered to have several advantages, such as:

- setting standards for teaching and assessment;
- ensuring curriculum uniformity;
- enforcing accountability;
- putting pressure on schools to perform.

However, according to Fitz and Lee (2000), the Inspectorate caused problems by a) generating unnecessary stress, b) limiting innovation, and c) constraining pedagogical strategies.

Widespread opposition to the policies and practices of the Inspectorate inevitably gave rise to alternative ways of evaluating school effectiveness. For example, Cuttance (1994) refers to the Quality Assurance Framework as a strategy for enhancing school effectiveness. Quality assurance is characterised by stages of performance-development cycles whereby the school is left on its own for a particular period. Then a review (which

means evaluating the state of effectiveness) is done according to the level of school development at a specific stage. In South Africa, the period for the review is five years (RSA, 2001). The reviews assist the school in growing as a learning organisation, and accelerate change, collaboration and learning through reflective practice (Carbines, 1994). Most approaches to evaluating school effectiveness have the criteria for evaluation. The next paragraph deals with some of the criteria.

The criteria for evaluating school effectiveness are usually determined by how these have been conceptualised by those assessing it. Sammons (1999:260–261) highlights the following as important in evaluating the effectiveness of a school:

- pastoral care;
- good progress of learners;
- high-quality teaching;
- positive interpersonal relationships;
- good student attendance;
- good discipline;
- good planning, presentation and assessment of academic work;
- positive climate;
- provision of extracurricular activities;
- shared vision and goals;
- high expectation by learners and teachers;
- high motivation and commitment by stakeholders;
- parental involvement and satisfaction.

The above indicators seem to target the different areas in the functioning of a school which, when properly managed, enhance the effectiveness of the school. The areas seem to be centred on teaching, learning, and the behaviour of learners, teachers and parents in respect of the functioning of the school. While acknowledging that the abovementioned

elements are important in measuring school effectiveness, Sammons (1999:263) lists the number of factors that could act as barriers to school effectiveness, for example:

- social disadvantage of intake;
- shortage of qualified teachers;
- inadequate leadership;
- low staff morale;
- external pressure;
- lack of resources;
- poor physical resources;
- falling student roll [declining student enrolments];
- high staff turnover;
- lack of coherence in goals;
- high staff absences;
- less work given to learners;
- lack of discipline;
- lack of academic motivation;
- little support by parents;
- low expectations by both learners and teachers;
- poor quality teaching;
- lack of staff commitment;
- poor learner attendance;
- conflict within senior management.

A comparison of the previously mentioned criteria for evaluating and enhancing school effectiveness, and those factors that hamper school effectiveness, suggests that the absence of even one factor creates a barrier to school effectiveness.

Although it seems important to consider the factors contributing to or acting as barriers to school effectiveness, it is important to bear in mind, as Morley and Rassool (1999:69)

indicate, that school effectiveness is a continual process and never static. They describe the effective school as a 'learning organisation', which means there is an on-going attempt by the school to improve its performance by learning the strategies, values and contexts of its environment in order to enhance effectiveness. The following are, therefore, regarded as the characteristics of the learning school (Morley & Rassool, 1999:84):

- commitment to lifelong learning for all those within the school;
- emphasis on collaborative learning;
- creative and positive use of differences and conflict resolution;
- holistic understanding of how the school operates as an organisation;
- strong connections and relationships with outside organisations;
- focus on student learning;
- continual learning by teachers;
- encouraging collaboration among teachers;
- the principal is the leading learner.

The above exposition brings to light a contestation between the understanding of school effectiveness as the product of an influence of certain indicators or factors and the idea of perceiving school effectiveness as a process. These two ideas complicate the notion of evaluating school effectiveness.

2.2.7 Conclusion

This section discussed the definition of school effectiveness, the factors contributing to school effectiveness, the characteristics of effective schools, the management of school effectiveness, exemplary models of school effectiveness, and the evaluation and assessment of school effectiveness. The subsequent section will give a brief overview of the conceptualization of the construct of school improvement.

2.3 THE CONCEPT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

2.3.1 Introduction

In this section, the literature on school improvement will be discussed from a general perspective as a prelude to exploring the concept further in Chapter 3. This section will, therefore, define school improvement and its link to change; highlight the approaches to school improvement and change, as well as the evaluation of school improvement; and discuss the relationship between school effectiveness and school improvement.

2.3.2 Defining school improvement

The literature on school effectiveness has a close relationship with that of school improvement as the two processes both refer to how well a school is functioning. The two concepts contribute to the creation of a climate of effectiveness in schools.

Teddlie and Reynolds (2000:146) define school improvement as the 'long-term goal of moving towards the ideal type of the self-renewing school'. Schools improve as they embrace the spirit of change; and change from the current to the future state depends on how well change is managed at a school. Hopkins (1987:57) defines school improvement as:

... a sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively.

The preceding statement focuses attention on school improvement as a process characterised by change. Therefore, there is an important link between change and school improvement. According to Hopkins (2001), change plays a pivotal role in school improvement as schools adapt their internal conditions in response to change, which may

lead to school improvement. It is important at this stage to conceptualize change as a prerequisite for improvement.

Change, according to Hopkins (2001), can bring about improvement if it:

- is systematic;
- focuses on internal conditions;
- accomplishes educational goals;
- enhances a multi-level perspective (by stakeholders);
- applies integrated implementation strategies;
- leads to the institutionalisation of new ideas.

The above expositions of school improvement seem to revolve around the phenomenon of change as a prerequisite for improvement. As this study explores the factors contributing to the effectiveness of secondary schools in the Free State province, the processes leading to effectiveness – that is, change and school improvement – will be discussed next to elucidate the relationship between them.

2.3.3 School improvement and change

Some schools fail to improve their effectiveness because the process of change is not properly planned, initiated, implemented and monitored. Harris, Bennet and Preedy (1997) compare a school to a system with components that are dependent on one another for the system to function. The authors indicate that change initiated from the bottom up is more sustainable than from the top down, because those for whom change is intended are involved, a position shared by Mills (1990). Macbeath and Mortimore (2001:153–154) argue that change towards school improvement may be realised if a profile of change is developed to guide areas which need improvement. Their profile of the school lists the following as important:

- the learning school;
- high expectation of learner achievement;
- ownership of change;
- widely accepted goals and values;
- effective communication;
- focus on learners learning;
- effective leadership;
- real home-school partnership;
- mutual respect among individuals;
- collaboration and partnership among stakeholders.

The above list indicates that the effectiveness of schools is determined by specific aspects that range from those stemming from management, curriculum and school to social issues. Fullan (2004) argues that the reason why most schools struggle to improve is that change is often difficult to implement. Fullan (1999, 2001) further points out that schools are places characterised by diversity, power relations and micro-politics, which often complicates the transition from the current state of affairs to the improved one.

Fullan (1999) furthermore states that change should be a priority need for the school community, with a clear set of objectives and goals, monitored and carefully planned. Change is often disturbed when there is an autocratic leadership style that prohibits free engagement by those at whom change is directed (Engelbrecht & Green, 2001; Weber, 2007). The relevance of change as a contributory variable to school effectiveness seems to lie in how it is approached. Change is a component of school management and leadership; therefore, the way change is approached may have a profound influence on school effectiveness. However, the management approaches, as well as the leadership and management philosophy at a school, seem to diverge because of the varied contexts and prevailing conditions.

The approaches to change management as a component of management will determine how improvement is initiated and implemented, which will finally determine the level of school effectiveness. The salient approaches will be discussed next.

2.3.4 Some approaches to school change and improvement

Change and improvement are core concepts in all definitions of leadership. School improvement is about capacitating school leaders to improve on the service provided to learners. There is a strong relationship between leadership and change. School leaders need change to effect improvement at their institutions. The quality of change is often determined by the extent to which it affects the improvement of the school. The school leader is charged with the responsibility of implementing change through various approaches. While there are many theories of change in the literature, the complexity and evolutionary change theory of Michael Fullan is relevant and appropriate. Fullan (1999:36) distinguishes between two approaches of educational change, namely the *complexity approach* and the *evolutionary approach*. The complexity approach is a more interactive approach towards change whereby stakeholders interact to bring about a state of stability. By contrast, the evolutionary approach assumes that change will happen over time.

The choice of either approach to change will depend on the circumstances and the context within which change takes place. The school culture of management, learning, assessment and routine can all have a profound effect on how successfully change is implemented. School improvement signifies a change from the current to the new state.

Writing in support of the complexity approach, Mittler (2000:134) postulates that change is an ongoing process, and that for change to be successfully implemented, all those involved should continually monitor and reflect on the process (McCallion, 1998; Loreman, Deppeler & Harvey, 2005). Those involved in change should continually challenge their beliefs and notions about the process of change (Goodson, 2003). Similarly, Richards, Gallo & Renadya (2001), Haney, Lumpe, Czerniak & Egan, 2002)

argue that beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and understanding are pivotal points to be looked at closely if any success is to be registered.

Such a process of change at school takes place within a particular cultural context, which is often driven by the leadership staff. If the leadership is autocratic, it is likely that change will be imposed on everyone by those in authority. According to Fullan (2004:67), this could lead to the phenomenon he calls the *implementation dip*, 'which is when things do not go according to plan'. He maintains that if the management of the school introduces a cultural participation and collaboration then, a new direction is mapped out, which may lead to the successful implementation of change.

The complexity approach to change is congruent with the notion of collaboration advanced by Mohr *et al.* (2004), Richardson (1998), Somekh (2006), and Ainscow, Booth and Dyson (2006). This notion is crucial for the successful implementation of change as those for whom change is intended collaborate to bring about improvement to their practice. To bring about the desired results, reflection is crucial for educational change, challenging the status quo and introducing new ideas ; Fullan & Hargreaves, 2002; Briscoe, 1996; McTaggard, 1997; Hoban, 2002).

Collaboration with the school community will develop into what Fullan (2001) calls a professional learning community. The community affords stakeholders the opportunity to learn together in what will be referred to as a community of practice (Wenger, 1998; Hargreaves, 1997; Fullan, 2001). A community of practice should probe its own practices with a view to improving them (Reason and Bradbury, 2006; Retallic, Cocklin & Coombe, 1999). The approaches to change and school improvement often orientate and direct the type of the strategy the school will adopt in enhancing improvement. The following section briefly looks at some examples of such strategies.

2.3.5 Strategies of school improvement

A number of strategies are applied in an attempt to improve schools, but essentially there are two main perspectives in this regard: firstly, there is the belief that the school can improve when an outside body determines what standards the school should meet (for example, setting targets and benchmarks); secondly, it is believed that the school should continually review its progress and performance for service to improve – hence the notion of the learning school. McGilchrist, Myers and Reed (1997), Senge *et al.* (2000), and Sun *et al.* (2007) highlight the significance of a school's continual learning process about itself to bring about improved performance. This learning process is embedded in the school, clearly articulating its vision, embarking on continual staff development, good leadership, fostering learning on behalf of the school community, and enhancing community networks.

The school learns through the process of school-development planning. Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991:3; 1994) believe that a school learns by continually planning its development. They define school-development planning as the process of planning the improvement and then implementing the plans over a specified period. School-development planning must encompass the performance indicators that will make it easy for the progress to be monitored (Hulpia & Valcke, 2004). School-development planning, according to Hulpia and Valcke (2004), will allow the school to:

- achieve its aims and objectives;
- provide a comprehensive approach towards improvement;
- capture its vision;
- determine the pace of change;
- stimulate innovation on the part of the teachers;
- improve the quality of staff development;
- strengthen the partnership between the staff and school-governing body; and
- make reporting easier.

The continual cyclic procedure of school-development planning allows the school continually to reflect on its effectiveness and plan for future improvement. The following is an illustration of the cycle of school-development planning.

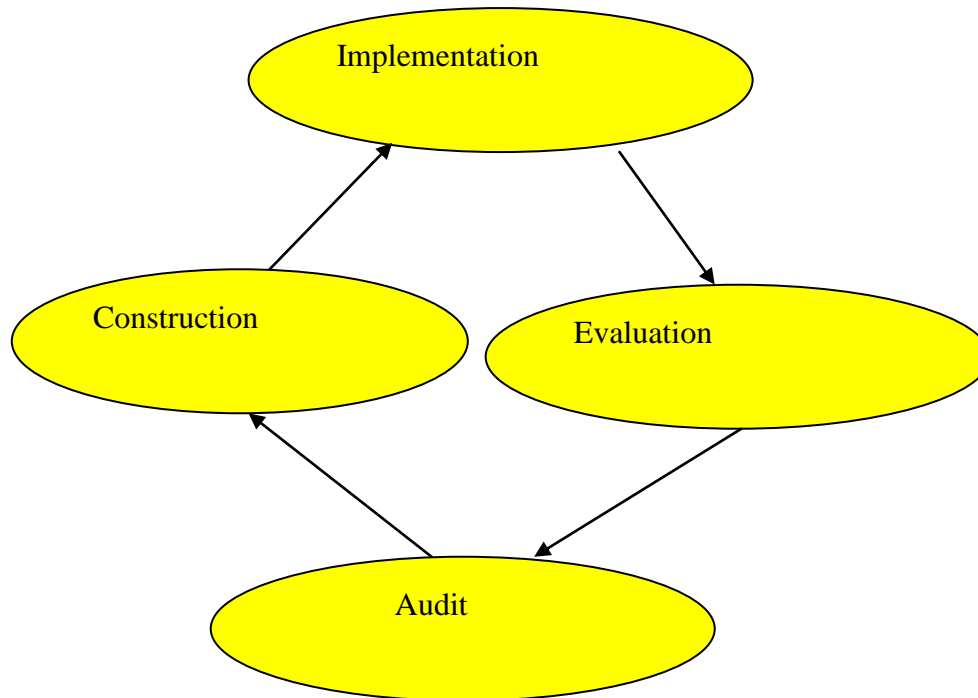


Figure 2.4: Cycle of school-development planning
Adapted from Hargreaves and Hopkins (1991:5)

The illustration shows that school-development planning is not linear but circular: one process leads to the next; for example, construction leads to implementation.

School-development planning is usually a collective effort on the part of the stakeholders at the school. It is a never-ending process aimed at achieving the vision of the school. Total Quality Management (TQM) is another improvement strategy suggested by Harris, Bennet and Preedy (1997:263–268) and Motaboli (2009) who posit that improvement takes place in a cyclical process called TQM (Total Quality Management) defined as ‘continuously meeting agreed customer requirements at lowest cost’.

TQM is a management approach geared towards developing an educational institution in totality and achieving school improvement and effectiveness. TQM groups employees together, identifies opportunities for improvement, and engages in problem-solving. It focuses on goal attainment by the school and looks at how well the school is adapted to its routine. It is important that there is a clear focus on the internal conditions of the school, clear decisions about development and maintenance, and that external change is adapted for internal purposes. Improvement should cut across all levels. Performance data should be used to plan future development, and change should be accepted to transform school culture. TQM looks at the operation of the school in its wholeness, and it is furthermore related to strategic management.

Middlewood and Lumby (1998) reflect on and single out strategic management within TQM as the component that enhances the chances of improving efficiency and effectiveness. The authors believe that being proactive and planning ahead strategically enhances the quality of planning and therefore results in quality work. The authors define strategic management as an approach to managing with anticipation, and providing for the unexpected in the process of enhancing improvement. Strategic thinking is an important step that all school managers should embark on. According to Middlewood and Lumby (1998), if correctly practised, it entails:

- being proactive;
- maintaining consistency of purpose and mission;
- being reflective;
- utilising the organisational capabilities;
- being creative;
- being effective in approach;
- examining external environment;
- being accountable to stakeholders.

Strategic management has to develop a vision (image of what might be) and mission (how to achieve the vision) and set clear objectives. This could take place in an organisational culture that is geared towards effectiveness and improvement. Strategic management has an effect on the marketability of the school both internally and externally. The strategic thrusts are usually contained in the school-development plan. To achieve strategic-management goals, the managers have to ensure that there is cooperation between all stakeholders in the school community, including strategic governance with the school-governing body. The school-governing body is involved in planning, policy-making and the evaluation of the progress of general school development. It is also crucial that managers plan the anticipated change strategically. The phenomenon of strategic management is geared towards ensuring that the school is self-managing. Schools come to be self-managing when all activities are carefully planned and carried out. In their work, Caldwell and Spinks (1998) describe four dimensions of self-managing schools as follows:

- strategic leadership: capacity to see the bigger picture and allow others to make a contribution;
- cultural leadership: changing the way things are done and introducing a culture of performance;
- educational leadership: developing a community of learning;
- responsive leadership: building a culture of accountability and responsibility.

The concept *self-managing school* is closely linked to the process articulating the decentralisation of powers to schools, which is the notion of School-Based Management (SBM). According to Nenyod (2002), this is an administrative concept that originated in the United States of America (USA). SBM is a management philosophy that allows schools to manage themselves and take important decisions on their own.

The implication seems to be that, in relative terms, self-managing schools are more effective. While noting the impact of school-development planning, TQM, SBM, and strategic management on school effectiveness and improvement, Visscher and Coe (2002) highlight the significance of improvement, on the one hand, through the use of

external feedback by performance feedback systems. External evaluation is believed to be providing a clearer understanding from a distance. On the other hand, there are those who believe that change and improvement can only come about if schools work together. Waghid (2002:2) uses the term *deliberate schooling*, implying an emphasis on deliberation, aiming to deepen, institutionalise, facilitate, consolidate and develop cooperation and participation in all schools. Such cooperation is necessary, especially between formerly advantaged and disadvantaged schools in South Africa.

The notion of Wahid's *deliberate schooling* seems to get close to the process of mentoring by definition. Love (1993:18) postulates that mentoring is one of the systems known to enhance the effectiveness of organisations:

Mentoring is a complex, interactive process occurring between individuals of different levels of experience and expertise, which incorporates interpersonal or psychosocial development, career and or educational development, and socialization function into the relationship. This one-to-one relationship is itself developmental and proceeds through a series of stages which help to determine both the conditions affecting the outcome of the process ... further the mentoring process occurs in a dynamic relationship within a given milieu.

Mentoring has become one of the widely used strategies in schools to enhance school effectiveness. The functions of the mentor are usually to provide support to protégés through coaching and assigning tasks that will lead to the development of the protégé. The mentor should act as a role model of positive attitudes, beliefs and values. The mentor should facilitate discussions about the protégé's work and dispel the protégé's anxieties and fears. Teachers at all levels of management at school could be mentored for the enhancement of their performance. Angelle (2002) indicates that mentoring newly appointed teachers could influence their work positively and consequently have a bearing on school effectiveness.

The school improvement strategies discussed above must all be monitored and the results evaluated. The following section explains how school improvement is evaluated.

2.3.6 The evaluation or assessment of school improvement

Change and improvement usually begin with the process of initiation. Change is then implemented and institutionalised to become part of the school culture. Coppieters (2005) warns that a school is a complex, unpredictable and dynamic institution. Improvement depends on how well change is managed and how well the school is transformed into an institution of learning. School improvement is guided by the processes of goal-setting, pressure and need to improve, cyclical improvement processes, and school autonomy (Scheerens & Demeuse, 2005).

Although school improvement is an ongoing process, evaluating or measuring it is critical as it relates to how effective change has been. Two views of ensuring school improvement prevail, namely, that of using learner attainment as a yardstick and that of using whole-school evaluation with specific indicators of change or improvement. Scollay and Everson (1985) warn against using student achievement as the sole criterion to evaluate school improvement.

On the other hand, Crowley and Hauser (2007), while advocating the approach of whole-school evaluation to measure school improvement, believe that the evaluating strategies need ongoing conversations about the nature of evidence and elements of the research practice.

In the previous section, school effectiveness and school improvement were discussed and often the link between the two emerged. The next section will deal with the relationship between school effectiveness and school improvement.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented a literature review of school effectiveness and school improvement in general. The chapter addressed the question of what school effectiveness is and how the concept is defined. Furthermore, the following issues were discussed: factors contributing to school effectiveness with reference to management and leadership, motivation, delegation, decision-making, conflict management, effective communication, self-management and employee wellness. Characteristics of effective schools were dealt with by firstly by describing an effective school and identifying main distinguishing characteristics. The exemplary models of school effectiveness i.e. received model, heretic model and contextual model, and the methods used to evaluate school effectiveness were discussed. The concept *school improvement* was conceptualized and defined. The relationship between change and school improvement and the approaches to school improvement were contextualised. The chapter further discussed the way school improvement could be assessed or evaluated, and concluded by highlighting the relationship between school effectiveness and school improvement.

The next chapter will establish what constitutes school effectiveness and school improvement from a legislative perspective in the South African context.

CHAPTER 3

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT: A LEGISLATIVE PERSPECTIVE

3.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the literature on school effectiveness and school improvement debates in South Africa. School effectiveness is conceptualised by reviewing two recent reports – the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) Report (2009) and the School that Work (sic) Report (2007) – and by linking quality to school effectiveness. The concept *school improvement* is contextualised as a process linked to the concept of *school effectiveness*. These concepts will be discussed from a legislative perspective within the South African educational context.

The legislative framework on school governance and management as important elements of school effectiveness and school improvement is highlighted by elaborating on school governance and management within the context of the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 (SASA). SASA (RSA 1996) details the function and roles of the school-governing bodies (SGBs) and the principal in relation to governance as an element contributing to school effectiveness and school improvement.

The policies for evaluating teachers and schools – namely, Whole-School Evaluation (WSE), Developmental Appraisal (DA), Performance Measurement (PM), and Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) – are discussed in relation to how they influence school effectiveness and school improvement. This is followed by a brief critique of their efficacy as school-effectiveness and school-improvement strategies.

The education district as a school-support structure is also discussed as it has a profound influence on school effectiveness. The analysis of school effectiveness and Outcomes-Based Curriculum 2005 is highlighted, because the implementation of the latter had a significant influence on the level of effectiveness at schools. The current developments with regard to curriculum review are also discussed, and the chapter concludes with an overview of school-effectiveness and school-improvement developments in the Free State Province.

The functioning of schools in South Africa continues to be shaped by the history of colonialism and apartheid (DoE, 2009). Education was a political tool used by the former apartheid government to perpetuate inequalities. The unequal provision of education continues to exist, despite the changes introduced in 1994. Similarly, the legacy of the unequal distribution of resources at schools continues to shape the performance of schools and the execution of their expected duties in relation to school effectiveness and school improvement (Jansen & Sayed, 2001). This legacy continues to have far-reaching implications for school effectiveness and school improvement.

The debates about school effectiveness and school improvement became more prominent after 1994 (Harber & Muthukrishna, 2000). The move to enhance school effectiveness and school improvement was informed by the general transformation of South African society to inculcate the principle of equality as enshrined in the Constitution of the country. The Department of Education, both at national and provincial level, initiated several projects (DoE, 1994) see Chapter 1, p. 3) to improve the teaching and learning conditions at schools.

The projects to enhance school effectiveness and improve teaching and learning conditions at schools were intensified both at provincial and national level. The national government introduced legislation that sought to transform the administration of education and to improve the culture of management, governance, learning and teaching. The Acts passed were the following: the National Policy Act, no. 27 of 1996 (RSA, 1996); the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996); and the Employment of Educators Act, no. 76 of 1998 (RSA, 1998).

Policy frameworks such as Whole-School Evaluation (WSE), Developmental Appraisal (DA), Performance Measurement (PM) and Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) were introduced to address the legacy of apartheid in education (NEEDU, 2009).

This legislative and policy framework was *inter alia* aimed at enhancing effective teaching and learning at schools, determining how schools will operate and function, and evaluating both schools and teachers in order to enhance school effectiveness (NEEDU, 2009). At this stage, it is first of all important to explain how school effectiveness is conceptualised in South Africa.

3.2 SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

This section gives a synopsis of the salient features of the complex school-effectiveness debates in South Africa from a legislative perspective as contained in the literature reviewed in this chapter.

The concept *school effectiveness* in South Africa is mostly linked to learner achievement (NEEDU, 2009), and the debates around school effectiveness revolve around the matriculation results of secondary schools. Schools with poor matriculation results are generally assumed to be less effective, as suggested by the following definition of Scheerens (2004:4), which is consistent with the South African understanding of school effectiveness: '[school-effectiveness research is the] association of hypothetical effectiveness enhancing conditions of schooling and output measures, mostly student achievement.'

Scheerens (2004) uses the systems analogy to conceptualise school effectiveness (that is, the input effect on throughput and the resultant output of the education system). The notion of quality is regarded as integral to school effectiveness, as educational output is a basic criterion of measuring quality.

In South Africa, the achievement of results has been the yardstick for evaluating school effectiveness; however, according to Taylor (in Townsend, 2007), the notion of achievement-oriented conceptualisations of school effectiveness led to the Department of Education initiating the School-Based Accountability (SBA) measures,

which focus on testing, not on capacity-building. The SBA is used to manipulating results by eliminating high-risk candidates, encouraging registration at standard grade, lowering the standard of question papers and raising scores during moderation. These processes resulted in the perceived high pass rates but actual poor quality.

The impression created was that schools are effective as a result of high pass rates, but the facts suggest differently. The achievement drive led to several initiatives to improve the performance of schools (as discussed later in this chapter), but there is a re-emergence of the debates around quality assurance and ensuring quality education at schools. Since 1994 there is a general perception that the quality has deteriorated (Christie, Butler & Potterton, 2007), which has led to various studies on quality in education.

Botha (2000:3), for example, in linking quality with school effectiveness in the new education dispensation, defines quality within TQM (one of the strategies to improve education in post-apartheid South Africa) as:

... factors such as learner achievement, teaching approaches and the nature (physical, cultural and social) of the school. Quality in the classroom also raises issues such as the aims, goals and means of teachers and learners.

Enhancing the quality at schools requires effective teaching and learning, which will result in learners achieving the expected outcomes. While Botha (2000) understands quality to mean the above, he emphasises that, for quality to be achieved, theory must be linked to practice and that sustainable improvement towards quality education can only take place if organisations identify and solve practical problems to enhance the quality of their organisations. This argument is shared by Motata (2000), who postulates that there is a large gap between South African policies and the reality at schools in that new policies have not necessarily translated into quality teaching and learning at schools. Motata (2000) suggests that more qualitative and empirical school and classroom research is needed.



Figure 3.1: Aspects enhancing school effectiveness

Similarly, most literature on school effectiveness, both internationally and locally, by authors such as Fullan (2004), Hopkins and Hargreaves (2001), and Jansen (2004), focuses on the different aspects of the schooling system that contribute to the quality of education and school effectiveness. The diagramme above summarises the aspects (some of which were discussed in Chapter 2) that seem dominant in the literature on school effectiveness. All processes contributing to quality education, and therefore school effectiveness, seem to revolve around teaching and learning, which form the core of any effective school.

Since 1994, the literature on school effectiveness in South Africa has mostly been about rejuvenating the quality of education, especially at schools in previously disadvantaged communities. While many studies have been conducted to determine

the quality of education at South African schools, it is important to mention a few projects that were deemed relevant to this study.

In 2007, the School that Work Report (Christie *et al.*, 2007) was published. In the study on which the report is based, a brief analysis was conducted among middle-quintile schools; that is, schools that are doing well despite being disadvantaged. This study used Senior Certificate results as the basis for an analysis of school effectiveness because such results are widely used as a yardstick to determine how effective a school is. The study involved interviewing teachers and principals and carrying out an observation at 18 schools. The findings of the study were centred on the following themes (Christie *et al.*, 2007):

- The importance of teachers and staffing (which stresses the significance of teacher commitment and dedication);
- Organising of teaching and learning: in these schools, the time of contact with learners was planned in such a way that quality time was provided;
- Leadership and management: working schools exhibited a well distribution of leadership and proper management;
- Acknowledgement, reward, recognition and motivation: there was a prevalence of high acknowledgement of work and achievement, resulting in positive reinforcement;
- Resources: schools were improvising in the absence of resources, and managed and maintained those available;
- Support from Districts and the Department: the support was inadequate; however, schools initiated their own training and support programmes.
- IQMS was said to be necessary; however, schools felt it was not being properly implemented.
- OBE graduates: the secondary schools indicated that the primary schools produced poorly educated learners who struggle upon entry into secondary schools.
- Socio-economic conditions surrounding schools: the following were evident in influencing schooling: poverty, parental support, discipline, learner pregnancy and HIV/AIDS.

The above findings make it clear that any school-effectiveness strategy will have to acknowledge context in terms of leadership, resources and the socio-economic situation. School effectiveness is influenced by different factors. This evidence-based study demonstrated that context plays an important role in school effectiveness.

In support of context-oriented approaches to school-effectiveness study, Fleisch and Christie (2004) argue that enhancing school effectiveness in the South African context must recognise the political, economic and socio-cultural changes in the country. Van der Berg (2008) agrees that the relationship between socio-economic status and school performance is critical; hence, the difference in performance between previously advantaged white schools and disadvantaged black schools. Schools are embedded in a political milieu, which in turn influences how well teachers and learners will respond to educational activities. While the schools in the above-mentioned study reflected signs of effectiveness, it is paramount that their unique contexts are considered in designing a universal effectiveness and improvement strategy. This view of taking context into consideration is supported by Harber and Muthukrishna (2000), as they believe that schools in South Africa vary from rural to urban and from well-resourced to poorly-resourced. Christie (2001), however, draws attention to the way other schools succeed despite being under-resourced and poor. These are schools with resilience which:

- prioritise teaching and learning;
- have strong managers and leaders;
- make provision for a safe and orderly environment;
- maintain a high level of discipline;
- consult stakeholders;
- have responsible leadership;
- enjoy a good relationship with the community.

The context usually has an impact on the beliefs of teachers on the aspect of school effectiveness. In their work, Grobler, Bisschoff and Mloi (2002) indicate that

effectiveness is perceived in a particular way by teachers; for example, at some schools teachers believe that effectiveness includes the

- level of discipline at the school;
- attendance level of the learners;
- language of instruction at the school;
- attendance level of the teachers;
- educational qualifications of the teachers;
- attendance of courses, workshops and seminars on school effectiveness.

The above exposition highlights the significance of context as a framework for understanding school effectiveness. A comparison could be drawn between the models of school effectiveness dealt with in Chapter 2 and the school-effectiveness literature in this section, as such a comparison aligns the school-effectiveness debate with the contextual model.

The second study that had a significant effect on the school-effectiveness debate in South Africa is the 2009 ministerial committee report on the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit. The purpose of the study was, among others, to review all existing policies, mechanisms, structures, processes and tools that evaluate and develop schools and teachers (NEEDU, 2009:7) with a view to determining the level of school effectiveness at South African schools.

The findings of NEEDU (2009) pointed to the fact that South African policies on both school and teacher evaluation have not enhanced school effectiveness adequately. Some of the key findings were that there is:

- broad recognition of the crisis in education and the limitations of existing evaluation instruments to remedy the situation;
- widespread consensus on the need for stronger accountability measures alongside developmental support to be introduced into the schooling system.

The report recommends the establishment of an evaluation unit that could bring more accountability to schools and strike a balance between internal and external evaluation. The evaluation of both the schools and teachers is viewed as problematic in view of the lack of effectiveness at schools (as discussed later in this chapter).

While both reports focused on the school as a starting point for enhancing effectiveness and improvement, Chinsamy (2002) highlights the importance of the school district in enhancing school effectiveness. Chinsamy (2002:1) indicates that developments since 1994 have not resulted in any solutions to the problems experienced in the education system. An education district is postulated as having a pivotal and significant level of influence on schools because it is a level at which the implementation of policy becomes pivotal. For the districts to provide an injection into school effectiveness, Chinsamy (2002:3) argues that they have to:

- balance pressure and support; that is, while expecting schools to be accountable, districts have to provide support for them to be highly effective; support could be executed through workshops, seminars or management, curriculum and assessment, school visits, lesson observation, coaching and mentoring;
- balance their maintenance role by providing the necessary services;
- give support focused on enhancing quality teaching and learning.

The following diagram is a schematic representation of an effective district:



Figure 3.2: Aspects of an effective education district

The above diagram indicates that different aspects of district functioning has an impact on school effectiveness:

- High functionality: a district with all the necessary plans, implementation strategies and control measures intended to achieve its objective will affect school effectiveness positively.
- High coordination capacity: the ability of an education district to synchronise activities has a positive effect on the functioning of schools.
- Capacity to value data from schools: the ability of the district to gather, analyse and interpret data has a profound influence on planning school interventions and assistance programmes.
- Ability to balance pressure and support: the district must provide support and at the same time monitor and control the effect of support, which enhances school effectiveness positively.

- Easy accessibility: the district that is accessible to schools both through its physical facilities and communication systems is likely to improve the functioning of schools.
- Curriculum-delivery support: the district that provides curricular support to teachers at schools is likely to enhance school effectiveness.
- Planned support to schools: the district that has a well-defined plan and strategies of school development is likely to influence school effectiveness positively.
- Capacity-building guidance for schools: the district that holds capacity-building workshops for school managers and teachers is likely to end up with self-managing schools.

It follows that the district has an extremely valuable role to play as an external monitor and evaluator of schools. However, it is clear that the significance of local context plays a pivotal role in understanding how well school effectiveness could be enhanced, and that districts would have to consider the local context in planning any support to schools (Carrim & Shalem, quoted in Yu, 2007).

District support services become important in the delivery of support to schools. Central to such support are two sections: the Curriculum Section comprising the learning facilitators, and the School Management Section comprising the school management and governance developers. The Free State Province is divided into five education districts (see Annexure J), each of which has the two aforementioned sections aimed at enhancing school effectiveness although different in nature.

The learning facilitators provide specialised curriculum support to teachers and monitor the implementation of the curriculum. The school management and governance developers are responsible for providing policy and management guidance to principals and for subjecting SMTs to management development. The learning facilitators and school management and governance developers have to visit schools regularly to monitor and assist wherever possible – but without any documentation to guide them on how to carry out their work.

While it is the role of the learning facilitators and school management and governance developers to visit, monitor and provide support to schools, the results have registered little success on school effectiveness and improvement. This suggests that, in the absence of a guiding strategy for school intervention, school effectiveness and school improvement are adversely affected. As school-support structures, the districts have not been able to improve school effectiveness.

School effectiveness is always achieved through the school improvement process, which fosters change for the school to attain its objectives; it is therefore important to contextualise the concept of school improvement. The next section discusses the concept *school improvement* in the South African context.

3.3 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

This section gives a synopsis of the salient features of the issue of school improvement from a legislative perspective in the South African context.

In the past, school improvement in South Africa was driven by NGO projects funded by corporate and international donors. After 1994, a multiplicity of projects were initiated and driven by the government; hence, the current literature on school improvement in South Africa is dominated by various projects that the Department of Education has implemented to effect improvement at schools (Taylor in Townsend, 2007), for example:

- The School Effectiveness in South Africa (SESA) project of 1992 initiated by the organisation called Advancing Basic Education and Literacy and some members of the Education Department of the University of Witwatersrand.
- The Imbewu Project (1998–2001) in the Eastern Cape at 523 rural schools. From 1994 -2003, standards-based accountability was used when matriculation results declined. Improvement plans were designed to change the situation at dysfunctional schools (schools attaining less than a 20% matriculation pass rate).

