

An investigation into how School Governing Bodies can assist with the performance of underperforming and dysfunctional schools in less advantaged urban communities in the Western Cape

DANIEL NICOLAAS ANDREW

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Supervisor: Prof. Lorna Holtman

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KEY WORDS

Development

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Parental Involvement

Participatory

Democratic

Interventions

Transformation



ABSTRACT

After 15 years in the democratic dispensation of South Africa, having access, equity and redress in educational provision have not yet been achieved. Instead, the reality speaks of underperformance (schools with a less than 60% national matric pass rate) as well as dysfunctional schools (with a less than 20% pass rate) continue in the Western Cape amidst a 7% increase in the Matric pass rate nationally.

The intention of the Western Cape Education Department (hereafter referred to as the WCED) to reduce the number of dysfunctional schools from 85 to 55 resulted in a decrease to 78 schools. The overall increase of the 2010 matric pass rate in the Western Cape from 75.7% to 76.8% does not reflect an increase of quality educational provision to children from less advantaged urban areas.

The aim of this study is to determine how and why some formerly identified dysfunctional and underperforming schools in less advantaged urban areas improved their performance while others did not. Also looking at, the role played by the School Governing Body in improving performance as a stakeholder, especially the role of the parental entity. It is clear that there are particular challenges facing parents from disadvantaged communities that directly influence their involvement and contribution to the improvement of performance in dysfunctional and underperforming schools. This research project focuses entirely on education but it is done within the field of development studies, trying to address certain developmental issues that impact educational provision and performance

The theory of Structuration is used in the theoretical framework to understand the relationship between the agent (learners, parents, educators) and the structure (education system, society). It is useful to understand and address the challenges that prevent/delay improvement in the performance and function of schools in certain less advantaged urban communities. The Humanistic paradigm is used as a theory to emphasise the importance of a grassroots/ bottom up approach to development and to bring better understanding of parental involvement in educational provision.

The mixed method approach (using both qualitative and quantitative research methods) that is widely acceptable in the field of educational research and in the development milieu is applied to address the question at hand. The use of a literature study, semi-structured interviews with focus groups and questionnaires to participating schools provide useful data for the research. The findings from this research will benefit the participating schools, the WCED and the education system.

November 2012

DECLARATION

I declare that *An investigation into how School Governing Bodies can assist with the performance of underperforming and dysfunctional schools in less advantaged urban communities in the Western Cape* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references

Daniel Nicolaas Andrew

November 2012

Signed:



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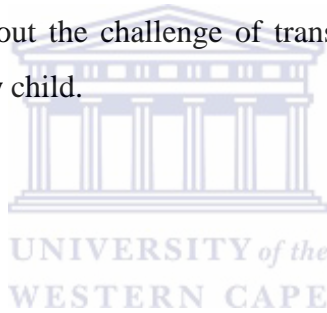


Table of Contents

KEY WORDS.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
DECLARATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
Table of tables.....	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	1
1.3 RESEARCH AIM, QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES.....	2
1.3.1 MAIN AIM.....	2
1.3.2 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION.....	2
1.3.3 SPECIFIC RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.....	2
1.4 LITERATURE STUDY.....	3
1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	3
1.5.1 STRUCTURATION.....	3
1.5.2 HUMANISTIC PARADIGM.....	4
1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	5
1.6.1 QUALITATIVE METHOD.....	5
1.6.2 QUANTITATIVE METHOD.....	6
1.6.3 MIXED METHODS.....	6
1.7 CHAPTER OUTLINE.....	7
CHAPTER TWO THEORETICAL FRAME WORK AND LITERATURE.....	9
2.0 INTRODUCTION.....	9
2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	9
2.1.1 STRUCTURATION THEORY.....	9
2.1.2 HUMANISTIC THEORY.....	13
2.2. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION.....	19