- The Education Action Zone (EAZ) programme of 1999-2002 in the Gauteng Province where 70 schools were identified and systemic intervention applied, which resulted in improved results.
- Several projects were implemented to align curriculum, teaching and assessment. These included the following:
 - ⇒ The District Development and Support Project (DDSP) from 2000–2002 at 453 primary schools (in rural areas) focused on improving the functionality of districts and schools;
 - ⇒ The Quality Learning Project (QLP) from 2001–2004 at 524 high schools in nine provinces;
 - ⇒ The Dinaledi Project (2001 and ongoing) at 12 dysfunctional high schools to improve their teaching of science and mathematics.

The above initiatives were attempts to enhance school improvement. The analysis of the projects shows that very little improvement was actually registered at schools.

On the same topic, Rampa (2005) refers to the COLTS (Culture of Learning and Teaching Services) campaign as an attempt by the South African Government to resuscitate the schools from the breakdown of the culture of teaching and learning as a result of the revolution against the Bantu Education Act. COLTS was a presidential project initiated in 1996. According to Rampa (2005), it was integrated as an improvement strategy with two other strategies, namely TQM and TIRISANO (the latter word means ‘working together’), which sought to transform the institutional cultures of schools into those of collaboration and team building. Rampa (2005) indicates that, despite the project, school productivity remained low, which was a sign that improvement as a result of the implementation of the project did not succeed.

Following COLTS, a number of projects were initiated to improve the quality of teaching and learning at schools; for example Kanjee (2005) and Taylor and Prinsloo (2005) indicate that the improvement intervention called the Quality Learning Project (QLP) was initiated to improve the conditions at secondary schools spread across the nine provinces.

This project was sponsored by the Business Trust and the National Department of Education and was managed by Jet Education Services with its interventions predominantly managed by NGOs.

The QLP improvement strategy was based on a systemic model, which involved intervention at district, school and classroom level to improve the conditions at schools with less capacity to promote effective teaching and learning. QLP activities were geared towards the improvement of the following:

- teaching of mathematics, reading and writing skills at 524 schools;
- governance and management of schools;
- management in 17 districts.

However, very little improvement was registered as a result of the project. In a similar vein, the Dinaledi Project, which was intended to improve the teaching of Physical Science and Mathematics, was implemented at 102 schools. While the outcome of the Dinaledi Project was slightly better than that of the QLP, the overall improvement was not significantly high (Taylor & Prinsloo, 2005).

While other improvement strategies such as those discussed above focused on systemic aspects of education to improve teaching and learning, others targeted the development of management and leadership to effect improvement.

According to Madasi (2004), there has been a paradigm shift in management approach from the prescriptive management approach to the developmental approach. Madasi (2004) avers that developmental management practice is pivotal for any school-improvement process. In a similar vein, Hoadley, Christie and Ward (2009) posit that change at schools needs leadership with the capacity to inject and lead improvement efforts. Emphasis is placed on the ability of the leader to transform the institution from its current state to an improved state; so, schools need transformational leaders who can initiate and implement change.

Several studies, projects and summits have been conducted in South Africa to determine exactly how schools can be improved. In his work, Botha (2004) examined the changing role of the principal in relation to school improvement in the new dispensation. The conclusion drawn by Botha (2004) in this study is that, for principals to have an influence on school improvement, the following are important:

- the important role of the principal as a professional leader;
- the involvement and ownership of the process of evaluation and improvement processes;
- the ability to think strategically;
- the ability to use and apply knowledge.

Botha (2004) stresses the importance of the leadership of the principal in injecting school improvement. Schools with good principals will have a far more positive effect on school improvement than those with bad ones. Botha (2006) also conducted a study on the role of the principal in School-Based Management (SBM), which is a system advocating a decentralisation of powers to allow the school leader to take decisions. The conclusion drawn in the study is that the role of the principal for effective SBM is crucial, and that principals who are well informed and empowered to take decisions have a positive effect on the effectiveness of the SBM which, in turn, could affect school improvement positively.

The current trend in the school-improvement literature has been to adopt a more comprehensive approach that can complement both systemic and management dimensions; for example, the Eastern Cape Member of the Executive Council (MEC) of Education has adopted an improvement strategy called Master Plan 2010 (DoE, 2010). This plan focuses on the systemic, management and resource needs of schools in that province for improvement to take place, which reflects a holistic or comprehensive approach to school improvement.

The Minister of Basic Education, Ms Angie Motshekga, has announced that the recently formed National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) will monitor the administration of tests on numeracy and literacy to Grades 3, 6 and 9

(Govender, 2010). This is seen as a move to raise standards and enhance improvement as far as the quality of teaching and learning is concerned. However, this raising of standards has become problematic. Jansen (2004) postulates that the improvement of the culture of learning at schools is hampered by the deeply held convictions and perceptions by teachers that evaluation of their work could result in victimisation. The historical relationship between South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) and the education department hampers efforts to improve the schools, especially the formerly disadvantaged ones

Given the 2% decline in the matriculation results in 2009, the Minister of Basic Education has made several statements to the effect that education has to be improved as a matter of urgency (Davies, 2010). Recognising the conditions affecting the quality of education, and consequently of school improvement, the minister has identified the following as some of the shortcomings (Davies, 2010):

- lack of participation by stakeholders in education;
- lack of participation by some parents in the education of their children;
- poor command of English as a language of instruction by learners.

In an attempt to rectify the situation, the DoBE in 2008 and 2009 has launched improvement strategies that include the following projects (Davies, 2010):

- The Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC);
- The Teacher Development Project;
- The Teacher Laptop Initiative (TLI).

The QLTC, which is partly funded by the Education and Labour Relations Council (ELRC), has secured a long-term commitment from different stakeholders – including teachers' unions, school-governing-body organisations, and learner organisations – to work together to improve the quality of education (Davies, 2010). The current situation is that the QLTC has not filtered through to the grassroots (that is many schools have not yet understood and implemented the campaign fully), but efforts by the DoBE to roll out advocacy campaigns and establish structures at schools, districts

and provincial departments are underway (Davies, 2010). It is hoped that the project will improve conditions at schools and consequently lead to school improvement.

The role of teachers in enhancing school improvement at schools is important. The Teacher Development Summit on 29 June 2009 (Davies, 2010) culminated in teachers issuing the following declaration on teacher development:

South African teachers come with different historical qualifications and educational backgrounds, the majority of which were developed under apartheid structures that deliberately disadvantaged and underdeveloped large sections of the population.

Teachers continue to work in different and unequal contexts and with different levels of resourcing and support, especially in rural schools, (compared with urban schools) and township schools (compared with suburban schools).

A large number of serving teachers are not fully qualified (in terms of current requirements) and unqualified teachers continue to be employed, especially at rural schools, which exacerbate the existing inequalities in the system.

There is a shared commitment to improve access to the quality of teacher development and promote professionalism in teaching (Davies 2010: 4).

The declaration seems to acknowledge the extreme importance of developing teachers to bring about improvement at schools, but also indicates that any improvement of teachers or a school will have to take note of the context in which teachers were trained. The focus of the Teacher Development Summit was to provide a platform to enhance institutional development, review the current teacher-appraisal structure, establish structures that will ensure teacher development, and assess funding opportunities for teacher development. All these are intended to influence

improvement at schools and enhance the culture of teaching and learning (Davies, 2010).

The DoBE (2009) has initiated Teacher Laptop Initiative (TLI) to provide teachers with laptops. The intention is to supply teachers with laptops for their subject planning and keeping of records. It is yet to be seen if this will produce results, as many of South African teachers are not computer literate; however, there is a strong belief on the part of the DoBE that this initiative will improve the teachers' ability to do their work with ease, leading to an improvement in the quality of their work and consequently school improvement.

The conclusion drawn from the literature is that school improvement needs the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels of the education system. There is a need to have a more integrated improvement strategy for the whole country since the small pockets of improvement strategies have yielded poor results. However, the legislative framework exists at South African schools to achieve school improvement and therefore a high level of school effectiveness. The next section discusses these legislative and policy frameworks on school effectiveness and school improvement in South Africa.

3.4 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK ON SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

3.4.1 Introduction

Effective schools distinguish themselves by virtue of their efficient and effective management, governance and quality teaching, which are the products of good management, governance and effective teaching. The following section will discuss the impact of legislative frameworks on school management, governance and the evaluation of schools and teachers as part of the aim of the DoBE to enhance school effectiveness and school improvement.

School effectiveness and school improvement are closely related to how a school is managed and governed. School management and governance are the responsibility of the principal and the school-governing body respectively. These two concepts are key aspects, among others, that influence school effectiveness and school improvement. In implementing the legislation, the DoBE sought to determine how schools should be managed and governed efficiently. The legislative framework provides guidelines on how the principal and the governing body should govern the school, resulting in effective management and governance. Similarly, the legislative framework also provides an opportunity to evaluate both teachers and schools to ensure acceptable standards, educational quality, and school effectiveness.

3.4.2 School governance and management in relation to school effectiveness and school improvement

School governance is one of the components of the school that determine how the school functions. It is a component which reflects on how well the school stakeholders could work together to accomplish the mission and vision of the school (Clarke, 2007). To locate school management and governance within the South African context in this study, it is important to discuss the legislative framework.

The South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 (RSA, 1996) is the legal framework which the ANC Government put in place to resuscitate effective management and governance at schools. According to section 16A of the Act, the management of the school is vested in the principal while, according to section 20(1), the governance of the school is the responsibility of the school governing body.

The South African Schools Act clearly elaborates on the functions and the role of the SGB and vividly distinguishes between management and governance. Governance is viewed as playing a pivotal role in the support of the school to exercise its teaching and learning mandate. The following is a brief discussion of the role and functions of the SGB. The role of the SGB as promulgated in the Act determines how well schools will be governed. Schools that are clearly and efficiently governed in terms of the stipulations will have effective governance structures and will therefore be effectively governed, which is a characteristic of an effective school.

It is important to discuss the role of the SGB in terms of the legal framework, as it is the foundation of what effective school governance means in the South African context, as well as the result of effective school governance on school effectiveness and school improvement.

In the first instance, the SGB must be democratically elected by all the stakeholders, which include parents, teachers, learners and non-teaching personnel at a school. The SGB must establish its constitution and set up a vision and mission in terms of the provincial and national legislative framework. It must also adopt a code of conduct for its members.

In terms of section 20(1) of the South African Schools Act (RSA 1996), the functions of the SGB are to:

- promote the best interests of the school and strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school;
- adopt a constitution;
- develop the mission statement of the school;
- adopt a code of conduct for learners at the school;
- support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the performance of their professional functions;
- determine the times of the school day, consistent with any applicable conditions of employment of staff at the school;
- administer and control the school's property, buildings and grounds occupied by the school, including school hostels; but the exercise of this power must not in any manner interfere with or otherwise hamper the implementation of a decision made by the Member of the Executive Council or Head of Department in terms of any law or policy;
- encourage parents, learners, educators and other staff at the school to render voluntary services to the school;

- recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of educators at the school, subject to the Employment of Educators Act, no. 76 of 1998, and the Labour Relations Act, no. 66 of 1995;
- recommend to the Head of Department the appointment of non-educating staff at the school, subject to the Public Service Act, no. 103 of 1994, and the Labour Relations Act, no. 66 of 1995;
- at the request of the Head of Department, allow the reasonable use under fair conditions determined by the Head of Department of the facilities of the school for educational programmes not conducted by the school;
- discharge all other functions imposed upon the governing body by or under this Act.

The above exposition gives clear guidelines of what effective governance means in the South African context. Effective governance is one of the characteristics of effective schools, and schools that are effectively governed have a high level of school effectiveness.

While the South African Schools Act is clear on the duties of the SGB, Prew (2004) posits that school effectiveness in the townships needs the involvement of the entire community if they are to turn the teaching and learning situation around. The implication of Prew's conclusion is derived from the fact that, despite the Act clearly articulating the role of parents; very few parents play an active role in the running of township schools, which often results in schools being less effective.

The South African Schools Act also elaborates on the duties and the responsibilities of the principal as these play an important role in the effective functioning of the school. It is important to note that effective schools are known to have effective principals. In the South African context, the term *effective principal* denotes a principal who manages the school within the legal framework and exercising of the duties as stipulated by SASA (RSA, 1996). The following section outlines the duties as indicated in section 16A of the South African Schools Act (RSA, 1996).

3.4.3 Role and duties of the principal in relation to school effectiveness and school improvement

According to Masitsa (2005), the principal is the one who has the authority to enhance the culture of teaching and learning and maintain school effectiveness. The effective principal in the South African context is responsible for carrying out the duties indicated in the South African Schools Act. Effective management is widely regarded as one determinant of quality at schools (Botha, 2004). The following is a brief discussion of the duties of the school principal in relation to the effective management of a school in South Africa (the numbering of this section is that of the source document and therefore inconsistent with the numbering of the thesis with a purpose of making it easier for cross referencing):

- 1) The principal in relation to the Department of Education:
 - a) The principal of a public school represents the Head of Department in the governing body when acting in an official capacity, as contemplated in sections 23(1) (b) and 24(1) (j).
 - b) The principal must prepare and submit to the Head of Department an annual report in respect of:
 - i.) the academic performance of that school in relation to the minimum outcomes and standards and procedures for assessment determined by the Minister in terms of section 6A; and
 - ii.) the effective use of available resources.
 - c)
 - i) The principal of a public school identified by the Head of Department in terms of section 58(B) must annually, at the beginning of the year, prepare a plan setting out how academic performance at the school will be improved.
 - ii.) The academic performance improvement plan must be presented to the Head of Department on a date determined by him or her, and tabled at a governing-body meeting.

- iii.) The Head of Department may approve the academic-performance improvement plan or return it to the principal with such recommendations as may be necessary in the circumstances.
 - iv.) If the Head of Department approves the academic-performance improvement plan, the principal must, by 30 June, report to the Head of Department and the governing body on progress made in implementing that plan.
 - v.) The Head of Department may extend the date contemplated in subparagraph (IV) on good cause shown.
- 2) The principal, in relation to the professional management of the school, must
- a) in undertaking the professional management of a public school as contemplated in section 16(3), carry out duties which include, but are not limited to:
 - i) the implementation of all the educational programmes and curriculum activities;
 - ii) the management of all educators and support staff;
 - iii) the management of the use of learning support material and other equipment;
 - iv) the performance of functions delegated to him or her by the Head of Department in terms of this Act;
 - v) the safekeeping of all school records; and
 - vi) the implementation of policy and legislation;
 - b) attend and participate in all meetings of the governing body;
 - c) provide the governing body with a report about the professional management relating to the public school;
 - d) assist the governing body in handling disciplinary matters pertaining to learners;
 - e) assist the Head of Department in handling disciplinary matters pertaining to educators and support staff employed by the Head of Department;
 - f) inform the governing body about policy and legislation;
 - g) provide accurate data to the Head of Department when requested to do so.

- 3) The principal must assist the governing body in the performance of its functions and responsibilities, but such assistance or participation may not be in conflict with:
- a) the instructions of the Head of Department;
 - b) legislation or policy;
 - c) an obligation that he or she has towards the Head of Department, the Member of the Executive Council or the Minister; or
 - d) a provision of the Employment of Educators Act, no. 76 of 1998, and the Personnel Administration Measures determined in terms thereof.

The above discussion clearly indicates that effective school management in the South African context means being able to give an account to the DoBE about what took place at the school, being able to implement programmes geared towards effective teaching and learning, and giving guidance to school governors. In this regard it is clear that the higher the level of accountability and the delivery of effective school programmes and effective governance, the higher the effectiveness of the school. While the Act clearly states the duties of the principal, the reality is that most principals, especially at formerly disadvantaged schools, still find it difficult to perform the duties as promulgated in the Act, resulting in less school effectiveness at those schools.

According to Masitsa (2005), the principals of mostly previously disadvantaged schools still struggle to stem the tide of poor performance and dysfunctionality at their schools. Masitsa (2005) states that, for principals to be effective and productive, they will have to be empowered in the following skills, which were found lacking in most of them: motivation of staff and learners, developing and evaluating personnel, dealing with legal issues, conflict- and problem-solving, managing change, financial management, stress management, and managing administrative and technical aspects. Masitsa (2005) further contends that restoring the culture of teaching and learning is predominantly the role of the principal. This view is shared by Kruger (2003), Bush (2007) and Mathibe (2007).

The conclusion one draws from the literature is that the role of the principal in enhancing school effectiveness is crucial. The better the school is managed by the principal, the more effective the school will be and the more improvement the school will experience.

3.4.4 Evaluation of teachers and schools in relation to school effectiveness and school improvement

Schools that are highly effective are known to have highly effective teachers. Effective teachers enhance the effectiveness of the school and contribute towards its improvement in general. The evaluation of teachers and schools is an important aspect of influencing how well teachers and the school will realise their vision and mission to achieve their goals. Taylor, Muller and Vinjevold (2004) state that in getting schools to be more effective the following are important:

- explicit, regular and systematic evaluation and assessment;
- an administration and management climate that values and ensures high attainment for all;
- language and early exposure to reading and writing; and
- mechanisms that ensure coverage of the curriculum such as sequence signals and good exemplars and textbooks.

The above points as articulated by Taylor *et al.* (2004) are a framework to determine how far the evaluation systems of teachers and schools have managed to enhance quality teaching and learning at South African schools. The reality is that the evaluation of both schools and teachers is still a contentious issue with teacher unions; therefore, this can hardly improve on school effectiveness (Jansen, 2004).

The following section discusses school-evaluation policies and their impact on the effectiveness of the South African school system.

3.4.4.1 Whole-school evaluation (WSE)

According to Asmal (Quoted in DoE 2001), the implementation of Whole-School Evaluation was a radical shift from the apartheid inspection of schools to a more collaborative and transparent approach to school evaluation. WSE was introduced as there was no evaluation system in place aimed at the following:

- carrying out evaluation according to an agreed national mode;
- improving the overall quality of education at schools;
- evaluations done by qualified and accredited supervisors.

WSE policy is underpinned by the following contextual framework (DoE, 2001):

- That transformation was necessary to provide quality education for all (Education White Paper, 1995).
- That the minister maintain standards of education provision and monitor delivery and performance as required by the National Education Policy Act, no. 27 of 1996.
- That the Assessment Policy Gazette in 1998 required that systemic evaluation be conducted in Grades 3, 6 and 9 to assess the effectiveness of the system.
- That the Further Education and Training (FET) Act, no. 98 of 1998 be put into action to determine the quality of FET education.
- That achievement been assessed in terms of nationally agreed standards by the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) Act, no. 58 of 1995 and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) bodies.

The policy was designed to achieve the goal of school improvement through partnership between supervisors, schools and support services. The process would result in a written report that contains recommendations aimed at helping schools to improve. The *WSE Report* requires that the school must, in collaboration with the District Support Services and the SGB, draft a School Improvement Plan (SIP) in reaction to the recommendation of the WSE evaluation report.

The SIP is a programme of action intended to address identified areas of development. The SIP then becomes part of the School Development Plan (SDP), which is a broad programme of development followed by the school over a long period. The drafting of an SDP is obligatory for all schools in terms of the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996. The SIP, however, is a plan intended to:

- react to identified improvement needs and recommendations;
- inform and guide the school and improvement activities;
- enhance school effectiveness;
- enhance accountability.

The SIP is drafted by the school within four weeks of receiving a WSE report, which must be supported by the district support service. The SIP is produced in collaboration with the District Support Team, SGB members, the principal, the School-Management Team (SMT), the School Development Team (SDT), RCL and a WSE Coordinator nominated by the staff.

Whole-School Evaluation would have identified areas such as the following ones that need attention:

- the basic functionality of the school;
- leadership, management and communication;
- governance and relationships;
- quality of teaching and learning and educator development;
- curriculum provision and resources;
- learner achievement;
- school safety, security and discipline;
- school infrastructure;
- parents and community.

These areas are evaluated by using input and output indicators (*input* is what the school does to ensure it functions smoothly; *output* is the learners' standard of attainment at the end of each stage of their education).

The evaluation performance ratings are:

- 5 – Outstanding
- 4 – Good
- 3 – Acceptable
- 2 – Needs improvement
- 1 – Needs urgent support

The evaluation process takes place in cycles of five years, where 4–6 supervisors visit schools and do an on-site evaluation for four days. While the WSE has been successfully implemented, there has been criticism regarding its effectiveness as an evaluation tool.

According to the NEEDU Report (2009:17), the WSE as an evaluation tool has revealed some serious shortcomings. According to the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit, the main objective was to review current South African policies, mechanisms, structures, processes and tools designed to evaluate and develop schools and teachers (NEEDU, 2009:17). The following shortcomings were highlighted by the report:

- The nine areas of evaluation are not relevant to the improvement of teaching and learning.
- There is a lack of balance between external evaluation as influenced by past victimisation of teachers by inspectors, and internal evaluation as hampered by a lack of skills and resources;
- It is not clear how the WSE relates to other forms of accountability at schools;
- The external WSE evaluation does not provide support after the evaluation as everything is left to the districts, which often do not do follow-ups.

The above-mentioned shortcomings have made the WSE questionable as an evaluation strategy. In the work of Jansen (2004), the rivalry between teachers' unions and the Departments of Education was a clear indication of the lack of trust between the two

parties on the aims and objectives of the WSE, as unions were vocal in equating it with a disguised inspection system.

The conclusion drawn from the literature on the WSE is that its value as a strategy to enhance school effectiveness is questionable. This gives rise to the need to find an alternative process of enhancing school effectiveness.

3.4.4.2 The Developmental Appraisal System (DAS)

The DAS was developed in 1998 and is contained in the (ELRC) Manual for Developmental Appraisal. The document spells out how teachers are to be appraised and it highlights several aspects, which include (TUT, 2005):

- the development approach to appraisal in education;
- guiding principles of the approach;
- setting up staff development teams;
- the role of appraisal panels.

a) Background

The Manual for Developmental Appraisal sheds light on the definition of developmental appraisal as an objective process of identifying the weaknesses and strengths of individual or groups of teachers; determining to what extent tasks are being carried out; and assessing performance with a view to planning skills-development programmes. It was designed to be developmental, as opposed to the judgemental systems of the past. It is viewed as a transparent and open way of assessing the work of teachers. The process starts by setting up Staff Development Teams (SDTs), which comprise the school principal and elected staff members. An SDT as a democratically elected structure initiates, coordinates and monitors the appraisal process and holds advocacies and workshops to familiarise staff with the appraisal process. The SDT will facilitate the development of appraisal panels, which are composed of:

- the appraisee;
- peer;
- union representative;
- immediate supervisor;
- an external person.

The panel conducts itself in a democratic and transparent manner. All members are expected to collaborate. The panel must deal with emerging weaknesses such as bias or prejudice. The stages of appraisal are the pre-appraisal, appraisal and post-appraisal stages. The pre-appraisal stage is a preparatory stage; that is, setting up panels and clarifying roles.

The appraisal stage involves facilitatory development through collaboration, self-appraisal, peer appraisal and interaction with the panel. During the appraisal process observation is a crucial stage as evidence is collected for job evaluation. During the post-appraisal stage, feedback is given and the strengths and areas of development are identified.

b) Criticism regarding the DAS

While the DAS was favoured by the unions, several studies are said to have criticised it for its ambitious, complex and time-consuming content and instrument (NEEDU, 2009:19). The NEEDU Report highlights the following weaknesses of the DAS:

- that it is assumed that teachers had the skill of reflecting on their work;
- that the DAS was not implemented properly, as the department lacked an effective support mechanism.

The Developmental Appraisal System is a tool that enhances teacher development so that they can effectively teach and facilitate learning. The understanding is that a well-implemented developmental appraisal system could influence teacher effectiveness and consequently enhance SE.

The conclusion drawn from the above discussion is that DAS did not influence the effectiveness of teachers and therefore had little influence on school effectiveness at South African schools.

3.4.4.3 Performance management

According to ELRC resolution 3 (2002), the Performance Management and Development System (PDMS) was developed to improve the performance of public servants. This includes school support officials such as learning facilitators and school management developers (NEEDU, 2009:21).

a) Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

In 2003, the Department of Education decided to integrate the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), Performance Management (PM) and Whole-School Evaluation (WSE) into IQMS. In terms of ELRC collective agreement 8 of 2003, the main purpose of the IQMS was to:

- provide for the specific needs of educators, schools and district offices for support and development;
- provide support for continued growth;
- promote accountability;
- monitor an institution's overall effectiveness; and
- evaluate an educator's performance.

The IQMS process starts with educators doing pre-evaluation and compiling the personal growth plans from which the developmental support group (DSG) – which comprises the immediate supervisor, peer and educator – would draw up a developmental programme. All educator evaluations are synchronised by the school development team (SDT), which draws up schedules and timetables. The PGPs are reconciled into the School Improvement Plan (SIP), which then becomes part of the District Improvement Plan.

The process of evaluation takes place in the classroom for Performance Standards (numbered 1 to 12):

- 1 – the creation of a positive learning environment;
- 2 – knowledge of curriculum and learning programmes;
- 3 – lesson planning, preparation and presentation; and
- 4 – learner assessment/achievement.

Outside-class Performance Standards

- 5 – professional development in the field of work/career participation in professional bodies;
- 6 – human relations and contributions to school development;
- 7 – extracurricular and co-curricular participation;
- 8 – administration of resources and records;
- 9 – personnel;
- 10 – decision-making and accountability;
- 11 – leadership, communication and serving the governing body; and
- 12 – strategic and financial planning.

Performance standards vary in terms of post levels; that is, PL1 has performance standards 1–7, while PL4 goes up to 12. The IQMS is monitored and moderated both internally and externally, limiting the chances of subjectivity and bias. The educator's scores are usually discussed in the DSG and agreed upon. The principal, and finally the District IQMS Official, moderate scores. The Department will then adjust salaries for educators who qualify for a performance increase.

b) Critique of IQMS

According to the NEEDU Report (2009), the performance standards are light on emphasising teaching and learning. For example, issues such as time spent on the task – appropriate use of textbooks and other material, good communication, motivation and the importance of positive feedback – are not covered by the evaluation process.

The report further states that learner attainment (achievement) is not used as a basis for teacher development. The other concern stated in the report is that accountability rests with the teachers and that there is little external monitoring of the actual process due to the assumption that teachers have the technical know-how to reflect on their work. The report further highlights the tension that surrounds the willingness and readiness of teachers to accept and internalise support. There is also the problem of combining developmental appraisal and performance measurement as this could compromise objectivity in that teachers could hide some facts for the sake of a salary increment.

The above discussion and analysis of the WSE, PM, and DA (IQMS) prompts the conclusion that an alternative system is needed to deal with loopholes in the current evaluation system. The NEEDU Report (2009:30) further highlights the following implications:

- The importance of evaluating or appraising the functions of organisations (departments and schools) and responsibilities that relate directly to the core functioning of teaching and learning;
- The need to appoint quality evaluators/appraisers with a high level of professionalism and autonomy (from the departments and schools), and who themselves are subject to the monitoring and assessment of their performance;
- The assurance that school and departmental leadership can act with greater authority in doing the work they are accountable for and with more effective strategies in their supporting work, and that they will be supported in these roles;
- The importance of organisationally separating the function of performance appraisal or management of organisations (school, district) and staff (officials, school-based personnel) from the function of development evaluation or appraisal; these two tasks should be conducted by different agencies;
- The importance of identifying the underlying causes behind the poor school and teacher performance by linking results to their context and to the departmental structures responsible for empowering schools and teachers. In that sense, what should be evaluated are the various levels of the education

systems (national, provincial and district/circuit) and the way they mediate policies and delivery to schools;

- The significance of monitoring the appropriateness of support for schools and teachers with the view to improving it;
- The requirement of aligning all quality assurance (QA) bodies, structures and processes to ensure their coherence and effectiveness at the level of schools and teachers;
- The necessity of developing an effective data-management system to ensure that the different levels of and actors in the education system can access such information for school improvement purposes.

The NEEDU Report (2009) provides the basis for looking at alternative ways of enhancing both teacher and school effectiveness. Point 5 of the above implications refers to the significance of context in addressing ineffectiveness at schools.

The conclusion that could be drawn from the literature on the three systems – the WSE, PM, and DA (IQMS) – is that they were not successful in enhancing school effectiveness at the schools. While implemented, they seemed to have shown some shortcomings, which create the need for an alternative system to enhance school effectiveness.

The next section devotes attention to how school effectiveness is conceptualised in relation to the OBE curriculum. Because of the curriculum changes in the education system of South Africa, it is vital to look at school effectiveness within the context of Curriculum 2005, which was hailed as a curriculum intended to resuscitate the culture of teaching and learning at school (Vermeulen, 1997). It needs to be asked if this laudable aim has been achieved.

3.4.5 School effectiveness and school improvement within Curriculum 2005 and beyond

The implementation of a new curriculum has an effect on school effectiveness and school improvement. According to the Report by the Task Team (DoE, 2009), the new outcomes-based curriculum has some shortcomings, as was pointed out in Chapter 1. The effect of the implementation of OBE has affected school effectiveness negatively to such an extent that the Minister of Basic Education has called for the review of some of the aspects relating to curriculum delivery.

The changes in the educational system since the implementation of Curriculum 2005 in 1997 have resulted in serious changes in teaching and learning. The role of educators and learners has changed dramatically and the way school effectiveness is viewed. For example, according to Kruger (1998), the old curriculum was content-based and teacher-centred, meaning that learners had to assimilate mainly content and teachers were only sources of information. By contrast, Curriculum 2005 is outcomes-based and learner-centred. The difference between the old and the new curriculum is that OBE places more emphasis on the achievement of outcomes and that learning is learner-centred.

The following assumptions are critical to an outcomes-based approach (Kruger, 1998:1):

- All learners can learn and succeed.
- Success breeds success.
- Schools control the conditions of success.

Advocates of OBE thought of it as a means of meeting the needs of all learners, regardless of their environment, ethnicity, economic status or disability. OBE claims to create greater curricular focus, develop better instructional methods and assess a learner's achievement with clarity and validity (Vermeulen, 1997:33). According to Kruger (1998:1), the above are principles or aims that are important for the proper practice of outcomes-based education. However, the above aims and principles were

not accomplished as the implementation of OBE did not result in the expected results and the effectiveness of schools deteriorated instead (Makoelle, 2009).

Schools can only be regarded as effective if the following OBE principles are prevalent in their organisations (Kruger, 1998:1):

- Educators should act as facilitators of meaningful learning.
- Classroom activities should be learner-centred.
- Education should focus on a wide variety of outcomes (knowledge, skills, attitude and values) to be achieved. In other words, the focus should be on the application of knowledge and skills.
- Learning and teaching programmes should be relevant to real-life situations and to the experiences of learners.
- Credit is given for prior knowledge and acquired skills.
- Knowledge and skills are integrated across learning areas in order to prepare learners for real life.
- Learners are expected to think critically, to solve problems creatively, to reason, to reflect, to research and to participate actively.
- Facilitators make use of team and collaborative teaching strategies and learners engage in group/team and pair work.
- Learners construct their own meaning and take responsibility for their own learning.
- Learners determine and work at own pace.
- A wide diversity of learning materials encourages an eclectic approach to take into consideration a wide range of resources with a view to facilitating information relevant to the life-world of the learners.
- Outcomes reached by learners are assessed on a continual basis to give an overall picture of an individual learner's progress.
- Assessment of learners is comprehensive, using a number of assessment techniques and criteria that include the assessment of knowledge, skills and dispositions.
- Assessment is done by learners themselves, the facilitators, peers, parents and other significant people.

The above exposition emphasises the role of teachers as facilitators of learning and learners being responsible for their own learning. Assessment is viewed as a process, not only in the hands of the teachers but involving the parents and the learners themselves.

The analysis of the actual situation at schools contradicted most of the abovementioned aspects assumed to be prerequisites for school effectiveness; hence the review of the OBE system as recommended by the National Task Team.

In the OBE Curriculum, learning is a combination of past and present experiences and should result in the demonstration of outcomes that are relevant to the learner's post-school life. However, this has not been the case as, according to the Task Team Report (2009), learning has become weak at schools, resulting in low school effectiveness.

Kruger (1998:11–12) indicates that OBE differs from the old content-based approach in four main aspects, namely the role of the educator, teaching methodology, the use of learning material, and the assessment of learners. While these differences were articulated in the OBE curriculum, very little improvement has been registered as teaching and learning did not improve; therefore, one is tempted to assume that school effectiveness and school improvement were not improved as a result of the OBE system of assessment.

Effective OBE schools should reflect certain principles. The table below summarises the general features of an effective OBE school (Kruger, 1998:11). The comparison is drawn between the old curriculum and Curriculum 2005 in relation to school effectiveness. The table depicts the ideal situation that could be envisaged theoretically if schools had successfully implemented OBE; however, what the table shows is not the actual reality at schools, meaning that OBE has not changed the level of school effectiveness, as mentioned theoretically in the table.

	Old curriculum	OBE curriculum
Education principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content-based education principles • Teacher transmits information to passive learners. • The classroom and activities are teacher-centred. • The focus is on knowledge of facts, information and syllabus contents • Information in the syllabus is independent of the learner's life-world and experience. • No credit is given for prior knowledge or skills outside the formal education situation. • Rigid, compartmentalised subjects with little or no cross-reference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes-based principles • Teachers are no longer seen as mere transmitters of knowledge, but as facilitators of meaningful learning. • The classroom and activities are learner-centred. • The focus is on wide variety of outcomes (knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes, dispositions and values) to be achieved. In other words, the focus is on the application of knowledge skills. • Learning and learning programmes are relevant to real-life situations and to the experiences of learners. • Credit is given for prior knowledge and skills acquired outside the formal education situation. • Knowledge and skills are integrated across the learning areas in order to prepare learners for real life, where knowledge is seldom compartmentalised.
Methodology (Teaching style)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are often expected to repeat information like parrots and to learn information by rote without the necessary understanding. • Teachers mostly make use of chalk and talk methods and lecturing to impart information. • Teachers are responsible for delivering information and for the fact that learning should take place. • All learners work at the same pace – a pace dictated by the syllabus and the teacher. • The diversity of learner styles and levels of ability are not taken into account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners are expected to think critically, to solve problems creatively, to reason, to reflect, to research and to participate actively. • Facilitators make use of team and collaborative teaching strategies and learners engage in group/team/pair work, as well as activities, debates, experiments, role play, etc. • Learners construct their own meaning and take responsibility for their own learning by being actively involved in research, debates and experiments. • Learners determine and work at own pace – a pace dictated by their unique situation, the barriers to their learning, their levels of ability, etc.
Use of learning materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prescribed textbook (with information often strange to the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide diversity of learning materials encourages an

	life-world and experience of learners) concentrates on delivering the exact contents of the prescribed syllabus.	eclectic approach, taking into account a wide range of resources with a view to facilitating information relevant to the life-world of the learners.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The knowledge of learners is evaluated through rigid time-bound tests and end-of-year exams. • Evaluation of learners' knowledge focuses on retention of facts. • Evaluation is done mostly by individual teachers who mark work and calculate a final result in numerical terms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outcomes reached by learners are assessed on a continual basis to give an overall picture of an individual learner's progress. • Assessment of learners is comprehensive, using a number of assessment techniques and criteria that include the assessment of knowledge, skills and dispositions. • Assessment is done by the learners themselves, the facilitators, peers, parents and other significant people.

Table 3.1: Old curriculum versus new OBE curriculum (Adapted from Kruger, 1998:11)

A careful analysis of the above exposition highlights the gap between what the envisaged states of school effectiveness could have been achieved if OBE had been successfully implemented. The conclusion is that the ideal theoretical state of school effectiveness has not been achieved, leaving a gap to review OBE as recommended by the National Task Team (2009).

The management of OBE at schools is a crucial aspect if schools are to be managed effectively. Grobler, Moloi, Loock, Bisschoff and Mestry (2006) believe that in a culturally diverse school environment, brought about by changes in the education of South Africa, a collaborative management style involving all stakeholders is crucial. The reality at the schools is far from ideal, as purported by Grobler *et al.* (2006). The state of management of OBE has not had a positive influence on school effectiveness and school improvement.

Kramer (1999:161) draws attention to the following 5P model of school management needs in an OBE environment:

- Policy: the school community should exercise an understanding of the policy first; policy governs all activities.
- Processing: these are the enabling, supporting processes that make the school operate effectively and smoothly.
- Property: these are all physical assets belonging to the school which are being used in the teaching and learning process.
- Programmes: these are what and how teachers teach in classrooms.
- People: the most important component of the school: they include parents, educators, learners, departmental officials and the community.

An analysis of the above exposition and comparison with what Kramer (1999) articulates as ideal for managing the OBE environment reveals a sharp contrast as schools in South Africa have not been able to meet all the 5Ps. The reason is that all the policies have not been understood, support to schools has not been adequate, and parental involvement at schools is still lacking, resulting in school effectiveness being less (Christie, 2001).

It is evident that school effectiveness in the outcomes-based approach differs from school effectiveness in the traditional approach. The latter places more emphasis on content and is teacher-centred, while the former places more emphasis on the achievement of outcomes and is more learner-centred. It is imperative that schools are capacitated to deal with the challenges of the new curriculum in order to function effectively and produce good academic results. Rogan (2007) argues that the implementation of OBE was hasty and had a far-reaching effect on the functioning of schools, resulting in teaching and learning problems. This view is also expressed by Makoelle (2009) who points out that the administrative workload brought on by OBE resulted in the reduction of teacher-learner contact time and therefore poor school performance. This influenced school effectiveness negatively.

The DoBE has since realised these shortcomings and, after an intensive review of the curriculum, made the following recommendations with regard to OBE teaching (DoE, 2009):

- Teachers are expected to develop only one file, despite the number of subjects they teach;
- Learner portfolios as separate assessment tools will be discontinued, but assessment will be done;
- The number of projects will be reduced to one per year; and
- Emphasis is placed on the use of textbooks.

The department accepted the recommendations and distributed the newsletter entitled *Curriculum News*, which summarises the details of what teachers were expected to do in their planning of work for 2010 and beyond as part of the implementation process (DoE, 2010). The intention was to attempt to turn around the situation and improve on school effectiveness. On 06 July 2010, the Department of Education further announced a new plan to review the curriculum; that is, *Action Plan 2014: Towards the Realization of Schooling 2025*. The plan intends, among other things, to:

- develop a single, comprehensive and concise curriculum and assessment policy statement per subject and grade;
- establish a coherent curriculum aim and delineate topics and assessments per term;
- develop workbooks for grades 1–6 and reduce subjects in the intermediate phase from eight to six.

The intention is to attempt to turn around the situation and improve on school effectiveness. It would appear that there is currently no uniformity in terms of what is being taught, and the subject content seems not to be clearly defined. This is a move to indicate content specified for different grades and how it should be assessed.

The literature on OBE referred to above suggests that the implementation of OBE has not resulted in the improvement of school effectiveness; indeed, the opposite holds true. It is unclear at this stage if the recommendations of the Task Team as mentioned before will change the circumstances with regard to school effectiveness at schools.

3.4.6 Conclusion

The preceding exposition indicates that school effectiveness and school improvement in South Africa are influenced by a number of factors, which include management, governance of schools, the role of the principal, teachers and how they are evaluated, as well as the effect the implementation of the new curriculum has had on school effectiveness and school improvement. The following section will focus on school effectiveness and school improvement in the context of the Free State Province.

3.5 SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE

The conceptualisation of school improvement and effectiveness in the Free State Province, as in the rest of the country, revolves around learner attainment in examinations. The Free State Department of Education embarked on a holistic intervention programme (HIP) to assist schools that, according to their poor matriculation results, are regarded as ineffective (Free State Department of Education, 2003). The HIP included the following actions:

- Support to schools by the District and Head Office;
- Guidance from School Management and Governance Developers (SMGDs) and Learning Facilitators (LFs);
- Use of mentors to assist principals in the day-to-day running of the schools;
- Retraining of educators in subjects registering a low pass rate;
- Camping : a process where Grade 12 learners are taken to a place where they will be taught separately, usually away from the school campus) of Grade 12 learners to be taught by experienced teachers.

The results of HIP were positive because the Free State Province improved the Grade 12 results from 70% in 2002 to 79% in 2003 (Free State Department of Education, 2003). The number of the so-called dysfunctional schools (ineffective schools) was reduced from 71 in 2001 to 33 in 2002 and to 14 in 2003 (FSDoE, 2003). The overall increase in the matriculation pass rate was widely considered by the Free State

Department of Education as indicating the effectiveness of secondary schools. However, the sudden drop of results in subsequent years proved that the effects of HIP were not sustainable, as other schools' results also began to drop.

From 2004 to 2006, due to the overall drop in the results at some schools, the Free State Department of Education adopted as an alternative to HIP the programme called "Operation Jack-up: an approach to *Sustain, Reverse and Push*" (FSDoE, 2006). The project had two aims: to give ample support (sustain) to schools that were already excelling in terms of matriculation results, and to assist the 67 schools that were categorised as schools at risk (performing satisfactorily but no longer excelling as before) to excel again (reverse). Eleven schools that had been categorised as dysfunctional schools with an attainment level of lower than 20% were subjected to intervention programmes (push) to improve their performance. The matriculation results for 2004, 2005 and 2006 were 78,7%, 77,8% and 72,2%, respectively (FSDoE, 2006). The results showed a decline, despite the improvement strategies by the Free State Department of Education since 2003, with the result that the department abandoned these strategies.

Since 2006, the Free State Department has not adopted any particular improvement strategy, except for introducing measures to ensure improvement at dysfunctional schools (FSDoE, 2009). These measures included the following:

- Emphasis on the Dinaledi Project for Mathematics and Science, its aim being to improve the teaching of mathematics and science at previously disadvantaged schools;
- Adoption of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) to feed learners in poor communities; and
- Provision of winter classes for schools with a matriculation pass rate of less than 40%.

The matriculation results for the three subsequent years were as follows: 2007: 70,5%; 2008: 71,8% ; and 2009: 69,38% respectively– a significant decline from 2003 (FSDoE, 2009). The results declined despite efforts to improve the performance

of schools. Nationally, the 2009 Grade 12 results declined by 2% to 60,7% (DoE, 2009). The number of schools with a less than 20% pass rate is reported to have increased. The results of the improvement projects were therefore not sustainable.

For 2010, the FSDoE emphasised the need to ensure implementation of the QLTC (Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign) project of the National Department of Education. The aim of QLTC was centred on the mobilisation of stakeholders at schools to support and rejuvenate the culture of teaching and learning. The Province has adopted what is called the Provincial Strategy on Learner Attainment (PSLA), which will focus on the following:

- focus on schools that attained a less than 60% pass rate in Grade 12;
- develop SMTs of such schools in leadership and management;
- assist schools to develop school- and subject-development plans;
- regular monitoring of schools by districts;
- structured programmes called ‘twinning’ for schools to share knowledge and expertise;
- curriculum-support sessions for teachers of underperforming schools;
- provide DVDs with exemplar question papers and memoranda; and
- provide extra classes on Saturdays and school holidays.

The announcement by the Minister of Basic Education, Ms A Motshekga, of the *Action Plan: Towards the Realization of Schooling 2025* has been emphasised in the Free State in that the Free State Department of Education has, through their website on curriculum news, announced plans to:

- develop a single, comprehensive and concise curriculum and assessment policy statement per subject and grade;
- establish a coherent curriculum aim and delineate topics and assessments per term;
- develop workbooks for Grades 1–6 and reduce subjects in the intermediate phase from eight to six.

While efforts were initiated provincially to improve teaching and learning at schools as was indicated above, it is appropriate to discuss alternative research efforts in the Province at this stage. During 2006, Khaile and Morrison (2006) initiated a study to develop an index of school effectiveness in the Free State. In their work, they aver that, while acknowledging that it is difficult to measure school effectiveness, certain variables indicating school effectiveness can be identified and used as indicators in measuring school effectiveness. The study was implemented in all five districts of the Free State Province. The project focused on the characteristics of teachers and schools which have an effect on school effectiveness, but it did not look at learner achievement or the characteristics of learners. The main themes used to measure the internal conditions of school effectiveness were:

- teaching and learning;
- leadership and management;
- staff participation and collegiality.

The findings of the study revealed that the evaluation of the condition of school effectiveness could provide the basis for enhancement and development through an index determined by prior evaluation of the condition of school effectiveness. Khaile and Morrison (2006) moreover highlight the fact that, since the end of the apartheid era, the Free State Education Department has taken action to promote effectiveness at schools (apart from those mentioned above). An improvement drive where learning facilitators were appointed as subject advisers to work with teachers in promoting quality teaching and learning was one of these measures introduced. School management and governance developers were also appointed to train school principals in management skills.

Experienced teachers were called from other parts of the world such as the UK to share their expert subject knowledge with local teachers. However, Khaile and Morrison (2006) caution that the process of enhancing school effectiveness in the Free State should be viewed as ongoing and that the outcome of the usage of the index has not been completed. The implementation of all these projects leaves very little evidence of improvement at Free State schools as the discussion of matriculation results over the last few years has indicated.

3.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter gave an overview of the legacy that influenced school effectiveness and school improvement debates in South Africa. School effectiveness was conceptualised by reviewing two recent reports, namely the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) Report (2009) and the School that Work Report (2007), as well as linking quality to SE. The concept *school improvement* was contextualised as a process linked to school effectiveness. The legislative framework on school governance and management as important elements of school effectiveness was highlighted by elaborating in detail on school governance and management within the context of the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 (SASA), which further details the function and roles of the SGB and the principal in relation to governance as an element of school effectiveness.

The evaluation policies of both teachers and schools, namely Whole-School Evaluation (WSE), Developmental Appraisal (DA), Performance Measurement (PM) and Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), were discussed in relation to how they influence school effectiveness, followed by a brief critique of their efficacy as school-effectiveness strategies. The literature on school effectiveness was consulted. The education district as a school support structure that has a profound influence on school effectiveness was also discussed. The analyses of school effectiveness and Outcomes-Based Curriculum 2005 were highlighted, since their implementation had a significant influence on the level of school effectiveness at schools.

The next chapter will discuss the research methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the research methodology used in this thesis, with specific reference to the relevance of the qualitative research approach and the case-study method. The epistemological view adopted in this research is discussed as a theoretical framework for the study. The chapter furthermore discusses population and sampling methods, defines and justifies the choice of data-collection techniques (namely, semi-structured interviews, focus-group interviews and documentary analysis); discusses the data-analysis method; and briefly explains how the data were triangulated. The chapter also clarifies how objectivity, validity, reliability and trustworthiness were maintained in the research, and concludes with a brief discussion of ethical issues and the role of the researcher in the process.

4.2 THE RESEARCH APPROACH OF THE STUDY

4.2.1 Relevance of the qualitative approach for the study

The research approach used in this study was qualitative in nature and based on a number of case studies, each of which is described in detail.

Qualitative research approach is an approach or inquiry that favours a naturalistic setting. It is not driven by theory and hypothesis-testing as major research priorities, but foregrounds the perceptions and experiences of the research participants. As a research and data-collection instrument, the researcher plays a significant role in the researcher-participant relationship (Neuman, 2006).

Qualitative research is intended principally to interrogate both the research process and the end-product of the research. It differs from the quantitative approach in that the process is not aimed at the generalisation of findings but focuses on achieving a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied. The data collected qualitatively are tacit (intuitive) and their reliability and validity depend on what Lincoln and Guba (1985) call 'trustworthiness' (Cresswell, 2003:186).

In the interests of achieving a balanced perspective, it is important to note the essential differences between qualitative and quantitative research approaches. According to Bryman (2001), Blaikie (2000), Neuman (2006) and Cresswell (2003), the difference between these approaches is that qualitative research is inductive, derives meaning from natural occurrences, and studies phenomena in their natural setting. By contrast, quantitative research is deductive, relies mostly on statistical information, and determines causal relationships between variables. Blaikie (2000), referring to data differences, indicates that data collected qualitatively rather than quantitatively use the social actors' views, describe the phenomenon thickly, and is context-bound.

While some researchers often regard qualitative and quantitative research approaches as competing paradigms, researchers such as Cresswell (2003) view them as mutually complementary to the research process. This study, however, used a qualitative research approach because it allowed the study to be conducted in natural settings, where the perceptions and experiences of the researcher and the researched could be taken into consideration for the purposes of understanding and describing the data (Motaboli, 2009). The use of a qualitative approach for this study is further supported by Trochim (2001:154), who argues that other researchers working in the same field choose to do the research qualitatively:

- to generate new theories and hypotheses;
- if there is a need for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon;
- when the researcher is willing to trade details for generalisation of research results;

- when the nature of the research is such that there is a need to be exploratory and inductive;
- the context and perceptions cannot be divorced from reality.

The choice whether or not to undertake qualitative or quantitative research depends on the conditions of the research itself; that is, value is either attached to meaning (qualitative) or numerical statistics (quantitative) by those involved in the research process (Flick, 2006). The nature of the study, its reliance on the knowledge and experience of the participants in the research process, and the willingness of the researcher to engage participants in the research process, often dictate to the researcher to choose a qualitative perspective.

In linking the case-study method with qualitative research, Noor (2008) describes the case-study method as a strategic qualitative method. The relationship between the qualitative research approach and case study mostly stems from the need to generate a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and to take the perceptions and experiences of research subjects into consideration. The goal of the case-study method is therefore to generate meanings to understand the phenomenon being studied (Noor, 2008).

The case-study method is in many instances used together with the qualitative research approach, because the phenomenon is studied in a real-life context. Case studies are mostly concerned with *why* and *how* things happen, clarifying the difference between the context of what was planned and what actually happened during an inquiry. This leads to an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon (Yin, 2003; Noor, 2008).

The next section will provide a detailed description of the case study and its relevance to qualitative research.

4.2.2 Case-study method

The choice of the case-study approach derives from the assumption that reality is socially constructed rather than objectively determined. For the purposes of the current research, there was a need to consider the experiences and perceptions of the research subjects in order to provide a detailed exploratory description of the phenomenon in their real-life context (Yin, 2003). This approach allowed the researcher to achieve a holistic view of the phenomena studied.

It is therefore not surprising to find that a researcher such as Robson (2002:177) defines a case study as ‘the situation, individual, group, organisation or whatever it is that we are interested in’. Barkley (2006) refines this definition by adding that the case study investigates a contemporary phenomenon, especially when there is a thin line between phenomenon and context.

While the case study method has the advantage of considering any particular case in detail, rendering the perceptions and experiences of the research subjects and providing a detailed description of the phenomenon, it is criticised for its lack of scientific rigour and the fact that its findings may not be generalizable. The characteristics of case-study research as articulated by Robson (2002:179) neatly summarise the reasons for choosing the case-study approach for this research:

- It is an approach rather than a method.
- It is concerned with research in a broad sense.
- It relies on empirical evidence.
- It is particular about a specific case.
- It focuses on the phenomenon in context.
- It triangulates data from different sources.

Case studies can be single or multiple (Yin, 1993). This means that a case could be subdivided into multiple smaller units or cases for individual, independent study. This method is ideally suited to studying the cases of the six schools in the Free State Province independently but interrelated within the overall context of the secondary schools in the Province. As each research approach is grounded in a particular view of knowledge acquisition, it is crucial to position and locate the study within a particular epistemological view that sets a theoretical framework for knowing. The next section describes the theoretical framework adopted in this study.

4.2.3 Epistemological view

The epistemological knowledge view (how knowledge is acquired) and ontological reality view (how reality is perceived) are crucial positions in any research inquiry. In this study, these two knowledge views are premised on the fact that knowledge is not produced through an objective researcher who collects facts about the social world and builds up an explanation in a chain of causality (positivism), but that reality is socially constructed rather than objectively determined (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). This view is consistent with the traditions of qualitative and case-study research (Noor, 2008). More recent developments have given rise to what is known as the post-positivist paradigm, which does not consider the causal relationships between facts and measurements to be superior to people's constructions of and the meanings attached to their experiences (Blake, Smeyers & Standish, 2003). This study maintains a *post-positivist* stance rather than a positivist stance for the reasons cited by Neuman (1997:63) and supported by Leedy (1993:141):

- Positivists use quantitative data and adopt experiments, surveys and statistical methods, which often underplay the views of those under study.
- The positivist measures the process of research against its objectivity and excludes the subjectivity.
- The research participants are reduced to statistical numbers.
- Reality is regarded as being 'out there' and measurable.

This research is premised on the assumption that subjectivity cannot be divorced from the process of inquiry (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). The subject has to be listened to, and reality is mediated by the perceptions and experiences in the social world (Niemann, 2000).

This research project therefore shares the opinions of Morris (2006:131) and Blake *et al.* (2003); they are: the critical-theory assumptions that the participants' views are important and should be taken into consideration. These assumptions demonstrate the ontological position adopted in this study:

- All thought is mediated by power relations that are socially and historically constituted.
- There is a reality 'out there', but it is mediated by a socio-historical context.
- Facts cannot be removed from the domain of value.
- Relationships between concepts and objects are never stable and are mediated by capitalist production and consumption.
- Oppression has many faces.
- Positivist research generally focuses on a reproduction of the current status quo.

The above tenets of critical theory are significant in that the research attempts to place the particular situation into perspective and apply a critical perspective to the existing structures and institutions in order to change and improve the conditions. The following are the steps taken to realise this objective:

- The literature on school effectiveness is analysed ideologically with a view to determining how the stakeholders are involved in the ideological position.
- Data are gathered from the key informants; that is, from the principals, teachers, school-management and -governance developers, learning facilitators, school management teams and parents.
- The participants are engaged through interviews to explore their knowledge and understanding of issues around school effectiveness as a phenomenon.

- The research attempts to develop an index of schools on the basis of the contributions by the stakeholders at the schools.
- The participants are engaged in a dialogue to reflect on how well the index could be implemented in their respective school contexts.

The above section discussed the epistemological position adopted in this study; the following section deals with population and sampling.

4.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

4.3.1 *Population*

Population is defined by Neuman (2006:224) as the abstract idea of a large group of cases from which a researcher draws a sample from which results are generalised. Sapsford (2007) adds that *population* means the entire set of objects spoken about and about which generalisations are made. The population in this study therefore comprises all secondary schools in the Free State Province.

4.3.2 *Sampling*

Sample is defined by Neuman (2006:218) as a small set of cases a researcher selects from a larger pool and generalises to the population. For logistical reasons, such as resources and time, only six secondary schools in a selected district of the Free State Province were selected to constitute a sample. The schools in the district were selected purposefully, which means that a sample was constituted according to the availability of subjects rather than on the basis of representativeness (Leedy, 1993).

The sample comprised of three highly effective schools and three less effective schools in terms of learner achievement. Documentary analyses of the six schools were done. The sampling of schools was done in a random manner, using a quota-sampling technique. Neuman (2006:220) describes quota sampling as:

getting a preset number of each of several predetermined categories that will reflect the diversity of the population using haphazard method.

Stringer (2008) and Sapsford (2007) support this definition of quota sampling. Three highly effective schools and three less effective schools were selected on the basis of their matriculation results. Schools with a more than 80% pass rate were regarded as highly effective and schools with a less than 60% pass rate as less effective schools. The 60% and 80% bench-marks were used as a distinguishing factor to highly effective and less effective schools given the Free State provincial average in pass-rates. While these thresholds were used for determining the level of effectiveness in the Free State Province, caution should be exercised as 60% could be regarded as highly effective in other provinces or in other contexts. The results used were culled from the years 2007, 2008 and 2009.

The data received from the six schools and district office can be summarised as follows:

Participants	Place	Number
Principals	Schools	6
SGB focus group	Schools	6
School-management team focus group	Schools	6
School-management and -governance developers	District	4
Learning facilitators	District	4
Total:		26

Table 4.1: Summary of participants

The members of a particular group of participants all had to answer the same questions: six principals (27 questions) (Annexure A); SGB focus-group (18) (Annexure B); school-management team (18) (Annexure D); four learning facilitators (8) (Annexure E); and the school-management and -governance developers (8) (Annexure F).

4.4 INSTRUMENTATION

This research made use of qualitative instruments or techniques – for example, unstructured interviews were conducted with the principals of selected schools, school-management and governance developers, learning facilitators, focus-groups of teachers, school-management teams and school-governing bodies. A documentary analysis of each school was done. All the questions that the various groups of participants had to answer addressed the effect of their respective practices on school effectiveness and improvement:

- The 27 unstructured interview questions (guide) that the principals had to answer focused on identifying aspects of management and leadership.
- The eight SGB focus-group questions (guide) addressed aspects of governance.
- The 18 school-management team focus-group questions (guide) related to aspects of curriculum-delivery.
- The five school-management and -governance developers' interview questions focused on support and development aspects.;
- The eight learning facilitators' interview questions (guide) addressed subject-support aspects.

Questioning was done in the same way and the researcher ensured that the conditions under which questioning took place were suitable by making proper appointments with respondents and choosing appropriate venues for the process.

Documentary analysis was done by scrutinising documents that could provide evidence of the status of school effectiveness and school improvement. Documents were conveniently divided into the following groups (Annexure H):

- School functionality
- Management
- Governance and parent community

- Teaching and learning
- Learner achievement
- School safety
- Resources
- Employee wellness
- Teacher discipline

4.5 DATA-COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

This section gives a perspective on the use of interviews, focus groups, and documentary analysis as data-collection techniques. The section concludes with a detailed discussion of how the data were analysed.

4.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interview is a person-to-person conversation with the objective of exploring the research topic with the research participant (Watts & Ebbutt, 1987; Trochim, 2001; Bryman, 2001; Burton, 2000; Yates, 2004; Cresswell, 2003; Wengraf, 2001). It is therefore important to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of interviews, at the same time highlighting the relevance of the semi-structured interview to this study.

According to Bryman (2001), Denzin and Lincoln (2003), and Bryman and Teevan (2005) interviews are used to collect data for research purposes when:

- the focus on the interviewee's point of view is important;
- a deeper understanding of and insight into the phenomenon is needed;
- flexibility is important for the research process;
- a focus on what people say and how they say it is significant for the inquiry.

According to Bryman (cited in Denscombe, 1998), interviews have both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include the following:

- Interviews aid the memory of the researcher when properly transcribed.
- The data can be thoroughly examined.
- Repeated analyses of data are possible.
- Data can be scrutinised by other researchers.
- The research value (bias) can be checked.
- Data could be used several times.
- Interviews are useful when the participants cannot be observed directly.
- Interviews generate historical information.
- They permit the researcher to control the pace and style of questioning.

The disadvantages of interviews, according to Bryman (cited in Denscombe, 1998), are the following:

- Indirect and unnecessary information could be given.
- They take place at designated places that are not natural settings.
- The researcher's presence could trigger bias.
- People are not always the same in articulating their points clearly.
- Interviews are time-consuming.

A semi-structured interview is a form of interview where participants are asked questions prepared in advance about the research phenomenon. Questions are usually open-ended but could also be closed (Wengraf, 2001). The open questions allow the research participants to give a detailed account of the research phenomenon (Denscombe, 1998). The major advantage of a semi-structured interview is that the researcher can be in control of the interview process and can direct the focus of the interview; however, a semi-structured interview could limit the depth of information the participant is able to give, thus excluding important information (Wengraf, 2001:5).

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews to obtain information on the state of effectiveness of schools. Open-ended questions were asked to allow the respondents to give detailed answers and to share their opinions on the subject (White, 2005). To guide the discussion, the researcher used an interview guide (Annexure A).

4.5.1 Focus-group interviews

According to Babbie (2004:302), a focus group is ‘a group of 12 to 15 people brought together in a room to engage in a guided discussion about some topic’. The same definition is supported by Wong (2008), Krueger (1994), Laws *et al.* (2003), Kelly (1998) and Wilson (1997). Similarly, Kairuz, Crump & O’Brien (2007) indicate that a focus group is a conversation with several people on a specific topic. Groups are not statistically representative but are used for a specific purpose. The focus-group interview technique is used in a research inquiry because it has the following known advantages (Babbie 2004:303):

- It is a socially oriented research method capturing real-life data in a social environment.
- It is flexible.
- It has high face validity.
- It produces speedy results.
- The costs are low.

However, according to Babbie (2004:303), focus-group interviews have the following disadvantages:

- Focus groups afford the researcher less control than individual interviews.
- Data are difficult to analyse.
- Moderators require special skills.
- Differences between groups can be a problem.

- The interview situation must be conducive to discussions.
- It is difficult to constitute groups.

The choice of the focus-group interview was based on the fact that this study was intended to capture a real-life situation, and that flexible data-gathering techniques would expedite the process of collecting data. The focus group allowed subjects to engage freely and share their views during the research process (Colluci, 2007).

To plumb the perspectives of the management teams, school-governing bodies and teachers, the researcher held focus-group interview sessions consisting of one member of the SMT of each school (a total of six) (Annexure D); and a focus group composed of one member of the SGB per school (a total of six) to discuss questions on the interview guide (Annexure B). Teacher-focus groups were also formed by selecting one teacher per school (a total of six) (Annexure C).

4.5.3 Document analysis

Document analysis is a process of looking at the official documents of an institution to gather detailed data on the practices of the institution. Such documents could include public documents, policies, minutes, plans and diaries (Prior, 2008). While it is important to examine the documents, the advantages and disadvantages of document analysis must be noted. Creswell (2003:1 & 3) mentions the following advantages:

- Language and words used by the participants could be learned.
- Data that were thoughtfully designed over a period of time could be analysed.
- Documents serve as written evidence.
- Data could be analysed at a convenient time.

Cresswell (2003:3), as in Denscombe (1998:232), mentions the following disadvantages of document analysis:

- Documents may not be readily available to the public.
- The search for documents might be a difficult process.
- They might need transcribing and scanning for computer use.
- Some documents may be incomplete.
- Some documents may not be authentic.

Documentary analysis was chosen to complement other data-collection techniques and to triangulate the results of the data collected. An analytic comparison between interview data, focus-group data, and documentary-analysis data provided a clear, holistic picture of the research phenomenon under study.

A documentary analysis of each school's management and administration records, whole-school evaluation records, policies, minutes, and the books of all committees was conducted (see Annexure H). These documents assisted in the analytic comparison of data from interviews and focus groups. The views and the opinions expressed in the interviews and focus group were either confirmed or refuted by the analytic comparison of data from documents. The whole-school evaluation records were studied as a guide to all the documents that had to be analysed. Whole-school evaluation is a method used in South African schools by the Directorate of Quality Assurance to evaluate how effective the school is. Documentary analyses were used because they produce data with high validity, as data are readily available and, unlike interviews and observation data, are not prone to manipulation by research subjects. However, documentary analysis data cannot react and could therefore be misunderstood (Mouton & Marais, 1993:79). The following section deals with how the data were collected.

4.6 PROCESS OF COLLECTING EMPIRICAL DATA

The process of collecting empirical data was composed of Preparation Phase, school-based interviews phase, district-based interviews and documentary analysis phase.

a) Preparations phase (two weeks)

The initial preparations were done to obtain permission from the Free State Education Department to carry out the research project, which involved writing an official letter to request such permission (see Annexure G and J).

b) Phase 1: School-based interviews

School-based one-on-one interviews with principals and school-based focus-group interviews were the first phase in the qualitative phase. During this phase, six (6) semi-structured interviews were conducted with each of the six principals of the selected schools ($1 \times 6 = 6$). School-based focus-group interviews with three different focus groups, also purposefully sampled, consisted of six SMT members, six SGB members and six teachers from each school followed. During this phase 18 (6×3) interviews were conducted. In total, 24 ($1 \times 6 + 6 \times 3 = 24$) school-based interviews were conducted during this phase.

(i) Semi-structured interviews with principals

The researcher conducted semi-structured one-on-one interviews with the six principals of the six schools to obtain information on the state of effectiveness of their respective schools. Open-ended questions were asked to allow the respondents to give detailed answers and to share their opinions on the subject. To guide the discussion, the researcher used an interview guide (see Annexure A). A total of six interviews were conducted with the principals, one from each school ($1 \times 6 = 6$).

(ii) Focus-group interview with SMTs, school-governing body members and teachers

To gain insight into the thinking of the groups the following were interviewed:

- The school management team (SMT) which is the top management of the school consisting of principal, deputy principal and heads of department,
- The school-governing body (SGB) which consists of 11 to 14 persons elected democratically to govern the school; that is, seven parents, two teachers, two learners, two non-teaching staff and the principal.
- The teachers.

The focus-group interview sessions were held as follows: six (6) SMT members each per school (see Annexure D); six (6) SGB members each per school (see Annexure B) and six (6) teachers each per school (see Annexure C), this means three (3) focus group interviews per school, meaning 18 focus-group interviews were conducted in total in the six sampled schools (6x3=18).

c) Phase 2 District-based interviews

District-based one-on-one interviews were the second phase in the process. During this phase four (4) school-development and -governance managers (school-management and -governance developers or circuit managers) and four (4) learning facilitators were purposefully selected and unstructured interviews were conducted with them. From the same district, eight (8) district-based one-on-one interviews were conducted in total (4+4 = 8).

(i) Semi-structured interviews with school-management and -governance developers and learning facilitators

The researcher conducted semi-structured one-on-one interviews with four (4) school-management and -governance developers (see Annexure F) and four (4) learning facilitators (see Annexure E) to gather information on the state of effectiveness of the selected schools in the district. School-management and -governance developers are school inspectors who monitor the progress and implementation of government policies at schools, while learning facilitators are specialised professionals who provide subject

guidance to teachers at the schools. The researcher once again used open-ended questions to allow the respondents to provide detailed answers and to share their opinions on the subject. To guide the discussion, the researcher used an interview guide during the interviews with the four school-management and -governance developers and four learning facilitators (see Annexures E and F). The school-management and governance developers and learning facilitators are the ones assigned officially by the education department to work in the six schools participating in the study. A total of eight (8) interviews were conducted with these district officials, four with the developers and four with the learning facilitators from the district ($1 \times 4 + 1 \times 4 = 8$).

(ii) Documentary analysis

A documentary analysis of each school's management and administration records, whole-school evaluation records, policies, minutes, and books of all committees was conducted (see Annexure H). The Whole-School Evaluation records were studied as a guide to all the other documents that had to be analysed. Whole-School Evaluation is a method used in South African schools to evaluate how effective the school is by the standards of the Directorate of Quality Assurance. The following section deals with how the data were analysed.

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS

4.7.1 Qualitative data analysis

According to Blaikie (2000), the data-analysis process in qualitative research must take into consideration that, unlike in quantitative research, the data are concerned with:

- the use of social actors' views, and not with the quantitative measuring of concepts;
- a thick description of the phenomenon, not with the causality of variables;
- social processes, not with generalising findings to a wide population;

- a flexible approach, not with replication or developing theory and concepts.

The analysis of qualitative data, according to Blaikie (2000), therefore takes into consideration the views of participants and the process and context. According to Mouton (2001:108), the aim of data analysis is to understand the components of data and determine the relationship between variables, patterns and themes. Data analysis results in interpretation, which involves synthesising data into a coherent whole.

The researcher attempted to make sense of all the data collected qualitatively; that is, from unstructured interviews, SGB focus-group interviews, and documentary analysis. The researcher used a systematic set of procedures to develop and inductively derive theory about the phenomenon, a principle borrowed from grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:24). The developmental data analysis was characterised by the following series of basic steps (Laws *et al.*, 2003:395):

- **Step 1: Reading and rereading all the collected data**

Reading the data ensured that the researcher was familiar with the data, thus making the process of analysis much easier and more manageable.

- **Step 2: Making a preliminary list of themes arising from the data**

The process of categorising data into themes, referred to as ‘coding’, has been conceptualised by Miles and Huberman (1994) as labels or texts assigned to units of meaning of pieces of data collected. Similarly, Neuman (1997) refers to the process as organising raw data into conceptual categories in order to create themes that will be used to analyse the data. Consequently, the data were categorised into themes.

- **Step 3: Reading the data again to confirm the themes**

It is crucial that data be studied several times to verify that the interpretations are correct and valid. The data were read several times to confirm the themes.

- **Step 4: Linking themes to quotations and notes**

The researcher then wrote themes next to the quotations and notes while examining the data.

- **Step 5: Examining and interpreting the categories of themes**

From the meaning attached to the interpretations of themes, logical conclusions were drawn.

4.7.2 Presentation of data

Data from the interviews were transcribed, analysed, and briefly discussed. The participants (principals, school-management and -governance developers, focus-groups of SMTs, and SGBs were all given alphabetic codes (e.g. A, B, C etc) as part of the ethical procedure. In this thesis, the data from documentary analyses are presented in tabular form, where the results of each analysis are presented. The data from documentary analysis are presented according to the following topics, as they are the critical areas which schools are organised into:

- functionality
- management
- governance
- teaching and learning
- learner achievement
- school safety
- resources
- employee wellness
- teacher discipline.

In each case, the table contains columns for the type of document and discussion of the evidence found.

4.7.3 Data triangulation

Data triangulation means to support the findings of the empirical research by using data from different sources (Denscombe, 1998; Leedy, 1993; Flick, 2006; White, 2005). Triangulation is used in this study to elucidate the research process – as Neuman (2006) avers, studying a phenomenon from different angles provides a clearer understanding and perspective.

Terre Blanche & Durrheim (1999) believe triangulation is the process of collecting material in as many ways and from as many diverse sources as possible. In this research project, the data are triangulated from the literature, semi-structured interviews, focus-group interviews and documentary analysis. The triangulation was done by analysing how each set of data answered the research question. For example, one of the research questions is: Which factors contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools in the Free State?

The subsequent analysis considered each set of data in relation to the question. The findings are presented in relation to the themes that guided the collection of data; that is:

- management , leadership and administration
- curriculum
- governance
- support structures

4.8 OBJECTIVITY, RELIABILITY, VALIDITY, TRUSTWORTHINESS AND ETHICAL ISSUES RELATED TO THE STUDY

There are competing notions between quantitative and qualitative researchers about how to measure qualitative research results. The reason is that most of the findings of a qualitative research investigation are the results of a naturalistic observation of the object of study as lived and experienced by the participants (White, 2005:199). According to

Niemann *et al.* (2000), what constitutes a weakness in qualitative research is indeed a strength in quantitative research and vice versa. Qualitative researchers believe that the object should speak for itself, while quantitative researchers usually quantify responses in statistical graphs and scales.

4.8.1 Objectivity

Quantitative researchers define objectivity as ‘the results of the regimented, impartial or unbiased and value-free way in which it [the research] is conducted’ (White, 2005:199).

Sapsford (2007) further elucidates the above definition by indicating that validity indicates the extent to which conclusions drawn from data are logical. Objectivity is attained only when standardised methods are used, usually from a distance, for example by means of questionnaires. The input (subjectivity) of the participant is not valued (Niemann *et al.*, 2000), unlike in the case of qualitative researchers who value the input and experiences of the participants. Participants in the current research study were allowed to have a say in the research process. Objectivity in this study was maintained by ensuring that all the data were collected systematically and that all the contributions and experiences of the participants were represented by recording and transcribing them for analysis.