2.2.1. DEVELOPMENT.....	19
2.2.2. EDUCATION.....	20
2.2.3. IMPACT OF THEORIES ON EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT IN SOUTH AFRICA	23
2.3 THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES	25
2.3.1 SCHOOL GOVERNANCE DEFINED.....	25
2.3.2 NATIONAL LEGISLATION	27
2.3.3 LEGISLATION	28
2.3.4 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE	30
2.3.5 TRAINING OF PARENTS AS GOVERNORS	32
2.3.6 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT	34
2.3.7 IMPACT OF GOVERNANCE ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	35
2.4 FACTORS THAT DETERMINE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE	37
2.4.1 SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS	37
2.4.2 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.....	38
2.4.3 PERFORMANCE AND UNDERPERFORMANCE.....	38
2.4.4 FACTORS/ VARIABLES.....	39
2.4.4.1 EDUCATIONAL FACTORS/ VARIABLES	39
2.4.4.2 SYSTEMIC VARIABLES	40
2.5 INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN EDUCATION.....	43
2.5.1 WCED INTERVENTIONS.....	44
2.5.2 IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNANCE UNDERSTATED IN WCED REPORT	45
2.6 CONCLUSION	46
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	49
3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	49
3.1.1 QUALITATIVE METHOD	49
3.1.2 QUANTITATIVE METHOD	51
3. 3 MIXED METHODS APPROACH	52
3.3 1 GENERATING QUESTIONS IN MIXED METHODS RESEARCH.....	58

3.3.2 MIXED METHODS RESEARCH DESIGNS	59
3.3.2 SAMPLING STRATEGIES FOR MIXED METHODS RESEARCH.....	60
3.3.2.1 PROBABILITY SAMPLING	60
3.3.2.2 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING	60
3.3.3 DATA COLLECTION IN MIXED METHODS	61
3.3.4 DATA ANALYSES IN MIXED METHODS.....	65
3.3.5 INFERENCE PROCESS IN MIXED METHODS RESEARCH	68
3.3.6 INTEGRATIVE FRAMEWORK.....	70
3.4 RESEARCH METHOD.....	71
3.4.1 RESEARCH QUESTION	71
3.4.2 SAMPLING.....	72
3.4.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS.....	72
3.4.5 SUMMARY.....	75
CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH FINDINGS	76
4.0 INTRODUCTION.....	76
4.1 SAMPLE PROFILE.....	76
4.1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOLS	76
4.1.2 THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES	79
4.2 KEY FINDINGS	79
4.2.2 KEY FINDINGS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE	83
4.3. INTEGRATION OF KEY FINDINGS FROM BOTH PHASES	90
4.4 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS.....	93
5.0 INTRODUCTION.....	100
5.1 GENERAL FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS.....	100
5.2 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS.....	104
5.3 LIMITATIONS	106
5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS	107
5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.....	109

5.6 CONCLUSION	110
REFERENCES	113
APPENDICES	120
Appendix A Letter requesting permission from WCED.....	120
Appendix B Letter of consent from WCED.....	122
Appendix C Interview Probes	124
Appendix D Questionnaire	127
Appendix E TABLE ONE EDUCATIONAL FACTORS.....	132

Table of tables

Table 1: Responses on questions dealing with educational factors.	86
Table 2: Responses to questions dealing with the systemic factors.....	87
Table 3: Responses on questions dealing with Non-educational factors.....	88



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The national matriculation (herein referred to as matric) certificate pass rate in South Africa has experienced a downward spiral from 65.2% in 2007, 62.2% in 2008 and 60.2% in 2009 (DOE, 2010:28). This has raised concern that if performance and specifically pass rates was a barometer of a country's educational system, then South Africa was approaching unprecedented levels of disaster with regard to further education and training and the acquisition of skills needed for an information driven society such as South Africa.

The sudden upsurge in the national matric pass rate from all record low of 60% in 2009 to 67% in 2010 was supposed to waive the fear of such a disaster. However Potgieter (2011) has argued that the improvement in the results does not represent an improvement in the quality of the education system (Die Burger, 7 January 2011). This fact is confirmed when one takes a closer look at the matric results of 2011 from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED).

The matric results of the Western Cape improved from 76.8% to 82.9% in 2011, the highest in six years and beyond the objective set in 2009 to increase the pass rate to 80% by 2010. The slight decrease of dysfunctional schools in the Western Cape from 85 to 78 in 2010 confirmed the inequalities and huge disparities plaguing the South African education system. The major decrease of dysfunctional schools from 78 to 30 in the 2011 national matric pass rate clearly showed that the strategic plan to improve performance in underperforming public schools is paying off. Whether the decrease of underperforming schools is sustainable, is a point of continuous discussion and which forms the problem statement for this study.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem identified is that access, equity and redress in educational provision has not yet been achieved after 17 years. Instead, the reality of underperformance (schools with a less than 60% national matric pass rate) and dysfunctional schools (with a less than 20% pass rate) continues in the Western Cape amidst an increase in the matric pass rate nationally.