4.8.2 Reliability

Reliability means the extent to which repeated measurement yields constant results over the same period, or when the same instruments are used (Sapsford, 2007). Quantitative researchers are more interested in the accuracy, stability and consistency of the research than that the research should be repeatable (White, 2005:200). By contrast, qualitative researchers are more interested in:

- Internal reliability: how systematically and reliably the internal research processes have been carried out. Internal reliability is usually attained by the following internal research processes:
 - Triangulation: using different methods to collect data.
 - Member check: verifying the contents of the data with participants.
 - Auditing: verification of findings by an independent person.
- External reliability: the ability of the research to be transferred to another context. This is achieved by giving a thick description of processes and justifying the decisions and choices made with regard to the process, instruments and participants (Bryman & Teevan, 2005).

Reliability of the instruments was ascertained in this study by ensuring that the questions were clear and meant the same to all respondents. While other authors such as Marshall (1997) and Oppenheim (1992) assert that the level of reliability cannot be optimal, the indication is that each study must endeavour to attain the highest level of both validity and reliability.

4.8.3 Validity

A quantitative researcher wants to establish a causal link between variables and qualitative research; on the other hand, he or she determines the validity of the research by examining how systematic the process was by way of specialised methods and techniques (Motaboli, 2009). Qualitative-research validity is judged in two dimensions (Bryman & Teevan, 2005):

Internal validity – the process through which the believability of the research is tested. This is achieved through the evaluation of content by conducting a member check, conducting an audit trail, and by triangulating the data collected. White (2005) draws attention to the notion of logic validity, which means to ensure that the research is representative, that a participant can supply the needed

information, and that the systematic analysis of data is assured by not suppressing the ‘voice’ of the participant – that is, using participant words as they are.

- External validity – the process whereby the results of the research could be applied in another context (generalisation). This is achieved through a thick description of the research process and context and the justification of methods used (Trochim, 2001).

The validity of this study was maintained by ensuring that appropriate methods and techniques had been employed in such a way that other researchers have a step-by-step guide to how conclusions were arrived at.

The criteria suggested by Trochim (2001) for determining the quality of a qualitative research process appear to be similar to what Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to as trustworthiness.

4.8.4 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), means how persuasive, systematic and rigorous the process of inquiry has been and whether the research findings are convincing and believable. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest the following criteria for determining the trustworthiness of the process of inquiry:

- Truth value: the truthfulness of the findings;
- Applicability: how far the findings could be applied to other contexts;
- Consistency: how far the process could be repeated;
- Neutrality: how far bias was controlled in the process of inquiry.

Trustworthiness is achieved by ensuring the credibility of the process of inquiry. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), enhancing credibility requires that the following procedures are included in the inquiry process:

- prolonged engagement with the participant, giving sufficient time for involvement with the site and building good relationships with participants; the researcher should avoid bias and be alert to misinformation;
- persistent observation by providing an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study, sorting out irrelevant information and avoiding deception;
- triangulation by gathering data from different sources to support the findings.

To assess trustworthiness in this research, the researcher determined credibility by representing the experiences of the participants as accurately as possible through intense observation and member checking; that is:

- Member checks were done by means of open dialogue with the participants on the nature of the data.
- To evaluate transferability, the researcher provided a thick description of the research process by giving the finer details of all aspects observed.
- To assess dependability, the researcher conducted a dependability audit, checking whether all the processes were handled properly, and by giving a thick description of each process.
- To test conformability, the researcher reflected on the research process together with the participants by way of open conversation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

4.8.5 Ethical issues

Denscombe (1998: 141) indicates that social research should be ethical in that it respects the rights and dignity of the participants, avoids harm to the participants, and operates with honesty and integrity. The research process, which involves people, may sometimes cause ethical dilemmas. Campbell and Groundwater-Smith (2007) mention three challenges that could constitute a dilemma in the research process:

- confidentiality of information;
- transparency of results;
- third-party involvement.

It is important that participants remain anonymous in the research as the information generated by the study could harm the integrity of the participants if not treated with confidentiality. The extent to which the research will keep this anonymous constitutes a major challenge to researchers.

The transparency of the research process as opposed to the confidentiality of information constitutes a challenge to researchers as consent forms might have been signed to protect the participants. There is usually the interest of a third party involved in the research, for example funders, or the Department of Education if the research is done at schools. To uphold the promise made during the signing of consent forms and conveying results, no matter how unpleasant, to the third party, could constitute a serious dilemma.

4.8.5.1 *Dealing with dilemmas*

Campbell and Groundwater-Smith (2007) suggest the following in dealing with dilemmas:

- To deal with confidentiality problems information must be kept the information private.
- It is advisable to be transparent while respecting the ethical concerns of practitioners.
- The Third-party interest is kept out of the process, noting the interest of, say, the school authorities.

The following are ethical precautions the researcher took to guard against the ethical dilemmas:

- **Researcher:** TM Makoelle is the researcher working with a research task team at the designated school. The researcher is supervised by an experienced professor of education deeply versed in conducting research of this nature.
- **Nature of the study:** the study involves interviewing people, and therefore a guarantee was given that no physical, psychological, legal, or social harm would be incurred by the participants. The latter were informed of all procedures to be used during the research process; there was no attempt to deceive anyone.
- **The research participants:** the participants were recruited purposefully; no-one was forced to take part in the study. No incentive was given to any participants for the time they devoted to the study. At no stage were any incentives used to bribe the participants so that their actions would advantage the researcher. The participants were informed at an official meeting about the research procedures and then requested to sign the consent form (Annexure A) if they agreed to the research procedure. The researcher indicated at that meeting that everyone was free to quit the study at any time. The participants were all appointed principals, SMGDs, LFs, teachers, registered learners and elected school-governing body members at the schools.
- **Material:** the tape recorder that was used for the interviews was checked and certified safe by a qualified technician. Where participants were against being recorded, a note-taking system was used as an alternative.
- **Confidentiality:** the researcher endeavoured to keep the information as confidential as possible by not letting anyone have access to it. For the sake of the data, the participants were given alphabetic codes, for example Teacher A or B. The data collected were used for the purposes of doctoral research, and no reference to a school name or to the names of participants was made in the thesis; only code names were used.
- **Debriefing:** as no deception had taken place, the purpose of a debriefing session was to remove any misconceptions or anxieties that might have arisen from the research process.

4.8.5.2 *The role of the researcher*

The researcher was the interviewer and he endeavoured to avoid imposing his ideas upon the participants. This ensured that the interview would capture the real facts in the words and language of the participants. All the ethical matters pertaining to the study were respected. Firstly, all authors whose work was used were acknowledged. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the appropriate consent forms had been duly completed. Care was taken that the participants should not be disadvantaged or the researcher privileged. The anonymity of the participants was guaranteed. Potential threats to the validity and reliability of the study were identified and addressed.

4.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an overview of the research methodology used in this study by explaining why the qualitative approach was chosen and why this approach is fundamentally relevant to the study. A brief overview of the case-study method was given, followed by an explanation of the epistemological view adopted in this research as a theoretical framework or basis for the study. The chapter furthermore defined and discussed the constructs of population and sampling; highlighted the choice of data-collection techniques and data-analysis methods used; and clarified how the validity, reliability and trustworthiness of this research were maintained. The chapter concluded with a brief discussion of ethical issues and the role of the researcher.

The following chapter deals with the results, discussions, analysis, and interpretations of the empirical research.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

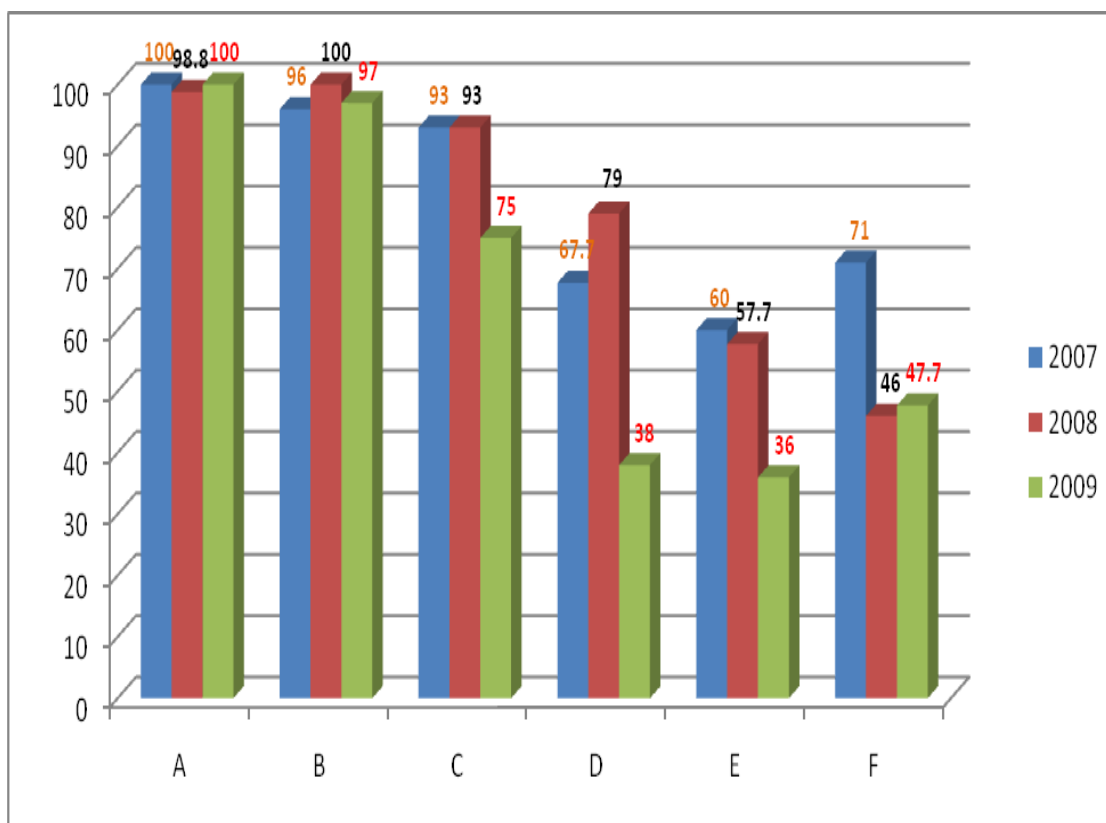
5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides feedback on the data-collection process in the form of the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the research results obtained from both phases of the study (that is, from interviews conducted as well as from documentary analysis).

The performances of the schools taking part in the project are represented in a histogram depicting their percentage pass rates. The aim is to compare their perceived effectiveness with their learner attainments in Grade 12. The chapter also gives:

- the results of the semi-structured interviews conducted with the principals, focus-group SMT members, focus-group SGB members and teachers, learning facilitators, and school-management and governance developers;
- the results of the data (analysed per question) culled from the interviews;
- an analytic discussion and interpretation of the results.

In analysing data, the researcher read and reread the transcripts, identified the preliminary themes, classified the quotations according to theme; discussed the quotations and made an analytical comparison to arrive at an interpretation and conclusion. The chapter furthermore tabulates the results of the comparative documentary analysis of the performance of highly effective schools A, B and C, on the one hand, and less effective schools D, E and F, on the other hand.



Grade 12 Results of 2007, 2008 and 2009

Figure 5.1: Attainment profiles of schools involved in the project for a three-year period (Adapted from FSDoE, 2009)

The attainment profile (see Figure 5.1 above) of the schools taking part in the project was given and used as a criterion or as a yardstick to differentiate between highly effective and less effective schools. Schools A, B and C are regarded as highly effective schools, while schools D, E and F are regarded as less effective schools. The summary of results of the empirical study began with a) the discussion of transcripts of the semi-structured interviews with the principals, focus-group interviews with SMT, teachers, and SGB members; b) the semi-structured interview results of the learning facilitators, school-management and -governance developers; c) and finally the documentary analysis of all six schools. The themes in Table 5.1 below were derived from data culled from the semi-structured interview and focus-group interviews. Other questions were based on the opinions of the principals, the SMT, the SGB, school-management and -governance developers, and learning facilitators, and were added to the list of interview schedules: The following table shows how each theme was addressed:

Theme	Who was asked questions to this effect
Management, leadership and administration	Six principals and SMT focus group
Curriculum	Teachers' focus group
Governance	SGB focus group
Support structures	Four learning facilitators Four school-management and -governance developers

Table 5.1: Themes derived from data

Each theme was sub-divided into the following sub-topics:

Theme	Sub-topics
Management, leadership and	<p>Principals Sub-topics for this theme are: planning, the year plan, management style, professional development of teachers, induction, mentoring, motivation, parent involvement, marketing, conflict-management, delegation, decision-making, quality management, strategic management, communication, principal's diary, interpersonal relations, extracurricular plan, employee wellness, inclusive education, performance review on the local management level.</p> <p>SMT Sub-topics for this theme are: planning, year plan, management style, professional development of teachers, induction, mentoring, motivation of staff and learners, parental involvement, control of work, conflict-management, decision-making, communication, collaboration, record-keeping, assessment, learning facilitators' visits, involvement in school management, employee wellness and performance review on by SMT members</p>
Administration	Sub-topics for this theme are: registers, stock control, hospitality (visitors), admissions, attendances (learners and teachers), filing system and communication

Table 5.2: Sub-topics of Theme 1 (Management, leadership and administration)

It is important to mention that, for the purposes of the study, the management levels above were divided into local management and middle management. The information provided sheds light on factors influencing school effectiveness and improvement,

both at schools in general (local) and within a particular department (middle), in order to provide an in-depth analysis of the impact of both and their contribution to school-effectiveness and improvement.

Theme	Sub-topics
Curriculum	Sub-topics for this theme are: work plan, choice of subject content, learning-programme design, assessment, inclusive education, record-keeping, teaching methods, motivation of learners, professional development, collaborative teaching, learning facilitators' support, management of stress, classroom discipline

Table 5.3: Sub-topics of Theme 2 (Curriculum)

Theme	Sub-topics
Governance	Sub-topics for this theme are: duties, school-development plan, meeting programme, conducting meetings, policy development, project management, learner discipline, parental involvement, vision and mission, teacher recruitment, extra-curricular plan, cleanliness of grounds, financial management, fundraising, school safety, school-based support team (BST) (inclusion), conflict-management, school committees.

Table 5.4: Sub-topics of Theme 3 (Governance)

Theme	Sub-topics
Support structures	<p><u>Learning facilitation</u> Sub-topics for this theme are: identification of subject areas of development, planning intervention, in-service training, resource provision, understanding NCS (policy), subject workshops.</p> <p><u>School-management development</u> Sub-topics for this theme are: identification of management areas of development, planning intervention, progress assessment tool.</p>

Table 5.5: Sub-topics of Theme 4 (Support structures)

It was important to distinguish between the learning facilitators and school-management developers in the above table, as the former focused on the curricular issues and the latter on the management issues and because these issues influence school effectiveness and improvement from different perspectives.

5.2 PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA OBTAINED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

5.2.1 Personal interviews with principals

The analysis of the principals' interviews was done per questions asked. The principals are referred to as the principals of schools A, B, C, D, E and F. Data are presented in the form of a discussion, followed by an interpretation and extracts from the responses to support the analysis and interpretation. The purpose of the questions was to identify which factors, according to the principals, enhanced school effectiveness and school improvement at their schools. The following analysis compares the responses of two groups of principals; that is, from the highly effective schools and less effective schools.

5.2.1.1 As the manager of the school, how do you go about planning your work?

a) Discussion

The principals of schools A, B, C and D all indicated that it was necessary to have a year plan drawn up at the beginning of the year, while the principals of schools E and F seemed somewhat unsure whether the year plan at their school worked or not. The principals of schools A, B and C also indicated that a year plan should give some indication of the intended aims, objectives, and organisation of the school and how the resources would be organised and utilised.

b) Interpretation

While the majority of principals indicated that a year plan was necessary and should be aimed at achieving some goal, the principals of highly effective schools know how it should be done; that is, in advance, with aims and objectives and detailing the availability of resources. In support of this, principal A said:

“[We]have to plan for the day, term and the year; this means determining daily objectives, medium-term plan and long-term plan, then organise resources both human and physical, lead by giving clear direction and instructions, then making a follow-up to see that they are carried out.”

There is a lack of knowledge of year planning on the part of less effective schools; for example, the principal of school F had this to say:

“We have not done the year plan although the SMGD said we must; we are looking for a template to use.”

5.2.1.2 How do you plan for the year?

a) Discussion

The principals of schools A, B and C consult with stakeholders before drawing up the year plan, while the principal of school D does it on his own but consults later. The principals of schools E and F do it entirely on their own.

b) Interpretation

The principals of highly effective schools A, B and C believe in consultation with stakeholders before going about developing the year plan. For example, the principal of school B said:

“We meet as the SMT and review our successes and failures for the past academic year, then draw [up] a priority list for the new academic year. We then request the itineraries of committees and departments and their priorities as well and consolidate that into a year plan. The year plan will have activities to be done, when, by whom and how feedback will be reported.”

By contrast, the principals of less effective schools D, E and F do not consult with stakeholders. Indeed, less effective schools exhibit less consultation with stakeholders during the drawing up of a year plan; hence the following statement by an acting principal:

“We have not had the year plan since the principal left, so, I am only acting as principal; so, I am still learning how things have to be done.”

5.2.1.3 Which management or leadership style do you use and why?

a) Discussion

The principals of schools A, B and C believe that a democratic management style is important and effective. The principal of school D agrees but feels it is necessary to be autocratic at times. The principals of schools E and F use an autocratic management style.

b) Interpretation

The principals of highly effective schools use a democratic management style, which is contrary to the autocratic style of management prevalent at less effective schools. The understanding of what a democratic management style means to the principals of highly effective schools is the participation of others at school; for example, principal A said:

“I use the democratic or participatory management style, to involve all stakeholders in the planning, organising, leading and control of all our activities as a school because it encourages teamwork.”

Evidence of autocratic management styles at less effective schools is confirmed by the statement of the principal of school E:

“Here I can only be autocratic because people are not happy with me acting, so I try to be diplomatic or inclusive to some extent, but to get this school running I have to put my foot on the floor.”

5.2.1.4 How do you ensure the professional development of your teachers?

a) Discussion

The principals of schools A, B, C, D, E and F all use a developmental appraisal system to develop teachers. The principals of schools A and C use workshops, the developmental appraisal, and the mentoring system. The principal of school B indicated that he used peer teaching to complement the appraisal system. There is a belief at schools D, E and F that the developmental appraisal does not work, the only system they use to develop teachers.

b) Interpretation

While the majority of principals use developmental appraisal to develop teachers, the principals of highly effective schools have initiated extra measures to develop teachers; for example, one suggested collaboration and mentoring while another suggested forming peer groups based on experience. Principal A said:

“We hold workshops for teachers in various subjects and as colleagues share our experiences. We appoint experienced teachers as mentors for newly appointed teachers and we induct new members to the staff.”

Principal B affirmed and supported this practice, stating:

“...sometimes we pair teachers on a subject,[an] experienced with a less experienced teacher, to help one another.”

This implies that highly effective schools use different ways of staff development, for example team development and mentoring. However, the IQMS is the sole teacher-development strategy at less effective schools, but even this is not used properly, as there is a general understanding that it is not effective.

5.2.1.5 How are new teachers inducted? What method do you use to improve the performance of your teachers? If so,how?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B, C, D, E and F have induction as the work of the HODs. School A has briefing induction sessions and collaborative teaching to induct and improve teacher performance. School B uses mentoring to induct and improve performance. School C uses subject committees to induct and improve the performance of teachers. School D believes HODs are responsible. No evidence for induction exists at schools E and F.

b) Interpretation

While the majority of schools believe that induction of new teachers is the work of an HOD, there is a strong indication of collaboration and mentoring by experienced teachers at highly effective schools. Various methods of induction are used as confirmed by the principal of school A:

“We plan the developmental appraisal plan. Teachers identify together with their HODs the areas that need development; then consolidate those in a programme that we start in the first term until the third term. The areas are developed via classroom visits by teacher peers, their

HODs and sometimes we request the LFs. We hold workshops for teachers in various subjects and as colleagues share our experiences. We appoint mentors of experienced teachers for newly appointed teachers and we induct new members to the staff.”

Induction at less effective schools is understood as the duty of departmental officials, but even so teachers of less effective schools are not inducted; for example, the principal of less effective school E stated:

“The HODs are supposed to be doing the induction of new teachers, but I doubt whether they are doing it. We have tried several things to improve the performance of teachers but the attitude is not positive, so only intervention from learning facilitators seemed to work.”

5.2.1.6 Do you regard motivation of learners and teachers as important? If so, how do you go about motivating them?

a) Discussion

All schools communicate with learners as a method of motivation. Schools A, B and C also use reward in the form of certificates. School A goes further by inviting professionals and universities to come and motivate learners. The principal of school B encourages parents to motivate learners at home as well. School C uses former students to address current learners. Schools E and F motivate learners verbally.

b) Interpretation

While most schools do attempt to motivate their learners, highly effective schools tend to use different methods such as rewards, external agents, parents, and previous learner talks. The following statement by the principal of school A attests to this:

“Yes, I talk to the learners at the assembly every Monday and Friday; I encourage teachers to do so in their classes. We normally invite

professionals who are successful in their work to address learners on how they succeeded. We invite the two universities' representatives to address learners about the careers and courses at varsity. We give rewards, certificates and trophies to those who work hard academically and [excel] in sport and leadership.”

The indication at less effective schools is that little motivation exists and is done mainly verbally and infrequently. The following statement by the principal of school F supports this:

“We can only talk to learners; I think they do not listen to us.”

5.2.1.7 How do you ensure motivation and the involvement of parents?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C involve parents as a way of motivation. School A goes further to provide good treatment to parents. School C listens to the parents, while at schools D, E and F much less motivation of parents takes place.

b) Interpretation

While most schools do involve parents as a form of motivation, highly effective schools believe in listening to parents and providing opportunities to welcome them; for example, the principal of highly effective school A said:

“The SMT and I, we invite parents to school as part of them being part of us, say, regarding learner discipline or social needs. Parents are treated well at our school. We plan parents' evening meetings per grade, where we introduce ourselves to them and share social moments. The SGB and myself ... try always to listen to the voices of parents and involve them in school functions.”

The indication at less effective schools is that of a lack of motivation on the part of the parents, non-attendance at school activities, and a lack of parental involvement; for example, the principal of school E said:

“There has been a very low motivation of parents at this school to take part in school activities; I think parents are not happy about the performance of the school.”

5.2.1.8 How do you market your school?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C use a newsletter to market their schools, relying on the performance of the school for marketing. School B has a prospectus and School A gives leaflets to visitors. School B uses newspapers to market school activities. Schools A and C maintain good relations with local businesses for sponsorship, while schools D, E and F have no evidence of doing any marketing themselves.

b) Interpretation

Highly effective schools use printed newsletters to market themselves, and their performance enhances their marketing strategy. The principal of highly effective school A said:

“I believe the most important marketing principle is that the school must do well ...”

The other indication is that less effective schools do very little marketing. Poor results have negative marketing effects, according to the principal of school F:

“I think it will take us some time to change the mindset of the public about the school ...”

Indications are that highly effective schools have excellent marketing skills, as opposed to less effective schools. Marketing at highly effective schools enhances their image and consequently their ability to perform.

5.2.1.9 Do you experience conflict at your school? If so, how do you deal with it?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B, C, D, E and F do experience conflict. Schools A, B and C negotiate to solve problems. Schools A, B and C avoid minor conflict situations. Schools D, E and F mainly use coercion (force) in resolving conflict.

b) Interpretation

Conflict exists at all the schools. However, it is addressed in different ways. Highly effective schools use negotiation to address conflict while, by contrast, less effective schools use coercion. The principal of highly effective school B had the following to say:

“The most frequently used approach to deal with conflict is to call parties that are at conflict with each other and have talks or negotiations, firstly by listening to both sides and try to get consensus.....”

The principal of less effective school E indicated that:

“Law is the only solution to conflict; just talking does not help.”

The indication is that conflict is resolved amicably at highly effective schools, not by using force, but by means of negotiation and the reaching of consensus. The use of force at less effective schools seems counter-productive.

5.2.1.10 How do you go about controlling the work of your teachers?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B, C, D, E and F tend to allocate the control of work to all the SMT members. Schools A, B and C all do documentary control of work by means of portfolios. School A conducts IQMS class visits as part of control and reporting about control, which occurs at all levels of management (also dialogical). School E was not clear about the method they used.

b) Interpretation

All schools exercise some form of control of work by SMT; however, highly effective schools have regular documentary and classroom observations. Reports about work are discussed and a follow-up meeting takes place to correct an unbecoming situation. The following is an example of how the principal of highly effective school A exercises control:

“HODs submit their reports to the deputy principal for monitoring, and feedback is given at the general SMT meeting. Dissatisfying cases are reported to me; then I call those teachers to the office for counselling and often agree if the case is serious to involve the LF.”

Control of work at less effective schools is not done properly; they appear to be resistant to the idea of work control and therefore refuse to cooperate. The following statement by the principal of school F sums up the situation:

“The HODs do control of work but, you see, some teachers do not cooperate; therefore, control can't be effective.”

5.2.1.11 Do you sometimes delegate official duties to your co-managers? If so, how do you go about it?

a) Discussion

At schools A, B, C, D, E and F, delegation is based on a division-of-duties' list. At schools A, B and C, delegation depends on capability, experience and familiarity with the job. At schools D and E, delegation is tied to seniority. School E has a problem with SMT members not wanting to be fully involved.

b) Interpretation

There is a strong indication from highly effective schools that work is delegated on the basis of capability, experience and familiarity with the delegated task. The principal of highly effective School A said:

“I firstly assess the capabilities of my co-workers; then I choose the most suitable one based on experience. But [for] some of the duties I already know who is good, so I request them do it. However, at poorly performing schools, delegation is based on the division of duties [and work is assigned] in an equitable manner to co-managers.”

Delegation at less effective schools involves dividing up the work among the managers, regardless of capability. The following statement by the principal of less effective school E illustrates this:

“Yes, we have a duty list for SMT members, but some of the SMT members I think they deliberately do the minimum, because they are not happy that I am acting as principal.”

The indication is that highly effective schools consider the ability and skills of the person to do work prior to delegation, as opposed to less effective schools. This influences the performance of delegated tasks positively.

5.2.1.12 How do you take decisions at your school?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C consult with stakeholders before a decision is taken. They all consider the issues about which a decision is to be taken. School A weighs up options in the process. Schools D and E tell their ideas to the stakeholders, while school F has a problem of lack of participation in the decision-making process.

b) Interpretation

While all schools make decisions, highly effective schools regard consultation and the weighing up of options as important for the decision-making process; this is supported by the statement of the principal of school C:

“I have a consultative decision-making procedure; for any academic issue it’s always good to consult with SMT and teachers, governance SGB, school-management and -governance developer or learning facilitator and read departmental policy.”

On the other hand, less consultation about decisions occurs at less effective schools.

The principal of school D said:

“I take decisions with my SMT and we try and sell it to the staff but sometimes because of negative attitudes we just continue.”

The indication is that, at highly effective schools, consultation is important to decision-making processes, as opposed to at less effective schools. Consultation enhances the decision-making process.

**5.2.1.13 Do you use any quality management system in your approach?
If so, how?**

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C use Quality Management to check if their work is qualitative. They use measures such as best allocation for the job, defining criteria for the quality (school A), and checklists (school B). Schools D, E and F rely on the outside intervention of a Quality Checklist by learning-facilitator, school-management and governance developers.

b) Interpretation

The data indicate that highly effective schools have internal means of controlling quality; for example, the principals of schools A and B stated:

“We put in place quality check measures. In our objectives, we often provide the specific criteria for the quality of the task to be done.”

“We do have some checklists we have to check if our work is of the required standard, I think this is Total Quality Management.”

Less effective schools, on the other hand, rely on outside quality checks by departmental officials. The following statement by the principal of school E confirms the notion:

“Teachers at this school are not for any idea of checking the work if it is not in line with the IQMS; they are not for any interference with their work, so we can only call learning facilitators to come and check if the work is up to standard.”

The indication is that highly effective schools have quality-enhancing measures, which are mostly internal, while less effective schools do not have any but rely on the official departmental quality system of measurement. The quality measures at highly effective schools affect their quality positively.

5.2.1.14 Do you use a strategic-management approach? If so, how?

a) Discussion

Schools A and B do have a strategic understanding in that school A sets five-point strategic plans for the year, while school B draws up a strategy for each of the school activities. School C applies strategic thinking, but only with regard to one single aspect: matriculation results. Schools D, E and F do not have a strategic system in place, but seem to be overwhelmed by crisis management.

b) Interpretation

Highly effective schools understand what strategic management entails. The principal of school B stated:

“Yes, we set every year five strategic points that we intend channelling our resources and energy towards; for instance our goal for 2007 was to reach the ‘top 50’ school category with the matric results. We had to have a strategy to do that. We embarked on several strategic activities to achieve that goal and we did.”

There is very little knowledge about strategic management at less effective schools. The principal of school F indicated the following:

“I wouldn’t say we have a strategic management approach, but we do crisis management.”

The indication is that highly effective schools do practice strategic management, as opposed to less effective schools. The strategic management of highly effective schools have a positive effect on their performances.

5.2.1.15 How do you deal with communication at your school?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B, C, D, E and F hold meetings to communicate. They all use circulars and the telephone as a mode of communication. However, schools A and B prefer the internet for communication. There seems to be a communication problem at school E due to poor interpersonal relations and mistrust among teachers.

b) Interpretation

While all schools use spoken and printed systems of communication, the data suggest that varied methods of communication enhance communication at highly effective schools. For example, the principal of school A said:

“We deal with communication in three ways; firstly, holding meetings with stakeholders and communicating verbally and recording our discussions. Secondly, we communicate in writing, using letters; thirdly, we use circulars and documents from the department of education. Communication is between the school’s stakeholders and the outside agencies, e.g. [the] department. We are now besides the telephone beginning to use the internet email system, but we have not established our website yet; we intend doing that in the future.”

Less effective schools rely on verbal communication without exploring other ways. Verbal communication, if used on its own, has some negative implications for the effective running of the school; for example, the principal of school F stated:

“... sometimes teachers claim that they have not heard about things, even if we did inform them.”

It is evident that highly effective schools have varied ways of communication, while poorly performing schools do not. The varied methods of communication impact positively on the communication systems of highly effective schools.

5.2.1.16 Do you often receive visitors at your school? If so, who visits and how do you deal with them during the visit?

a) Discussion

All schools receive visitors but have a restriction upon who sees the learners. Schools A, B and C insist on an appointment, except for departmental officials. Schools A and B have control systems for visitors; that is, a Visitors' Book and a Logbook. School A gives permission by means of a visitor's tag; school E regards visitors as a disturbance if they visit the school during school hours; and at schools D, E and F there seem to be no clear guidelines on the matter.

b) Interpretation

While most schools receive visitors, highly effective schools emphasise the significance of a specific way of regulating the visitors; for example, the principal of school B said:

“They firstly have to set up an appointment through the secretary before they come, especially if they want to see the staff and the principal. Upon arrival, they sign the visitors' book and are given the visitors' tag to display ...”

Less effective schools do not have clearly defined procedures, as is evident from the following statement by the principal of School E:

“... but other visitors are welcomed after school because we try to minimise disturbances.”

The preceding quotations indicate that, unlike at the less effective schools, highly effective schools regulate visitations properly. Well-regulated visits at highly effective schools impact positively on their management.

5.2.1.17 Do you have an admission policy at your school? If so, how is it utilised and how are admissions dealt with?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B, C, D, E and F all have admission policies. Schools A and C claim their admission policies are non-discriminatory. Schools A, B and C give preference to learners from local, feeder and neighbouring primary schools. All schools admit new learners in the October preceding the next academic year. Only schools E and F do admissions in January.

Schools A, B and C have clear guidelines for admission, and their admissions are done in the year preceding the new academic year.

b) Interpretation

Highly effective schools have clearly defined admission policies and admissions appear to be done more than a year in advance. The principal of school C said:

“Yes, we have an admission policy ... We do admissions around October of the current year for the next academic year.”

By contrast, less effective schools lack clear admission procedures, and admissions are done at the beginning of a new academic year. The principals of school E and F had this to say:

“... Our policy is ‘first come, first served’, and we allow all who qualify in terms of the age cohort as laid down by our national guidelines.”

“... but we do admit those who are late in January.”

The above indicates that, unlike less effective schools, highly effective schools do admissions at the right time and properly, which influences their admission process positively.

**5.2.1.18 Do you monitor the attendance of both teachers and learners?
If so, how and what is the situation like?**

a) Discussion

Schools A, B, C, D, E and F all mark the attendance registers for learners daily. Their teachers sign in and out every day to report and knock off for work. Schools A, B and C claim that the attendance of learners and teachers is very good. Schools D, E and F have problems with teacher and learner absences.

b) Interpretation

It appears that attendance of learners and teachers at highly effective schools is high. The principal of school B said:

“Teachers swipe their employment cards every morning in the secretary’s office and mark the daily attendance registers for the learners. The situation is very good ...”

At less effective schools, attendance is reportedly low. The principal of school E said:

“We have a serious attendance problem of teachers especially during month-ends; learners also abscond during pension days because of child grants but we do mark registers every day.”

The indication is that, unlike at less effective schools, highly effective schools have high teacher and learner attendance. This suggests that the standard of the teaching and learning activities at these schools is high.

5.2.1.19 Do you think keeping a diary as principal is important? If so, why?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B, D, E and F keep a diary to aid their memory about appointments. Schools A, B and C keep a diary for planning daily objectives and jotting down daily appointments.

b) Interpretation

While most principals keep a diary, highly effective schools use it effectively. The principal of highly performing school A said:

“Yes, my secretary keeps my diary updated about all important appointments for the day. I also have a year planner calendar on my desk on which I write all the important activities for the day. We also encourage staff to have diaries and we have the year planner for all workshops in the staffroom.”

The above indicate that at highly effective schools diaries are used effectively, unlike at less effective schools. The appropriate use of diaries influences the work of principals at highly effective schools positively.

5.2.1.20 Why do you think it is important to keep registers, for example permission, leave, summary, stock and learner attendance?

a) Discussion

All schools believe statistics have an administrative purpose. School A believes that they serve a statistical purpose for improvement of administration. Schools B and C believe that they are a record-keeping measure, support decision-making and serve as evidence. School B suggests they can be used in a review process to enhance performance. Schools D, E and F struggle to keep registers up to date.

b) Interpretation

The indication is that, although all schools keep administration registers, highly effective schools have proper administration control measures and seem to use them effectively. The principal of the highly effective school C indicated the following:

“... they can inform some of our major decisions like, for example, in a case of absenteeism by the learner or the teacher, the register is evidence.”

The indication is that keeping registers properly at highly effective schools impacts positively on the general administration, compared with less effective schools. This is supported by the statement made by the principal of school B:

“Yes, they are the valuable record of the school and they assist in the administration.”

5.2.1.21 Do you have a stock-control procedure at your school? If so, how do you go about controlling stock?

a) Discussion

All schools have stock-control procedures. Schools A, B and C use the inventory list to control stock and use a stock register for the auditing and replacement of stock. Schools A, B and C do stocktaking regularly (every term). Schools D, E and F do not do it regularly. School E has a problem of losing stock due to vandalism.

b) Interpretation

Stock control at highly effective schools is done frequently; for instance, the principal of school A said:

“Every term teachers check the items on the inventory against their physical presence and condition.”

The same cannot be said about less effective schools. The following statement by the principal of school E sums it up:

“Yes, all stock is registered in the stock register, but we have not been checking it regularly.”

The indication is that keeping the stock register updated enhances the administration of highly effective schools and consequently their administration of stock, unlike at less effective schools.

5.2.1.22 How do you enhance good interpersonal relations between yourself and colleagues and other stakeholders?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C believe that fair treatment enhances good relations. Schools A and B believe in organising social events to enhance relations. School C believes fair job distribution helps. School D believes that talking about problems helps. Schools E and F state that everyone complains and relations never improve.

b) Interpretation

All principals seemingly believe that some kind of fair treatment of teachers in terms of work enhances good relations; there is also an indication that the participation of everyone in decision-making could yield positive results. Highly effective schools focus on participation. The principal of school A said:

“I believe that if you want people to be content with their work, you have to respect them and lead by example; you also have to give them a chance to give their part if they so wish.”

By contrast, all the less effective schools only react to grievances as is evident from the following extract from the response of the principal of school E:

“I am trying to deal with all complaints so that everyone feels supported; but as I say, it will take time.”

The indication is that the good treatment of teachers at highly effective schools affect relations positively and, consequently, the motivation of teachers to carry out their duties well, unlike at less effective schools.

**5.2.1.23 How do you and your staff plan extra-curricular programmes?
How are they dealt with?**

a) Discussion

At school A, both the SGB and SMT draw up a timetable for extracurricular activities. At school B, it is drawn up by the SGB and then recommended to the SMT. At school C, the SGB decides and then informs the SMT. School D is steered by the SMT. School E is steered by cultural and sport committees (teachers) without parental involvement. School F seems to have a problem with parental involvement in extra-curricular activities.

b) Interpretation

It appears that all schools have extracurricular activities; however, highly effective schools involve parents more in planning extracurricular activities. The principal of highly effective school A said:

“We – the SMT, SGB and parents – firstly determine who will do what by establishing committees; then design the weekly programme for extra- and co-curricular activities.”

The principal of school F indicated:

“Parents do not come when requested to take part.”

The indication is that the involvement of parents at highly effective schools in planning extracurricular activities have a positive effect on the success of such activities, unlike at less effective schools. The following statement by the principal of school A supports this:

“... we hold all the sporting and cultural activities every afternoon.”

5.2.1.24 How do you deal with employee wellness at your school?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C use professionals for employee wellness, but school A has a support committee and schools B and C rely on the SMT. School A invites speakers and organises material on employee wellness. Schools D, E and F rely on the principal's intervention. School E has a real problem with employee wellness.

b) Interpretation

While most schools do have ways of dealing with wellness problems, highly effective schools have clearly defined wellness strategies. For example, the principal of school B said:

“We have a staff support committee, which is headed by the deputy and two staff representatives, if I am not around. This committee deals with finding support material and speaks to staff about issues of stress and health, legal, financial and family matters. Private and confidential matters concerning teachers are handled by me as the principal and nobody else; I solicit help from institutions if the problems need professional intervention.”

Less effective schools rely on the principal. The principal of school E indicated this:

“... but those who are under stress and who need my help do come and I am doing my best.”

The clearly-defined employee wellness strategies of highly effective have a positive effect on the wellness of teachers, unlike at the less effective schools. This statement by the principal of school C gives an indication of the results of such wellness measures:

“... we try to organise professionals across areas that could influence personal grow and effectiveness.”

5.2.1.25 Does your school practise inclusive education? If so, how?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B, C, D, E and F have established the SBSTs. Schools A and B work closely with the District Based Support Team (DBST). Schools A, B and C rely on teaching methods for inclusion. School C involves parents for inclusion. Schools D, E and F have a problem in that their SBSTs have not been trained.

b) Interpretation

It appears that schools are attempting to practise inclusion, but that there is a difference in terms of the knowledge the SBSTs have. At highly effective schools, SBSTs are effective and teachers focus on teaching methods to include learners. The principal of highly effective school B said:

“... all learners are helped, depending on the learning barrier that they experience; we also cooperate with the DBST and our local professionals if the parents recommend one. Teachers use teaching methods that accommodate all learners.”

However, there is a lack of knowledge about the functioning of the SBST at less effective schools, as the principal of school E indicated:

“We have the SBST, but we have to train it; we have already booked an appointment from [with] the district to get it trained; they are not yet sure of their role and responsibilities.”

Unlike at less effective schools, the SBSTs of highly effective schools support learners, which has a positive effect on the processes of assisting all their learners.

5.2.1.26 Do you review the performance of your school? If so, how often and how do you plan for the improvement (SIP)?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B, C, D, E and F all review their performances. Schools A and B use meetings as dialogue to reflect on performance (school A uses the WSE form). School C plans new strategies. School B uses brainstorming. Schools A, B and C review their performance annually. Schools D, E and F rely on an official review by the WSE. After five years, schools E and F were reviewed by the WSE but only with regard to their Grade 12 performance.

b) Interpretation

While all schools review their performance, there are differences in terms of the frequency and the timing of the reviews. Highly effective schools review their performance frequently and in different ways; for example, the principal of school B said:

“The performance of the school we review on a yearly basis; say, after receiving the results for matriculation, we usually do a reflection on how we have performed; we do that in other areas as well.”

The indication at less effective schools was that the performance review was done from the outside and infrequently. The following extract from the response of the principal of school E supports this conclusion:

“We rely on the official review systems like the WSE ...”

It follows that frequent performance reviews by highly effective schools impact positively on their performances, unlike at less effective schools. These reviews are done mostly internally rather than externally.

5.2.1.27 What would you regard as an effective school?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B, C, D, E and F believe that school effectiveness has to do with learner attainment. Only schools A and B mentioned sport and cultural achievements.

b) Interpretation

All schools believe that effective schools are the ones with higher learner attainments. The principal of school F, in defining an effective school, remarked:

“[They are] schools that perform beyond expectation in terms of learner attainment, and sport and cultural achievements.”

This gives a clear indication that school effectiveness is measured by the performances of learners, which is the aim of most schools that participated in this study.

5.2.2 Focus-group interviews with SMT members

The purpose of the questions was to determine what, in the experience and understanding of the SMT members, influences school effectiveness and improvement. The SMT members of all six schools were interviewed as a focus group. The discussion responses were labelled alphabetically according to schools for the purposes of analysis, but the responses of the SMT members were not labelled in the thesis as the SMT members had indicated that their responses should stay anonymous. Consequently, the responses refer to one member (teacher, HOD) and not one at schools A or C.

5.2.2.1 As the manager of your department, how do you go about planning your work?

a) Discussion

All schools indicate that they have to plan, organise resources and control the work of teachers. Schools A, B and C talked about equitable distribution of work and a developmental programme for teachers. Schools D, E and F had a problem of cooperation.

b) Interpretation

While all schools have departments that plan the work, the indication at highly effective schools is that this is well-articulated and that teachers cooperate. The following is what one teacher indicated:

“I have to plan the activities of the department, organise resources for teachers and learners, lead by example and control the teachers’ work.”

At the less effective schools, there is a problem in that teachers are unwilling to cooperate; for example, one SMT member said:

“I plan, organise, lead and control the work of the members of the department, but if you do not get cooperation, it is always difficult.”

The indication is that well-articulated planning at highly effective schools, as well as the cooperation of teachers in this regard enhances the operation of the departments of these schools, which does not happen at less effective schools.

5.2.2.2 How do you plan for the year?

a) Discussion

All HODs of schools A, B and C plan according to the priorities determined collectively by all the teachers in their departments. Only at schools D, E and F does the HOD draw it up by her-/himself before getting input from the teachers.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools appear to plan for the year, there is also collaboration by highly effective school managers. One of them said:

“I meet with the teachers in my department; we collectively determine our priorities for the year; then plan around them. I draw up a programme for the year according to our priorities. I determine the daily and long-term goals as per plan.”

The indication at less effective schools is that managers plan on their own with less involvement of others; for example, one of them said:

“Well, I draw up a year programme, that is reflecting all activities of the department for the year and I present it to the teachers for input, but mostly there would not be any input but criticism.”

The collaboration of managers at highly effective schools impacts positively on the planning and execution of the work, unlike at the less effective schools. The following extract from comments made by one HOD at a highly effective school supports this contention:

“I firstly hold a meeting with all teachers in my department and we do a SWOT analysis, identify areas that need development, and draw up

an action plan which clearly spells out what needs to be done, how, with what resources, when and by whom.”

5.2.2.3 Which management leadership style do you use, and why?

a) Discussion

The HODs of schools A, B and C prefer to use a participatory, cooperative or democratic managerial style. Schools A and B emphasise teamwork. School C emphasises collaboration. Schools D, E and F indicate a need to be autocratic at times.

b) Interpretation

The indication at highly effective schools is that leadership is collective and management is democratic; for example, one HOD said:

“I use the cooperative or team leadership style where you do not necessarily tell your subordinates what to do but as a team look for the best modus operandi. I believe in teamwork because you can use their talents.”

The trend at less effective schools is that management and leadership are leader-and-manager-centred and that others are hardly involved. One of the HODs said:

“The working relationship here determines my management style: sometimes one can be democratic and sometimes autocratic, depending on what needs to be done now, because teachers are not as willing and committed.”

The indication is that a collective and democratic management approach enhances their effectiveness, unlike at less effective schools. Teachers contribute to management. The statement by the HOD of a highly effective school supports this:

“It is very important that all members of the department be given a hearing and chance to maximize their potential, I can only do that if I run the department in a democratic fashion.”

5.2.2.4 How do you ensure the professional development of your subordinates?

a) Discussion

IQMS is the programme used by all schools to develop teachers. The SMT members of schools A and B emphasise the sharing of knowledge among teachers. School A uses mentoring. School C has a departmental development programme. Schools D, E and F use only IQMS. There seems to be no other approach.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools use IQMS as a tool to develop their teachers, highly effective schools go out of their way to use extra measures to develop teachers; for example, one HOD said:

“We have established subject- or learning-area committees which focus on support for members in different subjects; these committees discuss the best possible ways of teaching and facilitating the learning process. We also take part in the IQMS programme.”

The indication at less effective schools is that IQMS is the only way used to develop teachers. One of the HODs indicated:

“The IQMS is the only developmental tool for teachers, because they refuse any of the programmes if they were not agreed to in the collective bargaining chambers.”

The indication is that the extra measures employed by highly effective schools to develop teachers, unlike at less effective schools, do have a positive effect on the general development of teachers. This comment by one of the HODs of a highly effective school supports this:

“We do have the IQMS to develop teachers, but we also have our departmental programme that we do to develop teachers in the form of a collaborative effort.”

5.2.2.5 How are new teachers inducted in your department?

a) Discussion

Schools A and B conduct an orientation for new teachers. School C appoints a senior teacher as mentor. Schools D, E and F assign the HOD to orientate the teachers.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools indicated that they inducted the new teachers, there is a difference in terms of how this is done; for example, at highly effective schools they have designed an orientation programme. One HOD said:

“We hold an orientation and induction programme which includes showing them the buildings. I also orientate them in terms of the policies of the department, such as the NCS and the national assessment guidelines.”

The induction at less effective schools involves showing new teachers what they are supposed to teach and providing them with teaching material; for example, one HOD said:

“Well, I am responsible for the induction process of new teachers in my department. I usually take them through the requirements of the subjects, policies and so on.”

The indication is that, at highly effective schools, well-articulated induction programmes have a positive effect on the professional readiness of teachers to do their work, unlike at less effective schools. This part of a statement by one of the HODs of a highly effective school supports this finding:

“... I give resources to the teacher, and do frequent visits to the class until the teacher is settled.”

5.2.2.6 Do you motivate learners and teachers in your department? If so, how?

a) Discussion

The HODs at all schools use motivational talks to motivate both learners and teachers. For schools A, B and C, motivation seems effective. Schools D, E and F do try to motivate but there seems to be less motivation for teachers because of a negative attitude.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools claim to be motivating their teachers and learners, the difference is the way attempts at motivation are received by both teachers and learners. At highly effective schools, these attempts are well-received; for example, one HOD stated:

“Yes, I do motivate my subordinates and learners to work hard; I think giving people recognition is the greatest motivator. I always talk about the achievements of both learners and teachers at our public

gatherings, in the staff room, or at assembly for the learners – they feel great and will work even more.”

The indication at less effective schools is that the attitude towards motivational efforts is not always welcomed. One HOD said:

“Yes, I try my level best; I involve the LF for teachers and former learners for the learners, but it’s hard for teachers – because of the negative attitude, there are low levels of motivation.”

The cooperation of both learners and teachers with regard to motivation at highly effective schools have a positive effect on their motivation, which is contrary to what is happening at less effective schools. The following extract from a statement by an HOD at a highly effective school supports the notion:

“... they feel great and will work even more.”

5.2.2.7 Do you involve parents in your department? If so, how?

a) Discussion

The HODs of schools A, B and C hold parents’ evenings to discuss the learners’ progress. Schools A and B also allow parents to have individual meetings with teachers. School E does not hold meetings but parents may come to see teachers. There is no evidence of meetings at school F.

b) Interpretation

The indication is that highly effective schools meet with parents more frequently; for example, one HOD stated:

“Yes, we organise departmental parent-evening tea meetings during which we discuss the progress of learners and the different ways in

which the learners could be assisted with their learning. This happens three times per term. We also have individual meetings with parents.”

While less effective schools do involve parents, the involvement is minimal; for instance, one HOD said:

“No, meetings are arranged for a group of parents; however, parents do come as individuals to teachers to discuss progress, although this does not take place frequently and in a coordinated manner.”

The involvement in the running of departments, and the regular meeting of parents, at highly effective schools, unlike at less effective schools, have a positive effect on the work of learners in their departments. In support of this, one HOD said:

“Yes, we have parents’ evening meetings every term in each grade where they discuss the progress of the learners and ways to assist learners with their work.”

5.2.2.8 How and how often do you control the work of your colleagues?

a) Discussion

HODs of all schools have some form of control over teacher and learner portfolios. Schools A, B and C exercise such control frequently. Schools D, E and F are under pressure to control the work, but there is a lack of cooperation from teachers.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools control the work of teachers, the trend at highly effective schools is that it is done frequently; for example, one HOD stated:

“I control the work of my subordinates every month by checking their files, learners’ records, the standard of assessment tasks, and the portfolios of learners; we usually agree on the format of the checklist.”

The situation at less effective schools is that teachers do not want to cooperate. One HOD said:

“Yes, the control of teachers’ and learners’ work is intensive since we are a dysfunctional school. We check thoroughly the portfolios of both learners and teachers on a monthly basis to ascertain if work is up to the required level, but the lack of cooperation on the part of the teachers is a problem.”

The preceding quotation suggests that the frequent control of work at highly effective schools enhances their effectiveness because teachers cooperate, which is not the case at less effective schools. In support of this, a HOD at a highly effective school said:

“I control the work of teachers regularly to ascertain if enough assessment is done, the learners work is properly marked and feedback is given.”

5.2.2.9 Do you experience conflict in your department? If so, how do you deal with it?

a) Discussion

All schools experience conflict in their departments. Schools A, B and C mostly use dialogue (compromise, negotiations) to solve problems. Schools D, E and F use force (coercion) to solve their problems (because of poor interpersonal relations).

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools do experience conflict, the difference lies in how such conflict is addressed; for example, highly effective schools generally use dialogue or negotiations to resolve conflict. One HOD indicated:

“Yes, we do: it is being solved through compromise or reaching a consensus about the best possible solution to the problem.”

The trend at less effective schools is that often force is the only available option for solving conflict. This is, for example, what one HOD had to say:

“I prefer to solve conflict following the Educator’s Law Amendment Act because the situation is very volatile because of bad human relations.”

The indication is that highly effective schools use consensus-seeking to resolve conflict, whereas less effective schools consultation does not seem to take place. This is evident from the following statement made by an HOD at a highly effective school:

“Yes, we do; as colleagues; we collectively try to solve our problems in [a] team spirit; I believe in persuasion rather than force.”

5.2.2.10 How do you take decisions in your department?

a) Discussion

The HOD of schools A and C use participatory decision-making. School B uses a consultative decision-making processes. Schools A, B and C try to involve teachers. Decisions at schools D, E, and F seem to be the prerogative of HODs.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools do have decision-making systems, the difference is in the way decisions are taken; for example, at highly effective schools decisions are taken collectively with the involvement of others. One HOD said:

“I believe in a participatory decision-making process where myself and my colleagues firstly brainstorm and come up with solutions to any problem, unless the nature of the problem warrant my personal discretion.”

The indication is that, at less effective schools, consultation does not take place; instead, decisions are taken by managers. For example, one HOD said:

“I try to get as much information as possible about the matter to be decided upon. Once that is done, I analyse the situation and find the best possible answer.”

This suggests that the consultation approach to a decision-making process adopted by highly effective schools expedites the decision-making process, resulting in a collective ownership of decisions. By contrast, at less effective schools, decisions are often individualised or unilateral. The following statement by an HOD at a highly effective school suggests this:

“I firstly embark on a participatory or fact-finding mission; once I have the best opinions about the situation from all teachers I decide; sometimes one has to consider the merit of each situation.”

5.2.2.11 How do you deal with communication in your department?

a) Discussion

The HODs of all schools use meetings and circulars to communicate with teachers. School A also uses newsletters to communicate with teachers. Schools A, B and C use the intercom and have an instruction book to convey messages to teachers. Schools D, E and F rely on verbal communication.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools do ensure communication, the difference is that at highly effective schools different modes of communication are used; for example, one HOD indicated:

“We use mostly verbal and written communication during both formal and informal meetings; we have a departmental instruction book which I circulate to all teachers and we have circulars from the department of education for circulation.”

The situation at less effective schools is that they tend to rely mostly on a verbal mode of communication; for example, at one school the HOD had this to say:

“An instruction book is sometimes the used mode of communication where everyone signs that he/she has seen the information, even circulars are signed by all [as proof] that they have seen them, but everyone does not do it; we hear things mostly from others.”

The above statements indicate that the varied ways of communication employed at highly effective schools enhance their communication system, as opposed to a reliance on verbal communication by less effective schools.

5.2.2.12 Do you encourage teamwork among your subordinates, if so, how?

a) Discussion

The HODs of schools A, B and C indicate that collaboration is the most important method they use to encourage teamwork. Because of poor interpersonal relations, schools D, E and F have less team spirit.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools have teams, the trend at highly effective schools is that collaboration is considered crucial for the success of teams; for example, one HOD said:

“Yes, collaboration is very crucial in fostering teamwork; if teachers collaborate, chances are that they will work as a team.”

The situation at less effective schools is that there is no collaboration due to the often high levels of conflict. For instance, one HOD said:

“Yes, I am trying my best but it is very difficult given [the] poor interpersonal relationships at our school.”

The above indicates that collaboration or teamwork at highly effective schools affect the work positively, compared to the situation at less effective schools, which experience less collaboration. The following statement by one HOD of a highly effective school sums it up:

“Yes, we have peers for our IQMS and for our subject meeting, so we cooperate.”

5.2.2.13 How do you keep record of your department?

a) Discussion

The HODs of schools A, B and C use files to record information in their departments. Schools A, B and C have minute books and daily incident books for daily happenings. School B keeps assessment records electronically. The HODs at schools D, E and F seem to use only files as records in the department.

b) Interpretation

While both highly effective and less effective schools have ways of recording work in various departments, the highly effective schools have well-structured recording systems. For example, one HOD said:

“I have files in my office for all the subjects and all the teachers in my department; so, everything is recorded in there. We have a departmental minute book and an incident book for recording daily events.”

The indication at less effective schools is that they rely on files. The following extract suggests this:

“I do record all the information in the departmental files.”

It follows that the varied ways of recording work by highly effective schools enhances the administration of records as this serves as a backup, while reliance on files by less effective schools has less effect on effective recording.

5.2.2.14 Do you have an assessment policy, and how do you implement it?

a) Discussion

The HODs of all schools agreed that their schools had assessment policies. All schools emphasise times at which assessment should take place. At schools A, B and C, assessment takes place frequently.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools assess their learners, what is different is the frequency of assessment; for example, at two of the highly effective schools, the HODs had this to say:

“Yes, all assessment activities in our department are synchronised into a weekly programme where all subjects assess learners according to the NCS requirements.”

“Yes, we do; it means we assess learners every day, week, month and term by either formative or summative ways, but each subject has different ways of doing it.”

The situation at less effective schools is that, although assessment is done, it is infrequent. An SMT member at one school said:

“Yes, we have; it is in line with the assessment requirements for each subject, but we have to assess learners on a continuous basis, but teachers are behind with this.”

The indication is that frequent assessment of learners at highly effective schools enhances learning positively, unlike at less effective schools where assessments are done infrequently.

5.2.2.15 Do you and your colleagues receive visits from the learning facilitators? If so, how do you deal with these visits?

a) Discussion

Learning facilitators do visit all schools. All the schools claim that the learning facilitators want to see teachers outside the classroom. Schools A, B and C indicated that it would be good for learning facilitators to observe the teachers in their classes. All schools indicated that too many learning facilitators visiting the school at the same time disturbed the school. The HODs of schools D, E and F seemed to disapprove of allowing learning facilitators access to the classrooms.

b) Interpretation

While learning facilitators visit both highly performing and poorly performing schools, highly performing schools prefer the learning facilitators to conduct classroom visits. For example, the spokesperson for one group of HODs indicated:

“Yes, learning facilitators send visit date lists for us to arrange to meet him/her. They usually come during school time and I encourage that they see the teachers in their classes to avoid disruption, but other learning facilitators do not want to go to class but want to see the teachers elsewhere but this sometimes disturbs the school because if more than one learning facilitator is at school some classes are left unattended; and

Yes, they do come; we prefer to take them to class to observe what is going on, although some of the teachers have reservations about it.”

While there is scepticism at less effective schools about learning facilitators visiting the classrooms, one HOD said:

“Learning facilitators must firstly capacitate teachers before they visit them in classes.”

The indication is that the visit of learning facilitators to teachers directly in their classrooms could influence the work of the teacher positively. This need was expressed by SMT members at highly effective schools.

5.2.2.16 *How far are you involved in the general management of the school?*

a) Discussion

All the HODs of schools A, B and C seem to be highly involved in the general management of their schools by way of frequent SMT meetings. The HODs at schools D, E and F seem not to be highly involved.

b) Interpretation

The indication is that at highly effective schools the HODs are part of management because they are involved in the decision-making process. The following extract suggests this:

“I am part of the SMT, so we meet every morning to plan for the day and talk about management issues; so, I am fully aware of what is happening at our school.”

By contrast, at less effective schools the HODs are merely consulted by the principal and little is said about their input. One HOD said:

“I think one is highly involved, because we are consulted by the principal, but meetings are held once every term.”

The indication is that, at highly effective schools, the management is influenced positively by the involvement of other SMT members, unlike at less effective schools.

The following extract from a statement made by the HOD of a highly effective school sums it up:

“My involvement in the management of the school is good; we as SMT decide about all issues at the school; the principal involves us in a positive way.”

5.2.2.17 How do you deal with employee wellness in your department?

a) Discussion

The HODs of schools A, B and C regard the employee wellness of members of their department as their responsibility. Schools B and C feel the principal needs to be involved in some issues. Schools A and C have a support group in their departments. Schools E and F do not have an employee-wellness system for their departments.

b) Interpretation

The indication is that at highly effective schools there are well-defined employee-wellness strategies, for example, at one school the HOD had this to say:

“Although I regard that as the responsibility of the principal to all of us, teachers in my department have reported things to me that affect their lives and I have attempted to help them where possible.”

The situation at less effective schools is that teachers are often left to their own devices and that there are no clear wellness strategies in place, as one HOD indicated:

“It is very difficult to begin to talk about employee wellness when we can hardly work together.”

The employee-wellness strategies by highly effective schools influence the well-being of teachers positively, unlike at less effective schools. The following statement by the HOD of a highly effective school supports this:

“I talk with teachers in my department on a number of issues and we discuss our problems and, if I pick up a problem, I try to help but; we have a support group as a school and I find that very helpful”

5.2.2.18 Do you review your performance in your department? If so, how do you plan for the improvement?

a) Discussion

The HODs of schools A, B and C review their progress frequently, namely every term or month, while schools D and C review their work every year. Schools A, B and C have intervention programmes to improve performance after each review. Schools D, E and F have reviews at the end of the year and plan improvement for the subsequent year.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools review their performance, the indication is that highly effective schools do so frequently and plan intervention early. The following extract suggests this:

“Yes, every month we have a meeting with my colleagues to review our progress and come up with a contingency plan where intervention is warranted.”

The situation at less effective schools is that performance reviews take place after a long time and not regularly. One HOD attested to this by saying:

“Once we get [the] results at the end of the year, we reflect on those and draw [up] new strategies for [the] next year.”

The indication is that the frequent review of performance by highly effective schools ensures timely intervention, which has a positive effect on learning. This does not happen at less effective schools.

The following statement by one of the HODs of a highly effective school supports this:

“Yes, every month we look at our score boards and begin to reflect on our performance; [we] then identify weaknesses and work to remedy them.”

5.2.3 Focus-group interviews with teachers

The aim of questions to the focus group was to identify the factors that enhanced school effectiveness and improvement, particularly in curriculum planning and delivery, from the teacher’s experience and perspective. Teachers were coded alphabetically according to schools during the data-analysis process, but their responses are not given any label in the thesis, as others indicated that the report should stay anonymous. Consequently, in this instance the responses refer to one teacher and not to teachers of schools A or B.

5.2.3.1 *How do you go about planning your work?*

a) Discussion

All schools indicate that the responsibility of the teacher is centred on the following:

- organising content and choice (NCS);
- planning resources;
- choice of methods of teaching;

- assessment.

Schools A, B and C seem to have good planning procedures in place, whereas schools D, E and F do not.

b) Interpretation

While all schools know the role of the teacher with regard to planning their work, there is a strong indication that highly effective schools have well-defined and articulated planning procedures, as the following comment suggests:

“I have to organise the content and resources to teach, decide on the method, draw up a lesson, present it, and monitor the understanding of learners through questions or class tasks.”

By contrast, at less effective schools, planning is not well defined:

“I believe I have to analyse content against the requirement of the NCS, mobilise appropriate resources and choose assessment methods that will assist all learners to learn effectively, but I experience difficulties.”

The indication is that well-articulated planning procedures of work, such as organising resources, affect the work of teachers at highly effective schools positively, which is the case at less effective schools.

5.2.3.2 How do you go about choosing the subject content to be taught and how do you go about planning a learning programme?

a) Discussion

All schools choose the subject content according to the

- relevance of the NIC;
- outcomes of the curriculum;
- tasks to be done by learner;
- assessment and resources.

Schools A, B and C seem to consider contents that are appropriate for the teaching style, take into consideration the prior knowledge of learners, and guide them through a step-by-step process of knowledge acquisition.

b) Interpretation

While all teachers at all schools choose the subject content in relation to the NCS Curriculum, the indication is that the choice of the subject content is well articulated at highly effective schools:

“I choose the content that is relevant to the NCS (National Curriculum Statement) and usually start from what learners already know to what they do not know.”

“I decide on the learning outcome (objectives) of the learning process, organise a series of tasks the learners have to master before achieving the outcome, supply them with learning resources, guide or facilitate their learning through support (collaborative, group or peer), decide on the assessment criteria, design the assessment tool, assess and give feedback.”

The indication is that at less effective schools, subject-content choice remains a challenge as it is not chosen explicitly. One teacher alluded:

“My role is to plan my lessons to assist learners to achieve those outcomes; however, the challenge remains how to do it.”

The criteria for the choice and planning of subject content at highly effective schools have a positive effect on the sequencing of the learning content, which cannot be said for less effective schools.

5.2.3.3 How often do you assess your learners and how?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C frequently use formative and summative assessment. Schools D, E and F rely heavily on summative assessment. School E did not use to do assessment frequently and continuously until it was recommended as a strategy to improve the performance of the school.

b) Interpretation

While all schools do the assessment of learners, the indication is that highly effective schools assess learners continuously:

“I believe in formative assessment, which is continuous throughout the learning process; I do this through a series of tasks. I also do the summative assessment at the end of the term.”

The indication at less effective schools is that summative assessment is used regularly and formative assessment infrequently:

“Because we are a dysfunctional school, there was a recommendation that we assess learners frequently; so, we have class tasks, home tasks, weekly and monthly formal assessments and a formal examination at the end of each term, but teachers are behind with this.”

It appears that at highly effective schools, assessment is done continuously and this, unlike at less effective schools, has a positive effect on the learning processes.

5.2.3.4 What measures do you have in place to assist learners with special educational needs?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C suggest a varied teaching-method approach to accommodate all learners but school A has special helping sessions necessary to help learners with special educational needs. School B has special classes for slow learners. Schools D, E and F also try to accommodate all learners but complain about time and learner numbers.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools help learners with special needs, the difference is that at highly effective schools such intervention programmes are well articulated:

“I give special support to each learner according to the need he/she has. I organise individual helping sessions with learners after school if I deem it necessary.”

This suggests that programmes are not fully functional at less effective schools:

“I try to teach in such a way that all learners are accommodated, say by changing methods, I use different methods; however, the challenge is that we have too many learners in a class and time is very little [there is very little time] to focus on others.”

It could further be asserted that the intervention programmes for learners with special needs affect learning processes positively at highly effective schools, compared to the situation at less effective schools. The following comment by a teacher of a highly effective school supports this:

“I try a variety of methods to facilitate learning, but I have seen very good results with peer teaching and learning.”

5.2.3.5 How do you keep records of your work and that of your learners?

a) Discussion

All schools record their work in both teachers’ and learners’ portfolios.

b) Interpretation

The record-keeping at both highly and less effective schools are done in the same manner. Two extracts from comments made by the leadership of both types of schools support this:

“I record all my work in the portfolio and mark schedules; the learners’ work is also recorded in their portfolios and [on their] assessment sheets.”

“I record all the work in the teacher’s portfolio, and the learners also record all the work in their work portfolios.”

From the above, it is evident that record-keeping is most important for the work of teachers at all schools, regardless of their performance. The other indication is that all schools value records, even if not done in the same manner.

5.2.3.6 How do you facilitate the learning of your learners and which methods do you use?

a) Discussion

Schools A and B use collaborative and cooperative learning; school C uses peer training; school B also uses group work; and schools D, E and F use the textbook and lecture method.

b) Interpretation

The indication at highly effective schools is that they use learner-centred methods of facilitating learning. The following extract posits this:

“I prefer to use peer tutoring and collaborative learning because learners can support one another and can learn from one another.”

At less effective schools, teacher-centred methods dominate learning facilitation. One teacher said:

“Well, I prefer a textbook and lecture, but this I can adapt according to how well learners respond.”

The above indicates that the use of learner-centred methods of learning by highly effective schools impact on the learning of their learners, unlike the use of teacher-centred methods by less effective schools. The following statement by a teacher at a highly effective school serves as evidence in this regard:

“My learners are seated in groups of five or six; sometimes I give cooperative work, sometimes group work; but I like it when they help one another: they learn more.”

5.2.3.7 Do you motivate your learners? If so, how?

a) Discussion

All teachers at all schools claim to motivate learners. At schools A, B and C, motivation seems to be done regularly. School B has a record system giving stars to learners.

b) Interpretation

The indication at highly effective schools is that motivation takes place frequently and in different ways; for example, one teacher said:

“Yes, I talk to them every day and sometimes I call the learning facilitator to do the motivational talk to my classes. I invite my previous students who have pursued a university education in my subject to share their experiences with the learners.”

While less effective schools do attempt to motivate learners, the motivation is seemingly not done frequently. At one school, a teacher said:

“O yes, we are faced with very demoralised learners. I do invite speakers in the community who were learners at our school and who are successful to present motivational talks, but we do not do it often.”

The frequent motivations of learners at highly effective schools have a positive effect on the learning processes, while it is evidently not the case at less effective schools.

5.2.3.8 Are you engaged in your professional development in your subject? If so, how, and by whom?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C, besides conducting learning facilitators' workshops, have their own departmental meetings about the professional subject development of teachers. School C has a subject committee. Schools D, E and F rely on IQMS for professional development.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools do attempt to develop their teachers, the indication is that highly effective schools, besides the intervention of the education district, have internal developmental mechanisms, for example, one teacher said:

“Yes, there are workshops by our HOD and learning facilitators, which give me the platform to learn more about the NCS and my subject in general. We also collaborate as colleagues' in IQMS and departmental meetings.”

At less effective schools, teachers rely on external intervention by the education district; for example, one teacher indicated the following:

“Because of the situation at our school, the only developmental involvement is through IQMS.”

This statement suggests that, while there are official professional development initiatives by education departments, extra efforts by highly effective schools assist teachers in their professional development, unlike at less effective schools where only departmental development initiatives are used. This is confirmed by one of the teachers of a highly effective school, who states:

We ... discuss matters of interest in the subject where we exchange ideas as colleagues.

5.2.3.9 Do you work collaboratively with your colleagues, and in what way?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C plan and collaborate on their teaching. By contrast, the teachers of schools D, E and F do not seem to work together. At school E, there is no collaboration or cooperation because of poor working relations.

b) Interpretation

There is a high level of collaboration among teachers at the highly effective schools, as one of the teachers stated:

“Yes, we plan our programmes together and sometimes we share our classes on topics that we feel we can draw on our strengths.”

The indication at less effective schools is that teachers work on their own as individuals with little collaboration:

“No, each teacher is on his own, poor interpersonal relationships make any form of collaboration difficult.”

The high level of collaboration among the teachers of highly effective schools impacts positively on their work, whereas the same cannot be said about less effective schools as there is little collaboration.

5.2.3.10 Do you get support from the learning facilitators? If yes, what kind of support?

a) Discussion

All schools can participate in workshops and receive support on subject content and material and NCS policy. However, the support appears inadequate to teachers at all schools.

b) Interpretation

While all schools receive support from the learning facilitators, the indication at both highly and poorly performing schools is that the support only supplies curriculum documents and material and very little is said about teaching methodology. Two teachers from highly effective and less effective schools respectively had the following to say:

“Yes, we do in terms of NCS policy and general support in the subject content, although some learning facilitators are not so good.”

“Yes, we do get support from the learning facilitators in the form of the provision of teaching and learning material.”

The indication from both highly and less effective schools is that support from learning facilitators is not enough in the classroom, although such support is necessary in order to improve on learning. One of the teachers at a less effective school stated:

“Yes, we get support in the form of documents but little support is given in the classroom.”

5.2.3.11 Do you review your performance? If so, how often and how do you strategise for improvement?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C use continuous assessment of learners intensively. Schools D, E and F mostly use summative assessment and there seems to be little evidence of performance-improvement methods. Schools A, B and C have improvement methods in place (extra classes and remedial classes) and use different teaching methods.

b) Interpretation

While both highly and less effective schools do review their learners' performances, the indication is that highly effective schools do so frequently, use both formative and summative assessment as tools of review, and have well-defined improvement systems. For example, one teacher remarked:

“Yes, I look at the achievement of my learners in each and every assessment work [task], test or formal assessment and try to identify weak areas and focus on them. I organise extra classes on areas that learners struggle [with].”

The indication at less effective schools is that a performance review is only done after a long period. Summative assessment is predominantly used as an indicator of performance during the review. As one teacher stated:

“Yes, I do at the end of the year when I see how learners have worked.”

These statements indicate that the frequent review of performance by highly effective schools affects their performance positively, unlike in the case of the use of dominantly summative assessment at less effective schools.

5.2.3.12 Do you experience stress because of your work? If so, how do you cope with it?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C each have a support group to assist teachers with stress. The others do not have stress support groups; teachers are on their own.

b) Interpretation

While all teachers at highly and less effective schools do experience stress, highly effective schools tend to have coping mechanisms in place; for example, one teacher indicated:

“Yes, but the support group at school has been very helpful. I try to exercise a lot and plan my work in advance and seek help from my colleagues, if necessary.”

The situation at less effective schools is that teachers are left to deal with stress by themselves; for example, one teacher said:

“Yes, the stress level is high because of changes in curricular and many [other] school factors such as lack of learner discipline, poor human relations and so on; I just pretend not to be aware of everything.”

The above statements indicate that the stress-control mechanisms at highly effective schools do have a positive effect on their work performance, unlike at less effective schools where such mechanisms are not in place. The stress level at less effective schools is uncontrollably high.

5.2.3.13 *How do you maintain discipline in your classroom, and which methods do you use?*

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C emphasise the value of classroom rules and making learners respect the rules. Schools D, E and E seem to use reprimand and authority to discipline learners.

b) Interpretation

While all schools try to discipline learners in the classroom, highly effective schools rely on entrenched values and classroom rules. As one teacher remarked:

“I try to be preventative in my approach, inculcate the classroom rules, discuss with learners moral values such as respect and tolerance; I generally use a humanistic approach.”

The indication at less effective schools is that discipline is left to the teachers as they have to see to it in the classroom. One teacher indicated:

“I try my level best to yell and reprimand, but it is very hard, you see; there are too many learners [who are too] old for school already; so, it’s hard to discipline them.”

The preceding statement implies that the value-oriented discipline advocated by highly effective schools is working and is sustainable, as opposed to the disciplinary methods used by less effective schools.

5.2.4 Focus-group interviews with SGB members

The focus group was composed of one SGB member from each of the six schools. The SGB members responded at random to the interview questions. Their responses,

like those of the principals, are presented as ‘SGB members of schools A, B, C, D, E and F’. Analysis takes the form of an analytic discussion, followed by an interpretation supported by extracts from responses. The purpose of the questions was to establish the factors relating to governance, which the SGB regards as enhancing school effectiveness and improvement.

5.2.4.1 What do you think are your duties as a school-governing body and do you think you are doing it well?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C believe that their duty is to support the principal and teachers; moreover, they all seem to know what their duties are with regard to policy, finance, property, teacher recruitment, and learner discipline. However, schools D, E and F have challenges executing the duties well.

b) Interpretation

While all schools know what the duties of the school-governing body are, highly effective schools adhere to those duties; for example, one SGB member of school A said their duties are to:

- assist teachers with their work;
- draw up policies;
- help the principal with ill-behaved learners;
- help with the management of school finances;
- raise funds;
- support the learners with their learning;
- recommend the hiring of teachers;
- buy and take care of school property.

However, adhering to or implementing such duties is a problem at less effective schools; for example, an SGB member of school E said:

“Yes, but teachers are negative, so the SGB is struggling.”

It is clear that, at the highly effective schools at least, the members of the SGB are aware of their duties, which enhances the governance of the schools positively, compared to less effective schools.

5.2.4.2 Are you involved in developing a school-development plan? If so, how do you go about the development process?

a) Discussion

Schools A, B and C believe in prioritising first. Schools A and B do a SWOT analysis as their point of departure. School C believes that development planning goes hand in hand with the budget. School B believes that time is important for the school-development planning process. School A mentioned a timeframe of 33 years; school D did not specify any; schools E and F stated that they did not do development planning.

b) Interpretation

It is clear that most schools engage in development planning and that highly effective schools tend to emphasise the process rather than the planning itself. One of the SGB members of school A indicated the following:

“Yes we do the SWOT analysis of the school, then determine what should come first, and then draw up the school-development plan. All stakeholders are involved in the development of the plan.”

Less effective schools do not embark on any development planning. The following extract from the response of an SGB member of school E sums up the situation as follows:

“We have not been involved in such a process; the principal will just show it to us in the SGB meeting; I think he does it himself.”

The above-mentioned statements indicate that the process of development planning is important for effective governance; hence, highly effective schools embark on this. It also follows that the process of school-development planning should be done properly.

5.2.4.3 Do you have a plan for the SGB meetings? If so, when and how do you hold your meetings?

a) Discussion

At schools A, B and C, dates are jointly planned by the SGB. School A mentioned the chairperson and secretary with regard to the planning of meetings. School C determines dates according to the availability of members. School B has fixed meeting schedules. Schools E and F have problems in that members often do not attend the meetings.

b) Interpretation

While most schools state that they hold SGB meetings, highly effective schools hold meetings according to a well-planned and timed schedule. One SGB member substantiated this by saying:

“Yes, we hold a meeting at the beginning of the year to determine dates for the meetings; once we agree on the dates proposed, we draw up a meeting list for the year. Our meetings are run by the chairperson, and the secretary writes the minutes. ... All of us have a say in our meetings ... apologies are read by the secretary.”

Attendance of SGB meetings are a challenge for less effective schools, as the following extract from a member of school F suggests:

“Yes, we have a meeting schedule, which spreads [makes provision] for one meeting per term, but we usually cancel the meeting or reschedule if most members are not present.”

The indication is that attendance, planning and the proper scheduling of meetings, as at highly effective schools, have a positive effect on school governance, which is not the case at less effective schools.

5.2.4.4 How are your meetings run?

a) Discussion

At schools A, B, and C, the meetings are run by the SGB chairperson in each case; the secretary writes the minutes; and correct meeting procedures are followed. Schools D, E and F are the only ones where meetings are conducted by the principal. There is also an attendance problem regarding SGB meetings at schools E and F.

b) Interpretation

While all schools hold SGB meetings, there is a difference in how meetings are conducted. At highly effective schools, meetings are run properly, as is evident from the following account given by an SGB member of highly performing school A:

“... the secretary reads the minutes of the previous meeting and we deal with matters arising from the minutes; then they are adopted; then we discuss the new agenda. If you want to talk, you raise your hand; then the chairperson gives you the time to talk. We sometimes break for tea if the meeting is long; and at the end we close again with a prayer.”

The indication at less effective schools is that meetings are not properly conducted and that they are dominated by the principal. The following extract from comments made by an SGB member at school E supports the notion:

“The meetings are supposed to be run by the chairperson but because sometimes both [the] chair and deputy chair are not there, the principal does most of the talking.”

The preceding comments show that knowledge about meeting procedures has a positive effect on highly effective schools’ operations, unlike at less effective schools where meetings are not properly conducted.

5.2.4.5 *Are you involved in policy-making? If so, how do you go about developing a policy at your school?*

a) Discussion

All schools emphasise the identification of a need for policy formulation, which will result in formulating a draft presentation to parents. However, at schools A, B and C, the policy-making process seems to involve the SGB, while at schools D, E and F policy formulation seems to be influenced by the principals.

b) Interpretation

While all schools embark on policy formulation, highly effective schools use collaboration by SGB members in drawing up the policy using clearly defined procedures, as the following extract indicates:

“Yes, we firstly listen to the principal to explain what we should do; then we start by identifying topics about the area of policy-making; we break up into groups, choose topics, and then discuss each topic. Each group will present its discussion at the next meeting. [Next] we discuss the national or provincial guidelines before we agree on the draft policy. [When] the draft is adopted, then a copy is given to learners to give [to their] parents for comments and, in the next meeting, parents

raise their concerns and the policy is adopted. If some issues cannot be resolved, they are held over for the discussion in the SGB.”

By contrast, less effective schools have their policy formulation influenced by the principal, with little participation by SGB members. One SGB member of school E said:

“The principal comes with a discussion draft; then we discuss it and agree, but the parents will be reluctant to discuss against it because most of them do not know much about their role and rights in the whole process.”

It follows that the involvement of SGBs in policy formulation, as at highly effective schools, positively influences the quality of policy and therefore their effectiveness, as opposed to policy formulation at less effective schools.

5.2.4.6 Do you have projects at your school? If so, how are they managed?

a) Discussion

All the schools in the research sample have school projects: at school A, the SGB manages projects; school B has a project manager, and school C has a committee of stakeholders. Schools A, B and C have a set procedure for managing projects. At school D, the SMT runs projects, and at schools E and F the principals control them.

b) Interpretation

While all the schools affirmed that they have projects, highly effective schools have clearly defined procedures for conducting them; for example, the SGB member of school B stated:

“Yes, we do have projects at our school. We firstly appoint a project manager who will be a knowledgeable person (who could be a teacher or parent) in the area of the project; then we elect the project committee that will report to the SGB about selected vendors for the project, the use of money and so on.”

By contrast, at less effective schools, projects are the responsibility of the principal, as suggested by the following extract from comments made by an SGB member of school F:

“Yes, we do have projects [and] we drive [see] them through; the principal plays a leading role.”

The preceding comments indicate that, at highly effective schools, projects are collectively driven, which enhances their effectiveness. At less effective schools, the opposite holds true as the principal occupies centre stage.

5.2.4.7 *Are you involved in the disciplining of learners? If so, how?*

a) Discussion

At all the schools, the SGBs are involved in learner discipline. Schools A, B and C have disciplinary committees and proper disciplinary procedures. Schools D, E and F do not mention anything about disciplinary committees, and school E regards disciplinary procedures as cumbersome and less effective.

b) Interpretation

While all schools do discipline learners, it appears that highly effective schools have well-defined disciplinary procedures and well-functioning disciplinary committees. An SGB member of school B commented as follows:

“Yes, it is one of our roles as SGBs, in terms of SASA, to assist the principal with the discipline of learners. We have a disciplinary committee which meets to discuss cases of transgression by learners, and we can recommend suspension for five days or expulsion from school to the Head of Education.”

By contrast, less effective schools do not to have well-defined disciplinary procedures, resulting in prolonged cases, sometimes with limited success. An SGB member of school E commented as follows:

“Yes, the SGB has the role of helping the principal with serious cases, but we have had cases returned back from the department, reinstating learners that are misbehaving, claiming that they are either too young to leave school or [that] the evidence is not enough. So, the SGB is rather weary of these cases sometimes ... it is also a very long process.”

The above statements suggest that, as at highly effective schools, discipline is affected positively by having well-defined disciplinary procedures and a working disciplinary committee, which is not evident at less effective schools.

5.2.4.8 *Are you as an SGB motivating parents to be involved in school activities? If so, how?*

a) Discussion

All schools give some form of recognition to parents as motivation (that is, certificates, praise, invitations and rewards). School B indicated that school performance motivates parents. School E has a problem in that many parents are unmotivated and fail to attend meetings.

b) Interpretation

While most schools struggle to encourage parents to attend school activities, it is clear that highly effective schools usually have highly motivated parents; for instance, an SGB member of school B spoke about how the performance of the school could motivate parents, stating:

“We have, however, noticed that most of our parents are already motivated by the performance of the school.”

Parental involvement at less effective schools is a serious problem. An SGB member of school E said the following in this regard:

“Yes, although most parents do not come for our meetings, those who do come we motivate very much by recognising their presence and thanking them for coming.”

It is clear that the involvement of parents in the activities of the schools affects their success positively. This is the case at highly effective schools, unlike at their less effective counterparts.

5.2.4.9 Does your school have a vision and mission? If so, how do you ensure that the school governance activities are geared towards achieving the vision and mission?

a) Discussion

All schools have a mission and a vision. Schools A and B enhance their vision and mission through the cooperation of stakeholders; schools B and C incorporate a vision and mission into the planning of their school activities; schools D, E and F are unsure about how their vision and mission relate to their governance activities.

b) Interpretation

While all the participating schools claim to have a vision and mission, the indication is that highly effective schools articulate both their vision and mission to stakeholders and incorporate that into their school-development planning. The following remarks by an SGB member of school B support this conclusion:

“We do, the vision and mission of our school are lived by every stakeholder; we ensure that every activity of the school is linked to the vision and mission of the school.”

The indication at less effective schools is that a vision and mission are decided upon because it is required by the department; they are not well advocated to stakeholders. An SGB member of school E had this to say:

“Yes, it was the requirement of the education department for each school to have; we have, but we are in the process of popularising both and hope to see their impact on the situation of our school.”

It is clear that, at highly effective schools, a well-articulated and advocated vision and mission among all school stakeholders can have a positive impact on their general functioning and achievement, unlike at less effective schools lacking a vision and mission.

5.2.4.10 What role do you play in the recruitment of teachers?

a) Discussion

All schools do short-listing and interviews for the recruitment of teachers. Schools D, E and F are experiencing recruitment problems due to power struggles.

b) Interpretation

While all schools involve their SGBs in the recruitment process, the process at highly effective schools is problem-free with SGB members participating fully in the process. The following extract from statements made by an SGB member of school B bears testimony to this:

“We do [the] short-listing and interview of [the] candidates, then recommend the best man or woman for the job.”

Problems exist with the way recruitment processes are handled at less effective schools. An SGB member of school E said the following in this regard:

“Sir, do not ask me about that – this always causes conflict at our school because of everyone wanting a higher post. We do shortlist and interview, but we have disputes after disputes – I think somebody neutral should do it at my school.”

The indication is that, as at highly effective schools, the proper involvement of the SGB in the recruitment of teachers, if done properly, has a positive impact on the quality of the recruitment process, which is not happening at less effective schools.

5.2.4.11 Does your school have a plan for extra- and co-curricular activities? Are parents involved in the extracurricular activities? If yes, how?

a) Discussion

All schools have plans for extracurricular activities, although they are planned at different times. Schools D, E and F have a problem with the lack of parental involvement in extracurricular activities. School E also has a problem with teachers not committing to extracurricular activities.

b) Interpretation

There is a strong indication that highly effective schools involve parents in planning and executing extra-curricular activities; for example, an SGB member of school A said:

“Yes, this is a winning school: we have extra- and co-curricular activities every afternoon; most of our coaches are parents, for example in cricket and hockey.”

At less effective schools, parents reportedly do not fully participate in the process. The following was said by an SGB member of school E:

“... parents do come, but the distance from school is a barrier as most parents come from the township and the school is in town; others cannot afford the taxi fare to school.”

It follows that, if parents are involved in the planning of extracurricular activities, as happens at highly effective schools, it impacts on the schools' success, unlike as at less effective schools.

5.2.4.12 How do you maintain the cleanliness of the buildings and grounds and go about raising funds for the school?

a) Discussion

All schools have cleaning measures run by parents. Schools D, E and F have problems with parents not committing to cleaning, as well as the problem of vandalism.

b) Interpretation

While all schools indicated that they had cleaning and fundraising measures run by parents, it is clear that the parents of highly effective schools are more committed. The following extract from an SGB member of school B supports this conclusion:

“The parents of our school volunteer to clean, and those with cleaning companies offer their services to the school. We have joint operations by all parents; funds come from the school fees and donations from parents; well, we also raise funds in many ways, from sales to investments for the school’s trust account.”

Less effective schools indicated that they experienced problems because parents did not fully participate in the process. An SGB member of school E said:

“Cleaning is a problem as the school is vandalised so frequently, but we are trying our best with [a] cleaning campaign, but support from parents is a problem.”

It appears that cleanliness is prized at highly effective schools and that the parents are most supportive, which is contrary to what is happening at less effective schools.

5.2.4.13 (i) Do you have a financial policy and financial committee? If so, how are the funds managed at your school?

a) Discussion

All schools have financial procedure, policy and finance committees. Schools A, B and C show signs of having excellent financial management in place.

b) Interpretation

It is evident that at highly effective schools the financial management is good. An SGB member of school B supported the notion:

“Yes; we do the budget, approve it with parents, follow procedures of procurement in requisition, payments and record-keeping.”

It is clear that even less effective schools have financial control measures, because this is a basic legislative requirement for all schools. For example, an SGB member of school E said:

“Yes, we have a finance policy and the finance committee but are not implemented to the latter; our school funds are not run properly.”

The above imply that proper financial management, as at highly effective schools, has a positive effect on the smooth running of the school, which is not the case at less effective schools.

5.2.4.13 (ii) Does the school have a policy with regard to the following: HIV/AIDS, religion and language?

a) Discussion

All schools have HIV/AIDS, religious and language policies. At all schools, the religious domain is Christian-dominated. The difference lies in their implementation of policies: essentially, highly performing schools seem to have clear guidelines on implementation, as opposed to poorly performing schools.

b) Interpretation

While all schools do have HIV/AIDS, religious and language policies, it is evident that policies are well articulated and implemented at highly effective schools; for example, an SGB member from highly effective school A said:

“Yes, we have an HIV/AIDS policy which clearly explains how to deal with infected and affected victims. We are a Christian community but with [a] few Muslims, but we treat each religion the same. We are an Afrikaans- and English-medium school, so learners are taught in both languages.”

The abovementioned points imply that well-articulated and -implemented policies at highly effective schools impact on the effectiveness of such policies, unlike at less effective schools.

5.2.4.14 Do you have a safety policy at your school, and how do you deal with emergencies?

a) Discussion

All schools have a safety policy. All schools stated that safety procedures were displayed. Only schools A, B and C train new teachers in safety measures. The principal of school E stated that its safety was endangered by the state of the building.

b) Interpretation

While all schools do have a safety policy, it appears that policies are clearly communicated at highly effective schools; for example, an SGB member from highly effective school A said:

“We do: the safety procedures are displayed in all classes. We have fire extinguishers if there is [a] fire; there is a first-aid kit should

learners get injured; the secretary has the list of telephone numbers of [the] hospital, police and ambulance; and we have an SMS cell phone system for giving parents emergency information.”

5.2.4.15 Does your school have a school-based support team? If yes, how does it work?

a) Discussion

All schools do have SBSTs to help learners with special educational needs. Schools D, E and F indicated that they were in the process of training their SBSTs.

b) Interpretation

While all schools have SBSTs, highly effective schools SBSTs are more effective and operational. However, there is a lack of capacity on the part of the less effective schools. The following extract sheds light on the nature of the problem at less effective school F:

“The SBST is there to liaise with teachers and stakeholders about the assessment of the needs of all learners so that all learners are assisted; but we are still training more of our teachers to be effective in this regard.”

The SBSTs at highly effective schools are clearly effective, which influences the ability of the teachers to support the learners. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about less effective schools.

5.2.4.16 Do you experience conflict in the governance of the school and, if so, how do you resolve it?

a) Discussion

All schools experience conflict in the SGB. Schools A, B and C use talks to resolve conflict, while schools D, E and F use the law (force) to resolve conflict within the SGB.

b) Interpretation

While schools experience conflict in their respective SGBs, there appears to be a difference in terms of how such conflict is resolved. The two extracts from SGB comments by members of schools A and E highlight such a difference:

“Sometimes, we sit around the table and we talk about it then try to reach the solution. “

“Yes, at our school I think conflict is the major stumbling block of [to] progress and development; we use mostly law to solve problems as many conflicts are more personal than rational.”

It would appear that resolving conflict, as it is done at highly effective schools, needs some kinds of discussions to reach consensus, unlike in the case of the use of force, which is dominant at less effective schools.

5.2.4.17 Do you form part of school committees? If so, what is your role?

a) Discussion

All schools have school committees elected within the SGB or from the ranks of parent volunteers at schools A, B and C. Schools D, E and F have a problem with parents not cooperating with teachers in the committee.

b) Interpretation

While all schools have school committees, it appears that highly effective schools favour the involvement of parents (SGB) in committees; for example an SGB member of school A said:

“Yes, we are elected every year to serve on different committees. I think our role is to support the teachers and learners in those committees.”

There is a strong indication that, at less effective schools, the cooperation between parents and teachers in this regard is weak. An SGB member at school F said:

“Yes, we are part of the committees at school; our role is to assist the SMT and teachers with a number of aspects, for example extracurricular activities, but we do experience problems from teachers as some look down upon SGB members.”

It is clear that at highly effective schools the involvement of parents in school committees enhances the functioning of the committees, which is not the case at less effective schools.

5.2.5 Personal interviews with learning facilitators

Four learning facilitators responsible for curriculum implementation at the schools participating in the project were interviewed. The aim of the questions was to

determine which factors learning facilitators regarded as influencing the effectiveness and improvement of the schools that they supported. In order to maintain anonymity, learning facilitators are referred to in numerical codes, for example 1 or 3.

5.2.5.1 How do you identify areas of development among teachers in your subject and cluster?

a) Discussion

Learning facilitators 1, 2 and 3 firstly did monitoring to assess the weaknesses of teachers, and then planned an intervention programme to assist the school. Learning facilitator 4 performed a documentary analysis to detect weaknesses.

b) Interpretation

It appears that there is no coordinated and uniform approach to identifying the developmental needs of teachers. Two different responses by learning facilitators attest to this:

“I have to visit the teachers at their schools, monitor their work and see what are the weaknesses in their work as against the NCS.”

“The first thing is to do a documentary analysis of the teachers’ and learners’ portfolios, then identify weaknesses and give advice where possible.”

These statements show that there are different approaches to identifying teacher developmental needs, and that there is a need for a coordinated and uniform system in identifying the developmental needs of teachers.

5.2.5.2 How do you plan to assist teachers in your cluster?

a) Discussion

Learning facilitators 2, 3 and 4 agreed that they planned their teacher assistance based on their investigations of teacher performance (haphazardly). Only learning facilitator 1 spoke about drawing up an action plan for improving schools.

b) Interpretation

It follows that there is no coordinated and uniform approach to assisting teachers, and that the learning facilitators seem to be acting as individuals. The following responses support this:

“I firstly draw [up] an action plan based on my findings of [during the] visits that I conducted and in which I decided what kind of assistance is required by individual schools.”

“I intervene in schools based on their performance in the formal assessments, because it’s an indicator of what is happening in those schools.”

Furthermore, there is apparently no uniform plan to assist teachers, as learning facilitators seem to work as individuals, which reveals the need for a uniform approach to teacher assistance.

5.2.5.3 How do you ensure that teachers understand subject or learning area policies?

a) Discussion

Learning facilitators 1, 2, 3 and 4 ensured that teachers understood subject and learning-area policies through workshops. Only learning facilitator 2 spoke about individual teacher support.

b) Interpretation

Learning facilitators assist teachers as group in workshops as individualised support given to teachers is inadequate. This is evident from the following two extracts:

“Well, I run information sessions for individual schools and conduct workshops for the cluster of school based on the overall weaknesses identified either by formal assessments or my visits to schools.”

“I conduct workshops for schools in my cluster and give individual support to teachers per school based on their needs.”

The preceding comments clearly suggest that individual support is needed for both highly effective school teachers and, even more so, for teachers at less effective schools. Support is given to groups, rather to than individuals.

5.2.5.4 How do you provide resources for the teachers, and what are they?

a) Discussion

Learning facilitators 1, 2 and 3 supplied official department documents and recommended lists of learning and teaching material as resources support. Learning facilitator 4 suggested that other teachers could be used as a resource person.

b) Interpretation

While most learning facilitators give only official subject documents to teachers, little was said about other support methods such as assistance in the classroom. The following extracts support this conclusion

“I mostly provide teaching and learning-resources lists from, say, publishers for schools to order, and [I] supply circulars and national documentation updated on the subject.”

“The most important resources are the departmental documents and the catalogues of the latest teaching and learning resources.”

The preceding statements suggest that individual dialogical support is needed for both highly effective school teachers, and even more for teachers at less effective schools as the mere provision of documents is not enough.

5.2.5.5 How do schools respond to your visit reports?

a) Discussion

Learning facilitators 1 and 4 indicated that the performance of the school had a bearing on how the learning facilitator would be welcomed at a particular school (well-performing schools receive learning facilitators well). Learning facilitator 2 indicated that the attitude of the learning facilitator indicated how well he/she would be received by the school. Learning facilitator 3 indicated that the timing of the appointment became problematic if the appointment disrupted classes.

b) Interpretation

Responses to the visit of learning facilitators to schools are influenced by two factors, namely the performance of the school and timing of the visit. Highly effective schools

receive learning facilitators well. Learning facilitators are welcomed if the visit causes minimal disruption. Two learning facilitators had the following to say about this:

“Schools that are doing well in terms of learner attainment seem to respond well to visits compared to those struggling.”

“The schools not doing well always complain about the learning facilitators not coming to their schools; when you go, they complain about your attitude and the timing of the visit.”

The above statements suggest that visits by learning facilitators have to be scheduled for the appropriate time, and the schools have to be informed about such matters since some teachers complain about their attitudes.

5.2.5.6 *How often do you hold in-service training for teachers in your cluster?*

a) Discussion

Learning facilitators 1, 2, 3 and 4 hold workshops once every term. Only learning facilitator 4 attempts to arrange extra support meetings for schools.

b) Interpretation

While all learning facilitators indicated that they hold workshops for teachers every term, little was said about helping individual teachers in the classroom. The following extracts support this assumption:

“I conduct workshops on a needs basis. It is not like I have to do it every month or so, but we have a district programme of workshops per term.”

“There is a workshop programme for every school term.”

These statements imply that the current individualised support to teachers is inadequate and needs to be improved. It is clear that support is given to groups rather than to individuals.

5.2.5.7 *Are these workshops held during or after school?*

a) Discussion

Learning facilitators 1 and 2 stated that workshops were sometimes held during school hours. Learning facilitators 3 and 4 reported that they were held in the afternoons.

b) Interpretation

The indication is that most workshops are held in the afternoon just before the end of the last period. The following attests to this:

“It depends on the schedule: sometimes due to the number of schools, one is forced to do them [in the afternoon], say, taking some time [away] from the school time.”

“Our office is far from [the] schools, so we start with most of the workshops towards school-out; say, 14:00 for most schools.”

The mere fact that workshops are held after school is a shortcoming regarding the support the teachers need in the classroom. Teachers feel that these workshops should be replaced by classroom support programmes.

5.2.5.8 What problems would you mention as affecting the effectiveness or improvement of schools negatively, and why?

a) Discussion

The following are the main reasons learning facilitators cite as affecting school effectiveness and improvement negatively:

- lack of capacity of the SMT to workshop teachers on curricular issues;
- lack of control of work by the SMT;
- negative attitudes of teachers;
- poor leadership by principals.

The reasons listed are not substantiated.

b) Interpretation

Learning facilitators tend to blame the schools and teachers for the ineffectiveness of schools; for example, one said:

“The attitude of some teachers, in terms of commitment and towards their work in general, is very negative.”

This statement implies that learning facilitators do not perceive any shortcomings with regard to their work to schools; instead, they blame the schools for their (the schools’) poor performance.

5.2.6 Personal interviews with school-management and -governance developers

Four school-management and -governance developers responsible for the schools taking part in the project were interviewed. The purpose was to identify the factors which, in their experience, influence school effectiveness and improvement. The

responses of the school-management and -governance developers were not labelled as they had requested that their responses remain anonymous; consequently, the research refers to one school-management and -governance developer. No codes were attached to them *per se* as only their responses were important for the data-collection process.

5.2.6.1 How do you identify areas of development among schools in your cluster?

a) Discussion

In order to assess the need for help at the schools, school-management and governance developers use the following mechanisms:

- visits to schools;
- reports by principals;
- analyses of the performance of the school, using matriculation results;
- checklists.

b) Interpretation

While school-management and -governance developers do visit the schools, very little was said about what they did with the collected reports. School-management and -governance developers were checking rather than assisting. For example, two of them said:

“We rely on the reports from the principal of (to gauge) the need for intervention or support; and then respond appropriately.”

“I prefer to use my checklist to get evidence of what the school is doing, [and] then respond to what I regard as the school area of development. “

The indication is that there is more checking of the schools than support for them, and the absence of a support system by the school-management developers was evident and indicated that support was highly needed.

5.2.6.2 *How do you plan to assist these schools?*

a) Discussion

School-management -and governance developers assist schools based on the need and situation at the schools. There is no comprehensive assistance plan on the part of the school-management and -governance developers.

b) Interpretation

Currently, there is no plan to assist schools. School-management and -governance developers go to the schools and do whatever they think will help them; for example, two of them said:

“Well, I do not have a comprehensive plan for all schools but I respond to individual schools according to their needs.”

“My assistance for schools is based on the needs of each school; you see schools are not functioning the same, so your intervention is rather school-based.”

It follows that what is needed is a comprehensive plan by school-management developers to assist schools, which is evidently non-existent.

5.2.6.3 Which tools do you use to assess the progress of your schools?

a) Discussion

School-management and -governance developers 1 and 4 used checklists to assess progress at schools. School-management and -governance developers 2 and 3 relied on the verbal account of the principal and recorded it in the logbook.

b) Interpretation

The work of the school-management and -governance developers centred on check-listing and very little was said about development; for instance, two of them explained:

“We do not have a checklist from the National Department but the district has such a checklist although we do not fully utilise it.”

“I have a checklist that I use to record all reports from the principals and then take those to make a follow-up.”

These statements imply that there is a need for developmental programmes by school-management developers rather than an exclusive focus on checking. The developmental programmes should take the needs of the school into consideration.

5.2.6.4 What strategies do you often suggest for school improvement?

a) Discussion

School-management and -governance developers suggested the following strategies for school improvement:

- extra support to learners;

- extra classes to catch up;
- interpersonal collaboration;
- improvement plans for each teacher.

b) Interpretation

While school-management and -governance developers suggested school-improvement strategies, very little was said about the schools' and district's joint approach to school improvement and the need for more emphasis on schools. Two school-management and -governance developers said:

“It depends on the nature of the school's performance, but I recommend they provide extra support to the matriculants.”

“I have encouraged schools to develop their own catch-up programmes, which will be geared towards the improvement of results, for example extra classes.”

The abovementioned comments give a clear indication that there is a need for a joint effort for strategies of improvement between the school and the district office to foster collaboration between the two.

5.2.6.5 What problems would you mention as affecting the improvement of schools negatively, and why?

a) Discussion

School-management and -governance developers indicated the following as reasons affecting the improvement of schools negatively: poor management, lack of commitment on the part of the teacher, hasty changes, and lack of parental and community involvement.

b) Interpretation

The indication is that school-management and -governance developers tend to cite school-based reasons as those affecting the improvement of the schools. Very little is said about the education district. Two school-management and -governance developers heavily put the blame on schools, for example they indicated:

“Poor management in some of our schools.

“Lack of commitment and motivation on the part of the teachers.”

There is an indication that the role of the district office in support of school improvement is neglected and that more has to be done to ensure that the district provides adequate support for the improvement of schools.

In summary, this section represented the performances of the schools taking part in the project in the form of a histogram depicting their percentage pass rates. The aim was to compare their perceived effectiveness with their learner attainment in Grade 12. The results of the empirical study were presented by discussing pertinent extracts from the transcripts of the semi-structured interviews conducted with the principals, focus-group interviews with members of the SMTs, teachers, SGB members, learning facilitators, and school-management and -governance developers. An analytic comparison was made between three poorly performing and three highly performing schools. The subsequent section discusses and analyses the data obtained through documentary analysis.

5.3 PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA OBTAINED FROM THE DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS

A comprehensive documentary analysis was done to verify and substantiate the information collected during interviews and to strengthen the evidence about how schools operate. The documentary analysis was done by perusing the documents for information that could support or refute the data collected though the semi-structured interviews and focus-group discussions.

The following section provides a record of the documents analysed and the supporting data culled from the documents for the following areas of school performance (these areas are those used by the schools to conduct their evaluation): school functionality; management; governance and parent community; teaching and learning; learner achievement; school safety; resources; employee wellness and teacher discipline.

5.3.1 Results of documentary analysis

The following documents were analysed in the above-mentioned areas,

Area	Documents
Functionality	Timetable, school time-schedule, duty lists, and organisational structure.
Management	Principal's diary, year plan, school-improvement plan, school-development plan, SMT minutes, committees' composition, HOD records, files, control of work, improvement plans for department, departmental minutes, teacher development, staff minutes, staff attendance and leave register, circulars and communication, filing system, stock control and register, teacher discipline, visitors' register, induction, motivation of staff and learners, marketing, conflict resolution, control of work, delegation, decision-making, quality management, strategic management, interpersonal relations, extra curriculum activities, inclusion, performance review.
Governance	Vision and mission, policies, SGB minutes, parents' minutes, SGB year plan, projects, school-development plan, financial management, budgeting, control, auditing, procurement, reporting, fund-raising, disciplinary records, duties, recruitment of teachers.
Teaching and learning	Personal teacher portfolios, learner portfolios, assessment methods, teaching methodology, teaching and learning resources, teacher development, learning facilitators' visits.
Learner achievements	Assessment records, final year schedules, awards and trophies.
School safety	Safety policy, safety procedure.
Resources	Procurement procedure, retrieval procedure, maintenance procedure.
Employee wellness	Records of employee wellness.
Teacher discipline	Records of both formal and informal hearings.

Table 5.7: Documents analysed

5.3.2 Comparison of data from documentary analysis

The documentary analysis results of the six schools were obtained by comparing the six schools in terms of the areas used to do the documentary analysis.

5.3.3 Analytic tables

An analytic table was drawn up for each of the above areas subjected to documentary analysis. A comparison was made between highly effective and less effective schools to determine the aspects influencing school effectiveness.

5.3.3.1 *Functionality*

The functionality of a school refers to how successfully it operates to achieve the goals it has set for itself. The table therefore presents a comparative analysis of highly and less effective schools in this regard.

Highly effective schools Schools A, B and C	Less effective schools Schools D, E and F
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well-planned time scheduling is in force.• All staff members are aware of their duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time is allocated as a requirement but not used profitably.• Staff members are usually not well versed in their duties.

Table 5.8: Functionality of highly and less effective schools

5.3.3.2 *Management*

Schools with effective management can be distinguished from their less effective counterparts by virtue of their high level of planning, organization, leadership and control. In the following table, a comparison is made between highly and less effective schools.

Highly effective schools Schools A, B and C	Less effective schools Schools D, E and F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work is well planned in advance; • committees are representative of teachers and parents; • good record-keeping systems in place • teachers developed and mentored to improve performance; • good communication strategies; • induction and motivation of teachers a priority; • well-articulated school improvement plans; • good conflict-resolution skills. • work controlled by HODs and management is skilful in delegation, decision-making, quality management strategic management; • good management of interpersonal-relations; • extra curriculum well-planned and schools well-marketed; • performance reviews conducted regularly; • all learners included in the learning process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work not planned in advance • committees dominated by teachers • poor record-keeping systems • poor teacher development • communication mostly verbal • induction of new teachers a rare occurrence • school-improvement plans not well articulated • school characterised by a high level of conflict • poor control of work, delegation, decision-making, quality management and strategic management; • human relations seem very bad • extracurricular activities relatively infrequent and schools poorly marketed; • learners not all included in the learning process; • performance of the school seldom reviewed.

Table 5.9: Management of highly and less effective schools

5.3.3.3 Governance

Elected governors to the school SGB are responsible for governing the school. This involves policy-making and running the governance affairs such as finance, development planning, learner discipline, teacher recruitment and the maintenance of buildings and grounds. The following table shows how different governance is in highly and less effective schools.

Highly effective schools Schools A, B and C	Less effective schools Schools D, E and F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well-articulated vision, mission policies clear, and good policy-making procedures; • governance records are well-kept; • proper planning by SGBs; • SGBs are well informed about processes of school development planning; • proper financial management; • disciplinary procedure in respect of maintaining discipline; • SGBs seem to know their duties, which include, among others, the recruitment of teachers, maintaining property and doing admissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unclear and ambiguous mission and vision; • policies exist but poorly implemented; policy-making principal-centred; • governance records not well kept and updated; • planning not done in advance; • SGBs not involved in school-development planning • SGBs not well versed in financial management; • learner disciplinary processes not clear and discipline not well-maintained; • SGBs not well informed about their duties: property not well-maintained; recruitment of teachers often characterised by disputes.

Table 5.10: Governance of highly and less effective schools

5.3.3.4 Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning refers to how well teachers plan and facilitate teaching and learning. It also takes into account how teachers assess learners in order to achieve the curriculum objectives. The table presents a comparative analysis of how teaching and learning differ at highly and less effective schools.

Highly effective schools Schools A, B and C	Less effective schools Schools D, E and F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high level of teaching and learning; planning of work thorough and done well in advance; • records of both teachers' and learners' work well-kept and up-to-date; • assessment of learners done continuously and varied teaching methods used; • teachers' support from HODs; well-defined programmes of development; support by learning facilitators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low levels of teaching and learning; • poor planning and work often unfinished; • poor record-keeping of both teachers' and learners' work; • schools rely heavily on summative assessment and lecture methods are used to teach learners; • HODs lack capacity to give support to teachers; • very little development of teachers;

concentrated mostly on subject administration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support by learning facilitators mostly centred on subject administration and less on subject content.
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Table 5.11: Teaching and learning at highly and less effective schools

5.3.3.5 Learner achievement

The success rate at which learners achieve the curriculum outcomes is called *learner achievement*. The following table compares the achievement of learners in highly and less effective schools.

Highly effective schools Schools A, B and C	Less effective schools Schools D, E and F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high pass rates in all grades; • records of learner attainment well-kept and reflect a continuous approach to assessment; • assessment standards maintained; • learners frequently motivated and their achievements celebrated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lower pass rates in all grades; • no proper records of learner attainment kept; • assessment mostly summative and standards not maintained; • learners seldom motivated and achievements not well-celebrated.

Table 5.12: Learner achievement at highly and less effective schools

5.3.3.6 School safety

Safety in schools means that there are fewer threats to both learners and teachers. The following table compares the safety conditions at highly and less effective schools.

Highly effective schools Schools A, B and C	Less effective schools Schools D, E and F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safe and secure environment for learners and teachers; • sound safety policies in place and safety measures well-advocated; • safety threats dealt with speedily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools unsafe for both learners and teachers; • safety policies not well-implemented and safety measures not well-articulated; • safety threats seem to take long to address.

Table 5.13: Safety at highly and less effective schools

5.3.3.7 Resources

The resources are the means that the schools use to achieve their objectives. The table compares the way resources are handled at the highly and less effective schools.

Highly effective schools Schools A, B and C	Less effective schools Schools D, E and F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • resources well maintained and controlled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor resource management; • vandalism, theft and neglect rife; • records poorly kept and not regularly updated.

Table 5.14: Resources at highly and less effective schools

5.3.3.8 Employee wellness

The support mechanisms the school puts in place to support both teachers and learners is often referred to as employee wellness. In the table below, conditions with regard to employee wellness in highly effective schools are compared to those of less effective schools.

Highly effective schools Schools A, B and C	Less effective schools Schools D, E and F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good support structures for both teachers and learners; • support to teachers and learners a collective effort by all stakeholders; • stress well-managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no structures in place to support teachers and learners; • Support the responsibility of the principal; • Little effort to manage both learner and teacher stress.

Table 5.15: Employee wellness at highly and less effective schools

5.3.3.9 *Teacher discipline*

Teacher discipline is the ability of the school management to deal with disciplinary cases pertaining to teachers. The table provides an analysis of the conditions of teacher discipline in both highly and less effective schools.

Highly effective schools Schools A, B and C	Less effective schools Schools D, E and F
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• fewer cases of teacher misconduct;• teachers seem self-disciplined and collaborate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• high volume of teacher misconduct;• teachers negative and frequently challenge authority via unions;• staff members relatively uncooperative, and conflicts rife.

Table 5.16 Teacher discipline at highly and less effective schools

This section presented analytic accounts of documentary-analysis data from three poorly performing schools and three highly performing schools.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented feedback from the data-collection process. The performances of the schools taking part in the project were represented in a histogram depicting the percentage pass rates of schools involved in the research process. The aim was to compare their perceived effectiveness with their learner attainment in Grade 12.

The responses of principals, SMT members, SGB focus groups, teachers' focus groups, learning facilitators, and school-management and -governance developers were analysed, discussed and interpreted. Interpretations were supported by extracts from interviews. The documentary analysis data were analysed and the results presented by means of analytic tables drawing a comparison between highly performing and less highly performing schools. The chapter has found that factors which have an impact on school effectiveness and improvement may be categorised

into three, namely, management, leadership and administration (see table 5.1), curriculum (table 5.2) governance (table 5.3) and support structures (table 5.4).

The following chapter deals with the model developed from the research, as well as other findings, conclusions and recommendations that emanated from the study.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, LIMITATIONS, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this final chapter is to summarize the findings, highlight a number of limitations, and present the main findings of the research. The problem statement of the study as formulated in Chapter 1 will be correlated with the findings as set out in this chapter, and the conclusions arising from the findings will demonstrate that the research questions have been effectively addressed. The chapter also proposes a model based on the research findings for evaluating, maintaining and enhancing school effectiveness and improvement in the Free State (FS) Province. The chapter concludes with recommendations for further research.

6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to answer the question as to which practices contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools in the Free State Province. In order to answer this question, the following secondary research questions were developed:

- What are the characteristics of effective schools?
- What does secondary-school effectiveness and school improvement in the general context entail?
- Which factors (may) contribute to the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools?
- What entails school effectiveness and school improvement from a legislative perspective in the South African context?
- How can Free State secondary schools be assisted to improve and become more effective?

The following is a brief outline of how the chapters of the thesis were structured to achieve the stated goals:

- Chapter 1 provided an orientation and background to the study and defined the concepts *an effective school*, *school effectiveness* and *school improvement*.
- Chapter 2 presented a review of the research literature on the concepts *school effectiveness* and *school improvement*, and discussed the relationship between them.
- Chapter 3 provided an overview of the literature on school effectiveness and school-improvement from a legislative perspective in the South African context.
- Chapter 4 focused on the research design, justified the choice of research methods, and highlighted both the advantages and disadvantages of the methods used.
- Chapter 5 focused on the discussion and interpretation of the results of the empirical study.
- Chapter 6, this final chapter, presents the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for further research.

6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research into the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools in the Free State province was characterized by a series of challenges. Firstly, schools were reluctant to participate in the research because of the possible implications of the research results. Secondly, some of the stakeholders found it very difficult to be truthful about the reality at their schools and to provide unfettered access to information. The sensitivity of allowing an outsider to peruse the official school documents created an unsettling situation. Despite these shortcomings and limitations, and the constraints on the generalizability of the results in particular, the researcher believes that it is possible to draw conclusions that make a significant contribution to the growing body of scientific knowledge on school effectiveness and improvement in general.

6.4 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY BASED ON THE FIVE SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

6.4.1 Introduction

Empirical research findings are a culmination of a data-triangulation process, whereby data from semi-structured interviews are triangulated with data from focus-group interviews and documentary analysis. The use of literature supports the outcomes of the empirical study, and a constant comparative analysis of schools against their learner attainment is made, because it is one of the main indicators of the effectiveness of a school. The following is an illustration of how triangulation was applied in this study:

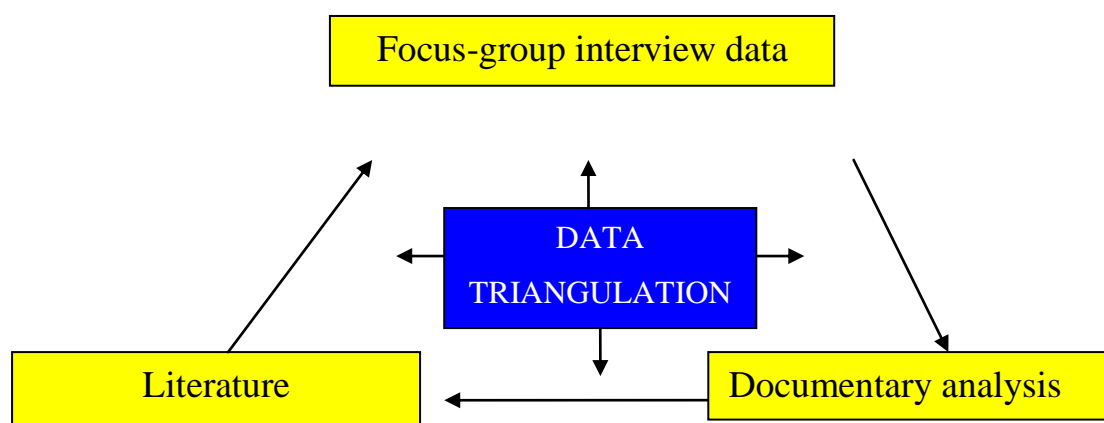


Figure 6.1: Triangulation applied in this study

The findings were analysed for each of the following four themes:

- Theme 1, *management, leadership and administration*, comprised the responsibilities of the principal, school management team and administrative infrastructure, and their impact on school effectiveness and improvement (Table 5.2).
- Theme 2, *the curriculum*, comprised aspects of subject curriculum delivery, administration and management by teachers and their impact on school effectiveness and improvement (Table 5.3).

- Theme 3, *governance*, focused on how such issues are dealt with by the SGB and influence school effectiveness and improvement (Table 5.4).
- Theme 4, *support structures*, addressed the question of how the role, functions and support of learning facilitators, school-management and -governance developers influence school effectiveness and improvement (Table 5.5).

6.4.2 Findings with regard to Research Question 1: What are the characteristics of effective schools?

This section first restates the research question posed in Chapter 1 in respect of the characteristics of effective schools. The section then defines the construct of an effective school, discusses the characteristics of effective schools with reference to the literature, and compares these with the findings of the empirical research. Cross-references are used to indicate clearly how the conclusions were arrived at.

In order to answer the research question, it was important first to define an effective school from the perspective of the research literature, and then to compare the literature definitions with definitions from the empirical study.

6.4.2.1 *Defining an effective school*

Most of the literature reviewed (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.4) highlighted the following characteristics as important in defining the effective school:

- Learner attainment: an effective school experiences high learner attainment.
- Effective teaching and learning: an effective school has a high level of teaching and learning.
- Effective management and leadership: effective schools have good leadership and are properly managed.

The empirical study found that the three highly effective schools that took part in this research had a high learner attainment (see Fig. 5.1) and effective leadership and management. It follows that the three aforementioned aspects form the basis of any definition of an effective school.

6.4.2.2 *Characterising an effective school*

The critical review of the research literature on the characteristics of effective schools identified a number of common characteristics (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.4). In turn, these were compared with the characteristics of effective schools according to the results of the empirical research. This comparison was made in order to answer the subsequent research question of what school effectiveness in the Free State context entails.

6.4.3 Findings with regard to Research Question 2: What does secondary school effectiveness in general entail?

The findings with regard to this research question are summarised in Tables 6.1 (a), 6.1 (b), 6.2 and 6.3 overleaf according to the first three of the four main themes identified earlier as indicators of effective schools and used throughout this study. The themes are management, leadership and administration (Theme 1); the curriculum (Theme 2); and school governance (Theme 3) (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2). The empirical research findings with regard to Theme 4, support structures, did not address the characteristics of effective schools. The respondents focused more on how their role and support influences school effectiveness, hence they identified aspects needed on the part of learning facilitation, school management, and governance development that could influence school effectiveness. The focus was on which external factors retard or enhance school effectiveness from an external perspective (see Chapter 5, paras. 5.2.5–5.2.6).

The next section deals with findings regarding the factors contributing to the effectiveness of secondary schools in the Free State Province.

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	CROSS REFERENCE
Planning	Planning was done in advance	Par.5.2.1.1
Year plan	All had effective year plans	Par. 5.2.1.2
Management style	All used a participatory management style	Par. 5.2.1.3
Professional development	All had a well-defined teacher development strategy	Par. 5.2.1.4
Induction	All had well-articulated induction programmes	Par. 5.2.1.5
Motivation of staff and learners	All had robust motivation strategies	Par. 5.2.1.6
Parental involvement	All had high and appreciated parental involvement	Par. 5.2.1.7
Marketing	All marketed themselves well with their performance	Par. 5.2.1.8
Conflict management	All used mostly negotiation or consensus-seeking to address conflict	Par. 5.2.1.9
Control of work	All controlled work frequently and intensively	Par. 5.2.1.10
Delegation	All tended to delegate according to capability and experience	Par. 5.2.1.11
Decision-making	All used a participatory decision-making system	Par. 5.2.1.12
Quality management	All had quality well-defined management check-ups	Par. 5.2.1.13
Strategic management	All planned their strategies well	Par. 5.2.1.14
Communication	All had effective communication systems in place	Par. 5.2.1.15
Visitors and community	All had an effective way of managing visitors and a welcoming treatment of outsiders	Par. 5.2.1.16
Admissions	All did advance admissions and had a well-defined admission procedure	Par. 5.2.1.17
Attendance of both teachers and learners	Both teachers and learners showed high attendance	Par. 5.2.1.18
Principal's diary	All their principals kept a diary that was updated daily	Par. 5.2.1.19
Administrative registers	All kept registers with clear control measures	Par. 5.2.1.20
Stock control	Proper stock-control measures were in place and stock was controlled regularly	Par. 5.2.1.21
Interpersonal relations	All had sound relationships between stakeholders	Par. 5.2.1.22
Extracurricular plan	All their extracurricular plans were well defined	Par. 5.2.1.23
Employee wellness	All had systems of assisting members in need of help	Par. 5.2.1.24
Inclusive education	All had clear systems of helping learners with special needs	Par. 5.2.1.25
Performance review	All reviewed their performance regularly and followed up for intervention	Par. 5.2.1.4.26

TABLE 6.1 (a): Theme 1: Management, leadership and administration: Principals

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	CROSS REFERENCE
Planning	All managers had a clear plan in their respective departments	Par. 5.2.2.1
Year plan	All managers had clear year plans in their departments	Par. 5.2.2.2
Management style	All used a mostly participatory approach to management	Par. 5.2.2.3
Professional development	All were highly involved with their departmental staff for development	Par. 5.2.2.4
Induction	All had a clear induction plan and were highly involved	Par. 5.2.2.5
Motivation	All frequently motivated learners and staff	Par. 5.2.2.6
Parental involvement	All held meetings with parents of particular grades	Par. 5.2.2.7
Control of work	All frequently controlled the work of subordinates	Par. 5.2.2.8
Conflict management	All used negotiation as a conflict resolution strategy	Par. 5.2.2.9
Decision-making	All preferred participatory decision-making procedures	Par. 5.2.2.10
Communication	All had well-defined communication procedures in their departments	Par. 5.2.2.11
Team work	All encouraged teachers to work as a team	Par. 5.2.2.12
Record-keeping	All kept proper records in the various departments	Par. 5.2.2.13
Assessment	All assessments of learners were done on a continuous basis and feedback on assessment given timely	Par. 5.2.2.14
Learning-facilitator visits	All learning facilitators were well received and their support well acknowledged	Par. 5.2.2.15
Involvement in school management	All managers were part of the management structure and highly involved	Par.5.2.2.16
Employee wellness	All managers played an active role in helping members of their teams who were in need	Par.5.2.2.17
Performance review	All managers reviewed the performance of their departments regularly and planned interventions	Par. 5.2.2.18

TABLE 6.1 (b): Theme 1: Management, leadership and administration: SMT members

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	CROSS REFERENCE
Work plan/choice of learning content	There were well-organised work plans in relation to choice of content, presentation and assessment	Paras. 5.2.3.1 and 5.2.3.2
Assessment	Assessment was done frequently and a combination of formative and summative assessment was used	Par. 5.2.3.3
Support for special-needs learners	All had mechanisms in place to support learners with special needs	Par. 5.2.3.4.
Record-keeping	Teachers kept proper records of their work and that of the learners	Par. 5.2.3.5
Teaching methods	Varied teaching methods were used, with emphasis on collaboration	Par.5.2.3.6
Motivation of learners	Learners were frequently motivated and achievements were celebrated	Par. 5.2.3.7
Professional development	Teachers were engaged in both internal and external development initiatives	Par. 5.2.3.8
Collaborative teaching	Team work was highly encouraged	Par. 5.2.3.9
Support by learning facilitator	All valued classroom support	Par. 5.2.3.10
Performance review	Teachers reviewed both their own work and that of the learners frequently and planned interventions	Par. 5.2.3.11
Management of stress	Teachers were taught employee-wellness strategies for coping with setbacks	Par. 5.2.3.12
Classroom discipline	A value-driven approach to learner discipline was preferred	Par. 5.2.3.13

TABLE 6.2: Theme 2: The curriculum

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	CROSS REFERENCE
Knowledge of duties	Governors knew their duties well	Par. 5.2.4.1
School development planning	Governors were actively involved in the school-development planning process	Par. 5.2.4.2
Meetings	Governors held meetings according to a well-planned schedule and meetings were properly run	Par. 5.2.4.3/4
Policy development	Governors were highly involved in drafting policies and procedures were well defined	Par. 5.2.4.5
Project management	Clear project management protocols existed	Par. 5.2.4.6
Learner discipline	Clear disciplinary procedures were in place and governors played an active role	Par. 5.2.4.7
Parental involvement	Parents were motivated to participate in school activities	Par. 5.2.4.8
Vision and mission	Besides being present, vision and mission were highly articulated and advocated to all stakeholders	Par. 5.2.4.9
Teacher recruitment	Governors were actively involved in the recruitment of teachers	Par. 5.2.4.10
Extra- and co-curricular activities	Parents were involved in planning and determining the activities	Par. 5.2.4.11
Cleanliness and grounds	Governors held regular cleaning campaigns and parents were committed to these	Par. 5.2.4.12
Fundraising/financial management	Fundraising was robust and finance-control measures highly effective	Par. 5.2.4.13
School safety	Governors had highly articulated and well-advocated safety measures and procedures	Par. 5.2.4.14
SBST	Had functioning SBST committees to give support to learners	Par. 5.2.4.15
Conflict management	Conflict was resolved through consensus-seeking	Par. 5.2.4.16
School committees	Governors were part of the school committees and fully participated in all activities	Par. 5.2.4.17

TABLE 6.3: Theme 3: School governance

6.4.4 Findings with regard to Research Question 3: Which factors contribute to the effectiveness of secondary schools?

The findings with regard to this research question will be discussed according to the following four main themes identified earlier as indicators of effective schools and used throughout this study.

6.4.4.1 Theme 1: Management, leadership and administration

The research results confirmed that several management, leadership and administrative factors influence the effectiveness of schools positively. These include proper planning, a properly implemented year plan, a democratic management style, regular teacher development, the induction of new teachers, motivation of staff and learners, parental involvement, marketing of the school, effective management of conflict, regular control of teachers' work, proper delegation of staff, proper decision-making, effective quality-assurance measures, proper strategic management, effective communication, proper time management, a welcoming atmosphere for all stakeholders and visitors, admissions that are done in advance, regular attendance by both teachers and learners, proper control of administrative registers, proper control of stock and assets, maintenance of good interpersonal relationships, proper planning of extracurricular activities, an inclusive approach to teaching, employee wellness, and regular performance reviews (see Chapter 5, paras. 5.2.1.1–5.2.1.27). It also became apparent that departmental collaboration, proper record-keeping, regular visits by learning facilitators, and the involvement of SMT members in the running of the school all have a profound influence on school effectiveness (see Chapter 5, paras. 5.2.2.1–5.2.2.18).

6.4.4.2 Theme 2: The curriculum

The findings confirm that the following curricular issues are pivotal to school effectiveness: good planning and the choice of subject-curricular content, regular and appropriate assessment strategies, appropriate use of teaching methods, regular motivation of learners, a collaborative approach to teaching, support of learning

facilitators, regular review of performances, management of teacher stress, and the maintenance of discipline in the classroom (see Chapter 5, paras. 5.2.3.1–5.2.3.13).

6.4.4.3 Theme 3: School governance

The research findings validate the positive influence on school effectiveness of governors who are well versed in their role, involved in school-development planning, capable of planning and conducting meetings regularly and properly, involved in policy-making, knowledgeable about the running of projects, involved in learner discipline, able to motivate parents to take part in school activities, committed to maintaining the vision and mission of the school, involved in teacher recruitment, uncompromising in maintaining the cleanliness of the school grounds – and who help with fundraising, financial control, safety on school premises, and form part of all the committees at the school (see Chapter 5, paras. 5.2.4.1–5.2.4.17).

6.4.4.4 Theme 4: Support structures

a) Learning facilitation

I. Identification of subject areas of development/intervention

The research literature indicates that the support of external bodies influences school effectiveness (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2); regular monitoring and assessment of teachers' work in the subjects affect teacher efficiency; intervention is based on the needs of individual schools and teachers (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.2.8); and there is a need for intervention programmes that can be applied in all schools.

II. In-service training and provision of resources

The research literature further indicates that in-service training should be on-going in order to improve the skills of teachers (see Chapter 3, par. 3.3). Although teachers regularly attend workshops, there is an excessive emphasis on policies and subject administration at the expense of the content of the individual subjects.

Moreover, the resources provided to teachers are mostly departmental documents and textbook lists rather than information about the latest subject insights (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.2.15). Consequently, there is a need for more defined training and resource-provision procedures.

III. Workshops

The empirical research shows that most in-service training is conducted through workshops and that much less individual support is given to individual teachers (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.2.15). The conclusion is that there is a need for more individualised support and fewer workshops.

IV. General

Learning facilitators pointed out that, in general, the factors influencing effectiveness at their schools (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.5) usually centred on the following:

- lack of management capacity by the SMT/principal;
- negative attitudes of teachers;
- lack of work control.

The conclusion is that there is a need for an inclusive programme that can be used to intervene and support teachers and schools to deal with the challenges.

b) School-management and -governance development

The empirical research determined that school-management and -governance developers believe that the development of schools should be based on the situation of each school. Currently, no comprehensive plan is being used to develop the schools (see Chapter 5, par 5.2.6).

I. Tool for planning intervention and assessing progress

While all school-management and -governance developers claimed to use a checklist to control and plan intervention at their schools, the research determined that there was no coherent and uniform way of doing the monitoring (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.6.1).

II. General

School-management and -governance developers mentioned that the following factors compromise the effectiveness of schools (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.6.1):

- poor management;
- lack of commitment by learners;
- hasty changes;
- lack of parental involvement.

These problems should be addressed to influence school effectiveness positively. The above section restated the research question posed in chapter 1 and addressed all the themes that were developed from the data to answer the question. The section also addressed the themes with reference to the literature reviewed in Chapters 2 and 3, and compared them with the results of the empirical study. The following section deals with the findings relating to how secondary schools can be assisted to become more effective in the Free State province.

6.4.5 Findings with regard to Research Question 4: What entails school effectiveness and school improvement from a legislative perspective in the South African context?

In chapter three an overview of the literature on school effectiveness and school improvement from a legislative perspective of South Africa was discussed. According to the legislative literature on school effectiveness in South Africa it became clear that the South African schools Act 84 of 1996 forms the legislative core

of how schools should be managed and governed. That the current school- and teacher-evaluation systems (the WSE, DA, PM and IQMS) are not assisting schools in improving their effectiveness. In particular, the findings indicate, for example:

- That there is a positive relationship between school effectiveness and good governance as contemplated by SASA (see Chapter 3, par.3.4.2).
- That the evaluation of both teachers and schools forms the basis for school improvement (see Chapter 3, par.3.4.3).
- That the implementation of the new curriculum since the advent of OBE has had a negative impact on school effectiveness (see Chapter 3, par.3.4.4)
- There is a need for the involvement of an external body to evaluate and support the schools (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2).

The next section explores the different ways by which the above findings could be addressed particularly in the Free State province.

6.4.6 Findings with regard to Research Question 5: How can Free State (FS) secondary schools be assisted to become more effective?

This section restates the aforementioned research question that was asked in Chapter 1 in respect of how secondary schools in the FS province can be assisted to become more effective. The section provides a detailed discussion on the suggested Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement (ISE&I) derived from the study, its context, key concepts, theoretical framework, themes, processes and indicators.

The literature on school effectiveness and improvement as reviewed in Chapter 3 (see par. 3.2) indicated that the current school- and teacher-evaluation systems (the WSE, DA, PM and IQMS) are not assisting schools in improving their effectiveness. In particular, the findings indicate the following:

- There is a need for the involvement of an external body to evaluate and support the schools (see Chapter 3, par. 3.2).
- Teachers have to be in-service trained on a continuous basis, and the content of the workshops should be teaching-based rather than administratively based (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.3.10).
- Support should be given to individual teachers (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.2.16).
- School-management and -governance developers do not have comprehensive school-improvement plans to enhance their effectiveness (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.6.2).

It should be noted that the highly effective schools that took part in this research indicated that IQMS were falling short of enhancing both teacher and school effectiveness. Comments made by one of the principals of a highly effective school during an interview supported this conviction (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.1.4).

The results of the empirical study as outlined in Chapter 5 indicate that schools generally do not have a local improvement strategy to enhance their effectiveness. Existing improvement plans are usually designed as a quick solution to a perceived weakness diagnosed in a specific area. What schools need in order to enhance improvement and sustain effectiveness is a comprehensive localised strategy that draws on the strengths of their stakeholders. The WSE of the National Department of Education does not offer a solution to the plight of the schools (see Chapter 3) as it is carried out every five years, while schools need a tool that they can use to assess their effectiveness on a continuous basis.

Based on the findings of the empirical research (see Chapter 5), the author has designed a model to enhance school effectiveness and improvement. This model, the **Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement (hereafter referred to as the ISE&I)**, is suggested as a localised context-bound and stakeholder-driven review tool that schools in this Province could use to enhance their effectiveness and improve their performance in all aspects. The ISE&I derives from this study and is based on the data collected and analysed.

6.5 INTRODUCING THE INDEX OF SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT (ISE&I) THAT CAN ASSIST IN IMPROVING SECONDARY SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS IN THE FREE STATE PROVINCE

6.5.1 Introduction

The ISE&I is a developmental model which, informed by the current research, is intended to help schools in the FS Province to review their current status of effectiveness and to plan and determine their improvement. The ISE&I adopts a developmental approach so that schools can use it to reflect on their current practices with a view to improving in the future.

School effectiveness is usually a process associated with learner attainment, and all improvement processes are geared towards improving the performances of learners. The ISE&I, however, views learner attainment as a narrow aspect of school effectiveness and articulates a comprehensive and holistic school-improvement model which focuses on all aspects of school functioning with the aim of improving SE.

The ISE&I is an initiative that perceives SE from a local school-based context, mobilising and facilitating the community-based involvement of stakeholders in the process of enhancing school effectiveness and improvement. However, the ISE&I should not be perceived as a recipe for the immediate improvement of schools; instead, it should be viewed as a tool providing an opportunity for all members of the school community to reflect on, brainstorm and evaluate their current practices so as to enhance their effectiveness and improvement.

6.5.2 Context of using the Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement

While the author does not recommend a particular way of using the ISE&I, it is important to note that being familiar with its contents could offer an insight into how it could be used best in each unique school context. The approach or use is purely participatory and seeks to involve all stakeholders in improving their schools.

6.5.3 Key concepts in using the Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement

School effectiveness: this concept refers to the school that functions properly, accomplishes its goals, and ensures learner support (Chapter 2, par. 2.2.2).

School improvement: for the purposes of the Index, this concept denotes the process whereby the school changes from its current state to an ideal state, resulting in conditions that are more effective (Chapter 2, par. 2.3.2).

6.5.4 Theoretical framework of the Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement

The understanding of school effectiveness is varied and complex in so far as there are different beliefs as to what constitutes it (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.2). There is consensus that school effectiveness is determined by the structural functioning of the school (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.5). Other views hold that there are factors within the school structure that could influence its effectiveness (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.5), and that the context in which the school operates has a significant influence on its effectiveness (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.5). It follows that the school operates within a particular social context with unique social characteristics that have a profound influence on its effectiveness (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.5). The ISE&I adopts the latter approach, which takes into consideration each school's contextual scenario in mapping out the improvement strategy.

6.5.5 Themes of the Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement

The ISE&I is centred on the following four themes, which are based on empirical research (see Chapter 5) and form the building blocks of school functioning:

- *Theme 1: Management, leadership and administration*: The ISE&I asserts that the management and leadership of a school has a profound bearing on school effectiveness and improvement; therefore, attempts should be made to improve and capacitate the management and leadership of the school at all

levels, from the classroom to the office of the principal (Chapter 2, par. 2.2.3.3). Administration is the cornerstone of the management and governance of a school. Consequently, the administrative process of a school has a profound and direct bearing on the functionality of the school. It is important to maintain effective administration in order to enhance school effectiveness and improvement (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.1).

- *Theme 2: The curriculum:* Teachers as the presenters of curriculum material are central to the subject-content choice, delivery and assessment; therefore, the manner in which the curriculum is managed, delivered and facilitated has a significant bearing on the general effectiveness and improvement of the school (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.2).
- *Theme 3: School governance:* The ISE&I notes that the governance of a school is a strengthening arm of school management; therefore, governors should be better equipped to deal with issues of governance in a way that complements and enhances school effectiveness and improvement (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.3).
- *Theme 4: Support structures:* Schools exist within a particular educational structure supported by management structures such as the school management directorate and the learning facilitation section. The district and provincial education departments are responsible for providing support to schools. This kind of support can be optimised if everything is carefully planned and executed to have a positive influence on the effectiveness and improvement of the school (see Chapter 5, par. 5.2.4).

Parental involvement is crucial at schools, because parents are the incipient and primary teachers of children and provide essential support to the learners. The partnership between school and home should be intact and geared towards creating favourable conditions for teaching and learning (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.4.).

6.5.6 Implementation of the Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement (ISE&I) in Free State secondary schools

6.5.6.1 *The principles underpinning the ISE&I*

The ISE&I is underpinned by the following principles:

- *Awareness* denotes that, in order for a school to move from its current state of effectiveness to an improved state of effectiveness, all stakeholders will need to be aware of the current situation. This can be attained through proper communication (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.3.6), thus making the stakeholders aware of all the improvement processes. The stakeholders of effective schools are usually highly involved (see Chapter 2, Table 2.1).
- *Participation* means that all stakeholders, having recognised and acknowledged the need for improvement, should get ready to participate in a process of reviewing, planning, action and reflection geared to school improvement (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.3.3).
- *Collaboration* signifies that all stakeholders should agree to work together on a collective set of goals and ideals that will be attained by them as a team (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.3.3).
- *Effective communication* implies that the process should be driven by constant feedback and reporting (see Chapter 2, par. 2.2.3.6).

6.5.6.2 *Five stages in the ISE&I*

According to the ISE&I, the processes of school effectiveness and improvement are cyclic, on-going, and consist of the following five stages: review of effectiveness; development of the operational framework for development; improvement plan; implementation, monitoring and feedback; and reflection and re-planning. The reason for having a cyclic process is that school-development planning is on-going, because stakeholders constantly strive to renew the conditions at the school to achieve an ideal state (see Chapter 2, par. 3.2.3).

The process of school improvement takes place within the framework of the four themes. According to the literature (see Chapter 2) and the results of the empirical study (see Chapter 5, par. 5.1), these four themes form the core of school effectiveness.

The ISE&I will therefore bring all stakeholders on board to improve the state of effectiveness at the school, foster participation in reviewing the situation, and assist them in developing operational plans to improve the conditions, implement such plans, and reflect on the progress. The ISE&I will ensure that the process is collaborative and reflective.

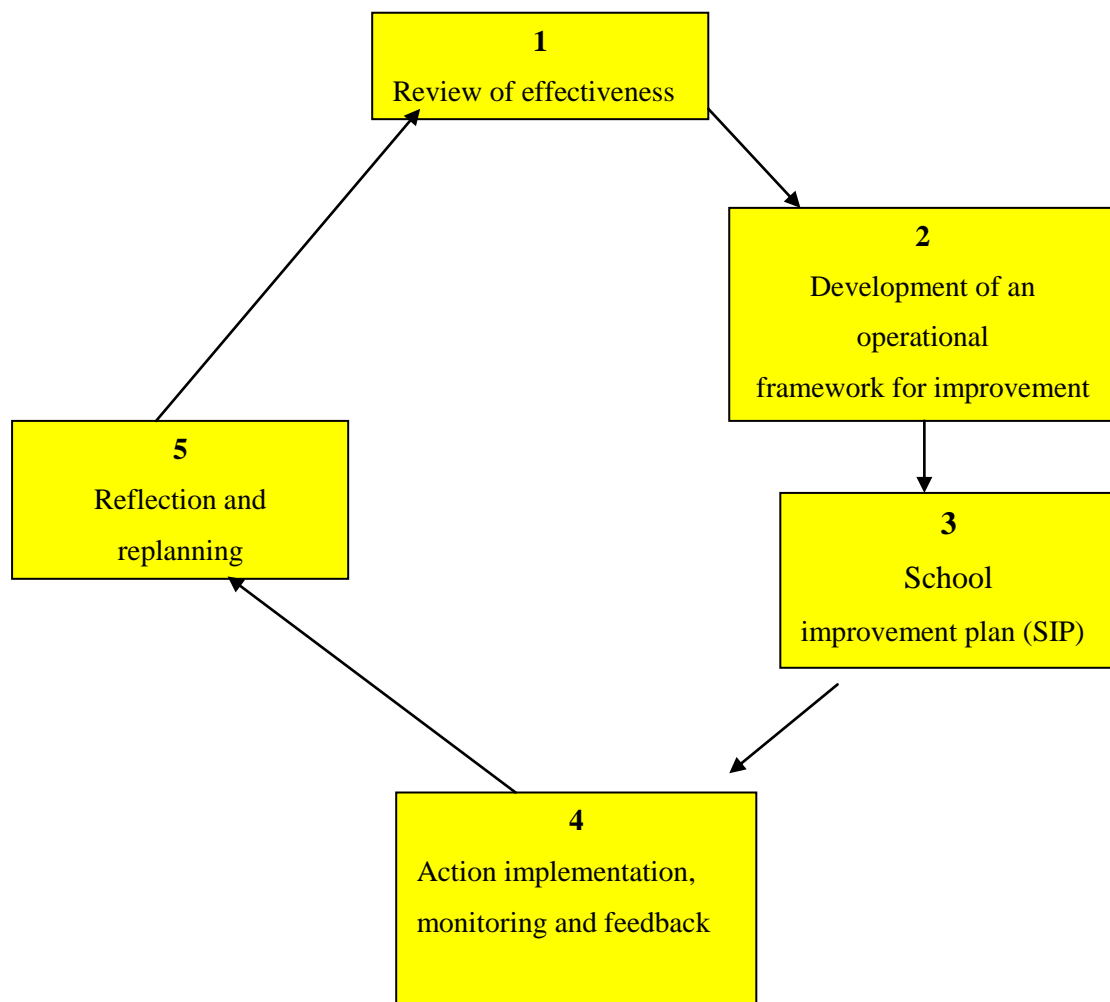


FIGURE 6.2: Cyclic Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement (ISE&I)

The process of improvement is, therefore, underpinned by the principles represented in Fig. 6.2, which are the following: *the review of effectiveness*, which seeks to raise the stakeholders' awareness of the state of affairs at the school and foster communication between them; *the development of an operational framework for development*, which strives to enhance participation; *a school improvement plan*, which aspires to foster collaboration; *action implementation, monitoring and feedback*; and *reflection and re-planning*, which endeavours to ensure reflective practice on the part of stakeholders.

Stage 1: Review of effectiveness

During the first phase, stakeholders will embark on a fact-finding mission and share knowledge of the current state of effectiveness at their schools. All the stakeholders need to participate in this process – for example, school management teams, teachers, the SGB, the school-management and -governance developer, learning facilitators and parents. Stakeholders need to probe questions such as the following:

- What is the current situation at our school with regard to effectiveness?
- What do we understand by *school effectiveness* and *school improvement*?
- What have we achieved in the past, and why?
- What are the strong and weak points of the school?
- What are the opportunities and threats that face the school?
- What are the challenges that confront the school?

Stage 2: Developing an operational framework for improvement

The second phase involves the composition of a school effectiveness and improvement committee, because no process can be driven without a steering committee. Ideally, all stakeholders should serve on the committee, which will be responsible for:

- reflecting on the current effectiveness and improvement processes by reviewing the tactics, strategies and planning new processes; mobilising support from the stakeholders by outlining the objectives, expectations and goals;
- setting up an effective framework that will include meetings, the duties of committee members, feedback, monitoring systems and reflection procedures.

Stage 3: Developing a school improvement plan (SIP)

During this process, areas of development will be identified. The SIP should attempt to answer the following questions:

- What should be done and why?
- Who should do it?
- When should it be done?
- How will it be monitored?
- How and where will reflection and feedback be managed?
- How will the process be financed and resourced?

Stage 4: Action implementation, monitoring and feedback

This is the stage during which the SIP will be put into practice. The monitoring tool for checking the effectiveness of activities will be used to provide constant monitoring and feedback. During this process, the following questions should be asked:

- What have we planned?
- Are all the planned activities taking place?
- What are the challenges?
- What are the successes and failures?

Stage 5: Reflection and re-planning

During stage five of the ISE&I, all the processes will be reflected upon to check the overall successes and failures. The strategies applied will be investigated to see if they have worked. A report is then compiled for all stakeholders and to serve as the basis for future reviews. The following important questions should be considered:

- What did we plan?
- What were our goals?
- What have we achieved, and why?
- What have we not achieved, and why?
- What have we learned from the process?

6.5.6.3 Time frame for the implementation of the ISE&I

A suitable time frame for the implementation of the ISE&I is essential. It is, however, up to the individual schools to plan according to how well the ISE&I can be applied to their school. The following is an example of how schools could plan around the issue of time:

Stage	Time in the academic year
1	Fourth term (end preceding year)
2	First term
3	First term
4	Second term
5	Third term

TABLE 6.4: Time frame for the implementation of the ISE&I

6.5.6.4 Contribution that the ISE&I could make in the improvement of school effectiveness in Free State schools

The ISE&I will firstly evaluate the state of effectiveness at a particular school. The results of such an evaluation will then form the basis of interventions to improve the conditions at the school. The ISE&I will also enhance stakeholder participation and ensure a sustainable improvement to which all stakeholders contributed. The ISE&I could serve as a guideline for other schools that intend reviewing and improving their effectiveness.

6.5.6.5 Review indicators of the ISE&I

The review indicators are those aspects that the SGB, guided by the school effectiveness and improvement committee, will have to assess during the first stage in the cycle, because these indicators will show where there is a need for improvement. The indicators, which are divided according to the themes of the ISE&I, were developed from the responses given during the regular and focus interviews, as well as from the analysis of the documentary data (see Chapter 5). The review should be carried out by all stakeholders in the form of a questionnaire soliciting data for the evaluation of each indicator per ISE&I theme. The following response options should be used:

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	PARTLY AGREE	DISAGREE
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- *Strongly agree* indicates that the school is effective in the particular aspect.
- *Agree* indicates that the school is effective in the aspect but that there is room for improvement.
- *Partly agree* indicates that more improvement is needed, although there are indications of effectiveness.
- *Disagree* clearly suggests that the school is ineffective in this aspect.

The following indicators derived from the research can be used to review the state of effectiveness at the school, which will then inform the improvement process.

6.5.6.6 The ISE&I review indicator questions

The review indicators and questions of the ISE&I were answered per theme by all the stakeholders according to the Review Questionnaire (see Annexure I).

Theme	Who will answer questions to this effect?
Management, leadership and Administration	Principals and SMT
Curriculum	Teachers/SMT
Governance	SGB/SMT
Support structures	Four learning facilitators Four school-management and -governance developers

TABLE 6.5: Review indicator questions for the ISE&I

6.5.7 Conclusion

The previous section posed the research question as to how secondary schools in the Free State can be assisted to be more effective. The findings of this study, culminating from both the literature and empirical investigations, were used to inform the ISE&I. The section further provided a detailed discussion on the suggested ISE&I, which helped to clarify the context, key concepts, theoretical framework, themes, processes and indicators. The following section deals with the recommendations of the study.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY BASED ON THE FIVE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

6.6.1 Introduction

This section discusses the recommendations according to the four research questions as stated in chapter 1. Based on the findings of this study, and according to the four research questions, the following recommendations can be made.

6.6.2 Recommendations with regard to Research Question 1: What are the characteristics of effective schools?

Paragraph 6.4.2 of this chapter listed the three salient characteristics of the highly effective Free State secondary schools that participated in this research. The researcher believes and recommends that the ISE&I be used to evaluate the effectiveness of all the other secondary schools in the province in terms of these characteristics. The results of such evaluations can then lead to the design of intervention strategies to enhance the overall effectiveness of all the relevant schools.

6.6.3 Recommendations with regard to Research Question 2: What does school effectiveness in general entails?

This section discusses the recommendations according to the four themes derived from the study, namely: management and leadership, the curriculum, governance, support structures, and maintenance of school effectiveness and improvement. Based on the findings of this study, and according to the four themes, the following recommendations can be made.

Theme 1: Management, leadership and administration

The research clearly indicates that there is currently no comprehensive development tool that can be used to enhance school effectiveness (see par. 6.4.6.4 (b) (i)). Therefore, it is recommended that the ISE&I be adopted to evaluate the effectiveness of schools and to enhance the improvement initiatives.

Theme 2: The curriculum

The study pointed out that teachers need support in the classroom, which the current workshops on subject administration cannot provide (Chapter 5, par. 5.2.2.16). It is therefore proposed that learning facilitators should focus on providing support for teachers in the classroom, rather than on subject administration, in order to enhance teaching and learning. The ISE&I could be used to determine the state of curriculum delivery at the school.

The study also revealed that the current teacher and school evaluation policies do not assist schools in improving their effectiveness (Chapter 3, par. 3.4.4). It is therefore suggested that the evaluation policies of both teachers and schools be revised to accommodate other stakeholders such as the SGB. The stakeholders could use the ISE&I to review the state of effectiveness at the school. This would help them to develop plans to improve the conditions, monitor the implementation of the plans, and reflect on such processes to enhance improvement.

Theme 3: School governance

The research showed that effective schools have high parental and SGB involvement in school activities, but that parents do not form part of the processes used to enhance school effectiveness, except for the interview during the whole-school evaluation process (Chapter 3, par. 3.4.4.1). The researcher therefore believes that the use of the ISE&I could enhance the provision of participation of stakeholders in the processes of improving school effectiveness.

Theme 4: Support structures

It is evident from the research that school-management and -governance developers work as individuals, and not collectively, as they do not have a uniform approach to supporting schools (Chapter 5, par. 5.2.6). Therefore, the position of school management developers should be strengthened by introducing them to the use of the ISE&I. This would help to determine the state of school effectiveness so that improvement interventions can be initiated.

The research further revealed that a more localised approach to school effectiveness and improvement is necessary (Chapter 5, par. 5.2.6.4). Therefore, the ISE&I developed in the course of this study should be implemented in schools to enhance the much-needed participation of all stakeholders and thus improve the effectiveness of schools.

6.6.4 Recommendations with regard to Research Question 3: Which factors contribute to the effectiveness of secondary schools?

In paragraph 6.4.4, several factors contributing to school effectiveness were identified. It is therefore recommended that the ISE&I be used to assess the prevalence of such factors in schools and that the results be used to design interventions to improve the effectiveness of schools. The implication is that the careful use of the ISE&I may result in a sustainable improvement in schools.

6.6.5 Recommendations with regard to Research Question 4: What entails school effectiveness and school improvement from a legislative perspective in the South African context?

In paragraph 6.4.5 several findings were made which include among others, the failure of policies such as WSE, DA, PM and IQMS in improving the effectiveness of schools. Furthermore, the need for external evaluation of schools was identified. Given these findings a recommendation is made that all policies be reviewed and a more comprehensive evaluation system be developed. The ISE&I developed in this study could serve as a guideline towards school evaluation policy development process as it offers a viable alternative to the current evaluation system.

6.6.6 Recommendations with regard to Research Question 5: How can Free State secondary schools be assisted to improve and become more effective?

The model for improving school effectiveness, the ISE&I, was presented in paragraph 6.4 of this chapter. It is recommended that all stakeholders be trained to use the model as part of their efforts to improve the overall effectiveness of secondary schools in the Province.

6.6.7 Conclusion

The previous section explained how the findings were arrived at and how the data were triangulated. It also provided a description of the themes derived from the study,

restated the research questions, and discussed them according to the themes derived from the study. Finally, it discussed the recommendations with specific reference to the research questions as stated in Chapter 1. The following section outlines the recommendations for further research.

6.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While this research strove to provide a comprehensive account of the effectiveness of secondary schools in general, it could not deal in any detail with other variables such as the race of learners and teachers, the political influence at schools, and the socio-economic circumstances in the area where the school is situated. The effect of these variables on school effectiveness and improvement should therefore be further investigated, also in the other provinces of South Africa.

6.8 CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY

This chapter provided a summary of the study, outlined the research findings, and highlighted the limitations of the research. It discussed the findings of the empirical research as the result of a data-triangulation process, whereby data from the semi-structured interviews were triangulated with data from the focus group interviews and documentary analysis. The findings were discussed with reference to each of the four research questions.

The chapter furthermore discussed the findings with regard to the factors contributing to the effectiveness of secondary schools with reference to the four main themes identified from the data. Next, it dealt with the findings relating to the characteristics of effective schools by conceptualising the definition of an effective school and comparing the literature and results of the empirical research with regard to the characteristics of effective schools. Finally, it examined the findings about how secondary schools could be made more effective with reference to the introduction of the Index of School Effectiveness and Improvement. The ISE&I is a local, stakeholder-driven model that schools could adopt to sustain effectiveness and promote improvement. The significance of the Index is that it can be used, firstly, to mobilise stakeholders into an improvement initiative; secondly, to evaluate the state

of school effectiveness; and, finally, to facilitate the process of improving the effectiveness of the school. The chapter concluded with recommendations derived from the study, and mentioned a number of specific recommendations for further research.

In conclusion, while some schools have not yet achieved an acceptable level of effectiveness, others are indeed effective and could actually serve as models of improvements for others to emulate. It requires the involvement of all the stakeholders at a school to make a difference; hence, the proposed ISE&I may serve as a starting point for enhancing the effectiveness of schools in the Free State to ensure that quality education is provided in the province as a whole. Finally, the research findings of this thesis, and the suggestions for future research, could form the basis of considerably expanded investigations into the complex field of enhancing the effectiveness of secondary schools in South Africa as a whole.

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ANNEXURE A

Interview schedule: Principals

- 1, As a manager how do you go about Planning your work?
- 2 How do you plan for the year?
- 3, Which management or leadership style do you use and Why?
- 4, How do you ensure the professional development of your teachers?
- 5, How are new teachers inducted? What method do you use to improve performances of your teachers, is so how?
- 6, Do you regard motivation of learners and teachers as important, if so, how do you go about motivating them?
- 7, How do you ensure motivation and the involvement of parents?
8. How do you market your school?
- 9, Do you experience conflict at your school if so how do you deal with it?
- 10, How do you go about controlling the work of your teachers?
- 11, Do you sometimes delegate official duties to your co-managers, of so how do you go about it?
- 12, how do you take decisions at your school?
- 13, Do you use any quality management in your approach, is so, how?
- 14, Do you use strategic management approach, if so how?
- 15, How do you deal with the communication at your school?
- 16, Do you often receive visitors at your school, is so, who visits and how do you deal with them during visit?
- 17, Do you have admission policy at your school, if so, how is it utilized and how are admissions dealt with?
- 18, Do you monitor the attendance of both teachers and learners, if so how is the situation like ?
- 19, Do you think keeping a diary as principal is important, if so why?
- 20, Why do you think it is important to keep registers e.g permission, leave, summary, stock and learner attendance?

- 21, Do you have a stock control procedure at your school, is so, how do you go about controlling stock?
- 22, How do you enhance good interpersonal relations between you and colleagues and other stakeholders?
- 23, How do you and your staff plan extra curriculum programmes, how are they dealt with?
- 24, How do you deal with employee wellness at your school?
- 25, Does your school practice inclusive education, is so how?
- 26, Do you review your performance of your school, how often and how do you plan for the improvement (SIP)?
- 27, What would you regard as an effective school?

ANNEXURE B

Interview schedule : SGB focus group

- 1, What do you think are your duties as a school governing body and do you think you are doing it well?
- 2, Are you involved in developing a school development plan, if so, how do you go about the development process?
- 3, Do you have a plan for the SGB meetings, is so when and how do you hold your meetings?
- 4, How are your meetings run?
- 5, Are you involved in policy making, if so, how do you go about developing a policy at your school?
- 6, Do you have projects at your school, if so how are they managed?
- 7, Are you involved in the discipline of learners, if so how?
- 8, Are you as SGB motivating parents to be involved in school activities, if so how?
- 9, Does your school has vision and mission, if so,how do you ensure that the school governance activities are geared towards achieving the vision and mission?
- 10,What role do you play in the recruitment of teachers?
- 11,Does your school has a plan for extra and co curricular activities, Are parents involved in the extra curricular, if yes how?
- 12, How do you maintain the cleanliness of buildings and grounds and go about fundraising money for the school?
13. Do you have a financial policy and financial committee, if so how are funds managed at your school?
- 14, Does your school have policy with regard to the following: HIV/AIDS, Religion and language?
- 15, Do you have a safety policy at your school, and how do you deal with emergencies?
- 16, Do your school have SBST, if yes, how does it work?
- 17, Do you experience conflict in the governance, of so, how do you solve it?
- 18, Do your form part of school committees, if so, which and what is your role?

ANNEXURE C

Interview schedule: focus group teachers

- 1, How do you go about planning your work?
- 2, How do you go about choosing the subject content to be taught and how do you go about planning a learning programme?
- 3, How often do you assess your learners and how?
- 4, What measures do you have in place to assist learners with special educational needs?
- 5, How do you keep records of your work and that of your learners?
- 6, How do you facilitate learning of your learners and which methods do you use?
- 7, Do you motivate your learners is so, how?
- 8, Are you engaged in your professional development, in your subject, if so how and by whom?
- 9, Do you work collaboratively with your colleagues, in what way?
- 10, Do you get support from the LFs, if yes, what kind of support?
- 11, Do you review your performance, is so, how often and how do you strategize for improvement?
- 12, Do you experience stress as a result of your work, is so how do you cope with it?
- 13, How do you maintain discipline in your classroom, which methods do you use?

ANNEXURE D

Interview schedule; SMT members focus group

- 1, As a manager of your department how do you go about planning your work?
- 2, How do you plan for the year?
- 3, Which management leadership style do you use and why?
- 4, How do you ensure the professional development of your subordinates?
- 5, How do are new teachers inducted in your department?
- 6, Do you motivate learners aand teahcers in your department, is so, how?
- 7, Do you involve parents in your department, if so, how?
- 8, How and how often do you control the work of your colleagues?
- 9, Do you experience conflict in your department, if so how do you deal with it?
- 10, How do you take decisions in your department?
- 11, How do you deal with communication in your department?
- 12, Do you encourage team work among your subordinates, if so, how?
- 13 How do you keep record of your department?
- 14, Do you have an assessment policy, how do you implement it?
- 15,Do you and your colleagues receive visits from the Learning facilitators, if so, how do you deal with these visits?
- 16, How far are involved in the general management of the school?
- 17, How do you deal with employee wellness in your department?
- 18, Do you review your performance in your department if so, how and how do you paln for the improvement?

ANNEXURE E

Interview schedule: Learning facilitators

- 1, How do you identify areas of development among teachers in your subject and cluster?
- 2, How do you plan to assist teachers in your cluster?
- 3, How do you ensure that teachers understand subject or learning are policies?
- 4, How do you provide resources for the teachers, and what are they?
- 5, How do schools respond to your visit reports?
- 6, How often do you hold in-service training for teachers in your cluster?
- 7, Are this workshops held during or after school?
- 8, What problems would you mention as affecting the improvement of schools negatively, and why?

ANNEXURE F

Interview schedule: School management and governance developers

- 1, How do you identify areas of development among schools in your cluster?
- 2, How do you plan to assist these schools?
- 3, Which tools do you use to assess progress of your schools?
- 4, What strategies do you often suggest for school improvement?
- 5 What problems would you mention as affecting the improvement of schools negatively, and why?

ANNEXURE G

TM Makoelle BA (UNISA) B Ed Hons (UPE)

M Ed (UFS) PGDE (UFS) FDE (UP) STD (Tshiya coed)

Address: 30 fourth avenue West ,

CLOCOLAN

9735

email:makoelletm@webmail.co.za

Tel: 051 9430241 (H) Tel: 051 9430432(W), Mobile: 076 1722 431

The Head of education: Free State province

**RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FOR A D Ed:
EDUCATION MANAGEMENT**

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a registered DEd student at University of South Africa. I am engaged in a research project investigating factors contributing to secondary school effectiveness. The research topic is; **“Exploring practices determining the effectiveness and improvement of secondary schools in the Free State”**

Some of the teachers, SGB members, SMT members and Principals in the selected school in your province will be requested to take part in the study. The SMGDs and LFs will also be interviewed.

Kindly take note that the study will not intrude the individual rights or privacy, nor will it apply ethically unacceptable procedures. Data collected will be kept confidential and names of participants and school won't be revealed.

The investigation will include semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews and documentary analysis. The envisaged starting date is 10 September 2009 and end date June 2010.

Find attached interview schedules.

Hoping the request is considered.

Yours truly,

Tsediso Michael Makoelle

ANNEXURE H

Documentary analysis guide

Functionality

Timetable

School time schedule

Duty lists

Organizational structure

(Organ gram’')

Management

Principal’s diary

Year plan

School improvement plan

School development plan

SMT minutes

Committee’s composition

HOD records, files, control of work

Improvement plans for department

Departmental minutes

Teacher development

Staff minutes

Staff attendance and leave register

Circulars and communication

Filing system

Stock control and register

Teacher discipline

Visitors register

Induction

Motivation of staff & learner

Marketing

Conflict resolution
Control of work
Delegation
Decision making
Quality management
Strategic management
Interpersonal relations
Extra curriculum
Inclusion
Performance review

Governance

Vision and mission
Policies
SGB minutes
Parent's minutes
SGB year plan
Projects
School development plan
Financial management
Budgeting
Control
Auditing
Procurement
Reporting
Fund raising
Disciplinary records
Duties
Recruitment of teachers
Cleanliness
Admissions

Teaching and learning

Personal teacher portfolios
Learner portfolios
Assessment methods
Teaching methodology
Teaching and learning resources
Teacher development
LF visits

Learner achievement

Assessment records
Final year schedules
Awards and trophies

School safety

Safety policy
Safety procedure

Resources

Procurement procedure
Retrieval procedure
Maintenance procedure

Employee wellness

Records of employee wellness

Teacher discipline

Records of both formal
And informal hearings

ANNEXURE I
REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

THEME: MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Planning: The school does its planning in time before the academic year starts.

Question: Does your school have its plans ready at the beginning of the academic year?

Response:

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Year plan: The school has a well-designed, consultative year plan with dates, activities and objectives.

Question: Does the school have a well-designed, consultative year plan with dates, activities and objectives?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Management style: The SMT adopts the management style that encourages participation of all staff members.

Question: Does your SMT adopt a management style that encourages participation of all staff members?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Professional development of teachers: The school has varied methods of professional teacher development besides the initiatives of the Department of Education.

Question: Does your school have varied methods of teacher professional development besides the DoE initiatives?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Induction: The school has an induction programme for new teachers.

Question: Does your school have an induction programme for new teachers?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Mentoring: The school has a mentoring system between senior and junior teachers.

Question: Does your school have a mentoring system between senior and junior teachers?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Motivation of staff and learners: The SMT motivates staff and learners.

Question: Does your school have motivational strategies for staff and learners in place?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Parental involvement: The school encourages parental participation in school activities.

Question: Does your school have strategies for involving parents in school activities?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Marketing the school: The school markets itself locally and nationally.

Question: Does your school market itself?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Conflict management: The school has sound conflict management procedures in place.

Question: Does your school have conflict management strategies and procedures in place?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Control of work: The school controls the work of both educators and learners.

Question: Does your school have control measures in place for both teacher and learner work?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Delegation: The school has a sound delegation procedure.

Question: Does your school have delegation mechanisms in place?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Decision making: the school has sound delegation procedures.

Question: Does your school have sound delegation procedures in place?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Quality management: The school has sound quality management strategies.

Question: Does your school have quality management systems?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Strategic management: The school has sound quality management strategies.

Question: Does your school have its strategies well managed?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Communication: The school has effective communication procedures.

Question: Does the school have effective communication procedures?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Principal diary: The management keeps a diary as part of time management.

Question: Do you principal and SMT members keep diaries as part of time management?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Interpersonal relations: The school has sound interpersonal relationships.

Question: Does the school have and enhance sound interpersonal relations?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Extracurricular plan: The school has well-planned extracurricular activities.

Question: Does your school plan and execute the extracurricular plan effectively?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Employee wellness: the school has effective employee wellness procedures.

Question: Does your school having employee wellness programme?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Inclusive education: The school implements inclusive education fully.

Question: Does your school implement inclusive teaching fully?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Performance review: The school reviews its performance regularly.

Question: Does your school review its performance regularly?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

SMT

Planning: The HOD does effective departmental planning in advance.

Question: Does your HOD do effective departmental planning in advance?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Year plan: The school has a well-defined year plan in all departments.

Question: Does your school have a well-defined year plan in all departments?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Management style: The school's departments' participatory management approach procedures are in place.

Question: Does your departmental management approach encourage participation?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Professional development of teachers: The school has effective professional development procedures in all subjects.

Question: Does your school have subject professional development procedures for teachers?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Induction: The school's departments induct new teachers.

Question: Do the school's departments induct new teachers?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Mentoring: The school's departments mentor novice teachers.

Question: Do the school's departments mentor novice teachers?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Motivation of staff and learners: The school's departments motivate staff and learners.

Question: Do your school's departments have motivation strategies for staff and learners?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Parental involvement: The school's departments' encourage parental involvement.

Question: Do your school's departments encourage parental involvement?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Control of work: The school's departments have effective control of work procedures for both staff and learners.

Question: Do your school's departments have effective control procedures for work of both learners and teachers?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Conflict management: The school's departments have effective conflict management procedures in place.

Question: Do your school's departments have effective conflict management procedures in place?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Decision making: The school's departments have effective decision-making procedures.

Question: Do your school's departments have effective decision-making procedures?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Communication: The school's departments have effective communication procedures.

Question: Do your school's departments have effective communication procedures?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Collaboration: The school's departments encourage collaboration among teachers.

Question: Do your school's departments encourage collaboration among teachers?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Record keeping: The school's departments have effective record-keeping mechanisms.

Question: Do your school's departments have effective record-keeping mechanisms?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Assessment: The school's departments assess learners regularly, both formatively and summatively.

Question: Do your school's departments assess learners regularly, both formatively and summatively?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Learning facilitator visits: The learning facilitator visits your departments regularly to offer advice on subjects.

Question: Do your school's departments receive advice from learning facilitators on your subjects?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Involvement in school management: The school fully involves all departmental heads in the management.

Question: Does your school fully involve HODs in the management of the school?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Employee wellness: The school's departments have employee wellness procedures in their departments.

Question: Do your school's departments have employee wellness tactics in place?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Performance review: The school's departments review the performance on a regular basis.

Question: Do your school's departments review their performances regularly?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Delegation: The school's departments have effective delegation procedures.

Question: Do your school's departments delegate effectively?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Quality management: The school's departments manage quality effectively.

Question: Do your school's departments have quality management procedures in place?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Strategic management: The school's departments have strategic management procedures.

Question: Do your school's departments have strategic management procedures in place?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Interpersonal relations: The school's departments maintain and enhance sound interpersonal relations among departmental members.

Question: Do your school's departments have and enhance sound interpersonal relations among departmental members?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

THEME: ADMINISTRATION

Registers: The school keeps all registers up to date.

Question: Does your school keep all registers updated?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Stock control: The school takes stock regularly.

Question: Does your school regularly take stock?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Hospitality (visitors): The school welcomes and treats visitors well.

Question: Does your school welcome and treat visitors well?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Admissions: The school has a sound admission policy and does its admission well in advance.

Question: Does your school have a sound admission policy and does it do its admissions well in advance?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Attendances (learners and teachers): The school has a high learner and teacher attendance and it is controlled effectively.

Question: Does your school have a high teacher and learner attendance and is it effectively controlled?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Filing system: The school has an effective filing system.

Question: Does your school have an effective fling system?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Communication: The school has an effective communication system.

Question: Does your school communicate effectively both within and outside its borders?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

THEME: CURRICULUM

Work plan: The school's teachers plan their work in advance and effectively.

Question: Do your school's teachers plan their work in advance and effectively?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Choice of subject content: The school's teachers have effective ways of subject control choice.

Question: Do your school's teachers have effective ways of subject control choice?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Learning programme design: The school's teachers design affective learning programmes according to national curriculum requirements.

Question: Do your school's teachers design effective learning programmes according to national curriculum requirements?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Assessment: The school's teachers regularly assess their learners formatively and summatively.

Question: Do your school's teachers regularly assess the learners both formatively and summatively?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Inclusive education: The school's teachers practise effective inclusion in the classroom.

Question: Do your school's teachers practise effective inclusion in the classroom?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Record-keeping: The school's teachers keep records effectively.

Question: Do your school's teacher keep records effectively?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Teaching methods: The school's teachers use varied methods of teaching enhancing learning.

Question: Do your school's teachers using varied methods of teaching enhancing learning?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Motivation of learners: The school's teachers motivate learners in the classroom.

Question: Do your school's teachers motivate their learners in the classroom?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Professional development: The school's teachers are engaged in the professional development of their subjects.

Question: Do your school's teachers embark on subject professional development?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Collaborative teaching: The school's teachers practise effective collaborative teaching.

Question: Do your school's teachers practise effective collaboration in their teaching?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Learning facilitator support: The schools receive learning facilitator support in their subjects.

Question: Do your school's teachers receive learning facilitator support in their subjects?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Management of stress: The school's teachers experience less stress.

Question: Do your school teachers have coping mechanisms for stress?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Classroom discipline: The school's teachers maintain discipline in the classroom.

Question: Do your school teachers have the skills to maintain discipline in the classroom?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

THEME: GOVERNANCE

Duties: The SGB knows its duties as a governing structure.

Question: Does your SGB fully know its duties as a governing structure?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

School development plan: The school has a well-defined and inclusive school development plan.

Question: Does your school's SGB have a well-planned all-inclusive school development plan?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Meeting programme: The SGB meets regularly.

Question Does your school's SGB meet regularly?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Conducting meetings: The SGB meetings are conducted according to standard meeting procedures.

Question: Does your school's SGB run meetings according to standard meeting procedures?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Policy development: The school's SGB has effective inclusive policy development procedures.

Question: Does your school's SGB have effective and inclusive policy development procedures?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Project management: The school's SGB has effective, inclusive project management procedures.

Question: Does your school have effective and inclusive project management procedures?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Learner discipline: The school's SGB conducts disciplinary hearings for learners.

Question: Does your school's SGB conduct disciplinary hearings for learners effectively?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Parental involvement: The school's SGB encourages partial involvement in school activities.

Question: Does your school's SGB encourage parental involvement in school activities?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Vision and mission: The school's SGB has drafted and adopted defined and articulated vision and mission.

Question: Has the school's SGB drafted and adopted a well-defined and articulated school vision and mission?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Teacher recruitment: The SGB participates in effective recruitment procedures.

Question: Does your school SGB participate in effective recruitment procedures?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Extracurricular plan: The SGB has drafted and adopted a well-defined extracurricular plan.

Question: Has your SGB drafted and adopted a well-defined extracurricular plan?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Cleanliness of grounds: The school maintains clean grounds.

Question: Does your SGB contribute towards the cleanliness of the school?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Financial management: The school SGB has effective financial management procedures.

Question: Does your SGB manage school funds effectively and procedurally?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Fundraising: The SGB embarks on rigorous fundraising.

Question: Does your SGB engage in fundraising?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

School safety: The SGB maintains effective safety regulations.

Question: Does your SGB maintain effective safety requirements?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

SBST (Inclusion): The SGB contributes to the functioning of the SBST.

Question: Does your SGB participate in the functioning of the SBST?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	-----------------	----------

Remarks _____

Conflict management: The SGB has effective conflict-managing procedures.

Question: Does the SGB manage conflict effectively?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

School committees: The school SGB has inclusive and effective school committees.

Question: Does the school SGB encourage inclusive participation in school committees?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

THEME: SUPPORT STRUCTURES

Learning facilitation

Identification of subject areas of development: The learning facilitator identifies areas of development among teachers.

Question: Does your learning facilitator identify areas of development among your teachers?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Planning intervention: The learning facilitator plans intervention programmes for teachers at the school.

Question: Does your learning facilitator plan intervention programmes for your school teachers?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

In-service training: The learning facilitator regularly conducts in-service training.

Question: Does your learning facilitator regularly conduct in-service training?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Resource provision: The learning facilitator provides assistance regarding all resources in the school.

Question: Does your learning facilitator provide adequate assistance in terms of resources at your school?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Understanding NCS/CAPS (Policy): The learning facilitator provides guidance with regard to NCS at the school.

Question: Does your learning facilitator provide intensive guidance with regard to NCS/CAPS at your school?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Subject workshops: The learning facilitator conducts effective workshops in the subjects of the school.

Question: Does your learning facilitator conduct effective workshops in your school subjects?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

School management development

Identification of management areas of development: The school management and governance developer identifies areas of development in the management of the school.

Question: Does your school management and governance developer effectively identify your management areas of development?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Planning intervention: The school management and governance developer plans intervention strategies for the management deficiencies of the school.

Question: Does the school management and governance developer plan intervention strategies for the management deficiencies of your school?

Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

Progress assessment tool: The school management and governance developer uses a progress monitoring tool to assess the progress of the school regularly.

Question: Does your school management and governance developer use a progress monitoring tool to assess the progress of your school regularly?

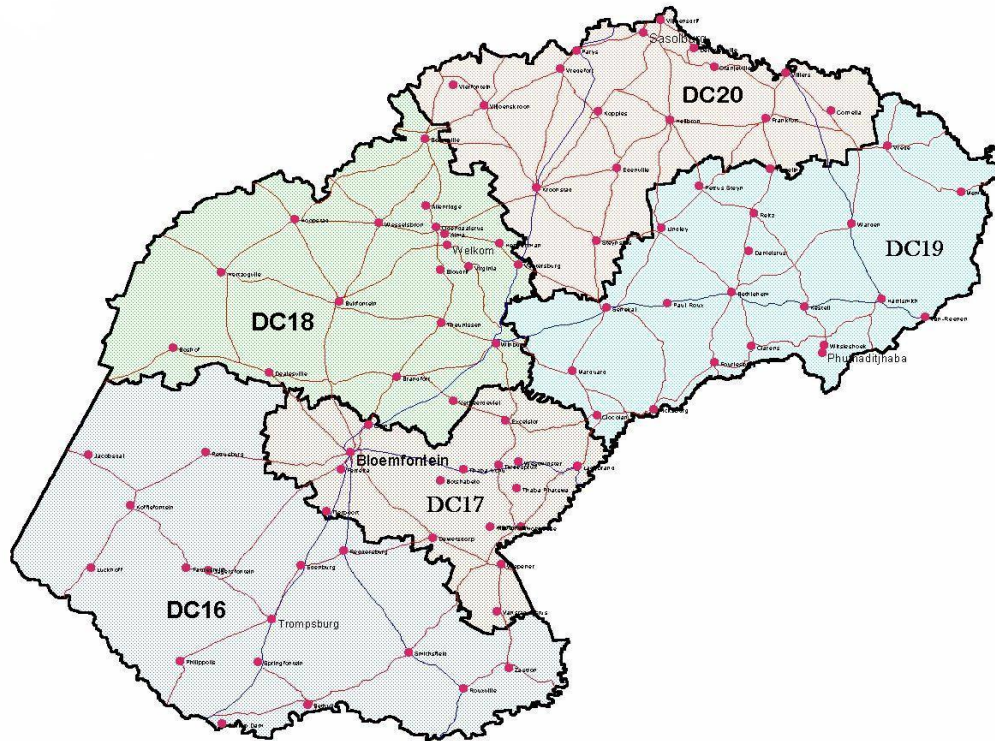
Response

Strongly agree	Agree	Partly agree	Disagree
----------------	-------	--------------	----------

Remarks _____

ANNEXURE K

MAP OF THE FREESTATE EDUCATION DISTRICTS



DC16: XHARIEP

DC17: MOTHEO

DC18: LEJWELEPUTSWA

DC19: THABO MOFUTSANYANA

DC 20: FEZILE DABI

ANNEXURE K

PERMISSION FROM THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



Enquiries: Malimane IM
Reference: 16/4/1/08-2010

Tel: 051 404 8662
Fax: 051 447 7318
E-mail: malimane@edu.fs.gov.za

2010 – 03 – 17

Mr. TM MAKOELLE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dear Mr. Makoelle.

REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

1. This letter is in reply to your application for the registration of your research project.
2. Research topic: **Exploring practices contributing to the effectiveness of Secondary School Principals in the Free State Province.**
3. Your research project has been registered with the Free State Education Department.
4. Approval is granted under the following conditions:-
 - 4.1 Educators, School Management Teams, School Governing Bodies, Learning Facilitators and School Management Developers participate voluntarily in the project.
 - 4.2 The names of the schools and participants involved remain confidential.
 - 4.3 The questionnaires are completed and the interviews are conducted outside normal tuition time.
 - 4.4 This letter is shown to all participating persons.
 - 4.5 A bound copy of the report and a summary on a computer disc on this study is donated to the Free State Department of Education.
 - 4.6 Findings and recommendations are presented to relevant officials in the Department.
5. The costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.
6. **You are requested to confirm acceptance of the above conditions in writing to:**

The Head: Education, for attention: DIRECTOR : QUALITY ASSURANCE
Room 401, Syfrets Building, Private Bag X20565, BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301

We wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely



FR SELLO

DIRECTOR: QUALITY ASSURANCE

Directorate: Quality Assurance, Private Bag X20565, Bloemfontein, 9300
Syfrets Center, 65 Maitland Street, Bloemfontein
Tel: 051 404 8750 / Fax: 051 447 7318 E-mail: quality@edu.fs.gov.za