The fact that the intention of the WCED to reduce the number of dysfunctional schools from 85 to 55 resulted in a decrease to 30 schools must be welcomed but whether it is sustainable is debatable. The overall increase of the pass rate in the Western Cape from 75.7% to 76.8% does not reflect an increase of quality educational provision to children from less advantaged urban areas but the overall success of better resourced schools in more affluent settings.

The implementation of the Western Cape Education Department's Strategic Plan that was launched in 2010 does not take seriously the pivotal role of parental involvement/participation in the performance of learners from less advantaged urban areas. This oversight emanates from the relevant policy framework that fails to distinguish between management (that is solely ordained for the principal and the school management team) and governance (that is a responsibility shared by parents, learners, educators and the principal). The parents understand the needs of their children and the community and are an indispensable contributor to the whole school success.

1.3 RESEARCH AIM, QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 MAIN AIM

The overall aim of this study is to investigate how school governing bodies can contribute to the enhancement of the performance of underperforming and dysfunctional schools in less advantaged urban communities.

1.3.2 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

How and why some formerly identified dysfunctional and underperforming schools in less advantaged urban areas improved their performance while others did not and what is the role played by the School Governing Body in improving performance as a stakeholder, especially the role of the parental entity.

1.3.3 SPECIFIC RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives emanating from the aim of the research were:

- To determine how formerly identified dysfunctional and underperforming schools in less advantaged urban areas improved their performance
- To see what the major factors contributing to underperformance in those struggling schools are.
- To analyse the role played by the School Governing Body as a stakeholder and more specifically the role of the parental entity to address underperformance in public schools
- To assist the school and ultimately the WCED to increase the academic performance of learners and decrease the underperforming schools through quality education provision.

1.4 LITERATURE STUDY

In the literature study the researcher looks at the relation between development and education, the role of school governing bodies, legislation pertaining to education, factors which determines school performance, and intervention strategies in education.

The literature dealing with School Governing Bodies focuses more on the role of the principal and educator as stakeholders, representing the management aspect. The parents, who are represented in the governance aspect of the School Governing Body, do not get the same amount of coverage, therefore the bias in the research towards their involvement in education.

It is also clear that there are particular challenges facing parents from disadvantaged communities that directly influence their involvement and contribution to the improvement of performance in dysfunctional and underperforming schools. These challenges will receive attention in the literature study and will be tested in the empirical part of the research.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Research into the restructuring of our education system and consequent transformation of our communities is needed. The theory of structuration and the humanistic paradigm will be used as a theoretical framework for these arguments. These theories will show how the human as a change agent can produce lasting and sustainable positive change in the education system and society overall. It will create a space to acknowledge the pivotal place in school governance and management for the parental component, who are ultimately the first and primary educators of their children.

1.5.1 STRUCTURATION

From the theory of structuration (Giddens, 1984) the researcher will derive an understanding of the relationship between the agent (learners, parents, and educators) and the structure (education system, society). The structural properties or elements from the theory can be useful to understand and address the challenges that prevent/delay improvement in the performance and function of schools in certain less advantaged urban communities.

Some of these elements that will be discussed are the duality of structure, which is produced, reproduced and transformed by human actors and whom in return is transformed by these structures. When applied to the education context it will become clear how education systems in general, and the South African system in particular, have been shaped, formed and transformed by human actors and how these systems impacted the current state of education.

The elements of time and space points to the contextual nature of structuration and opens the possibility of new episodes in the process of structuring, restructuring and transformation in education provision.

Another element of importance is the rules (which points to the legislation and policies that regulates education provision) as well as the resources (which can be authoritative in nature referring to decision making as a political activity). A lot of legislation has changed and policies were written to create an enabling environment for education. The principle of decentralization that is built into the legislation allows for more stakeholders, like the parental component, to be included in the making of decisions which impact the academic performance of their children.

The theory also points out the material and structural constraints that forms part of the structuration process. Humans have a degree of freedom in their actions, amidst the constraints, which do not render them powerless. Through their transformative capacity people can use the rules and resources at their disposal to overcome constraints and re-create new structures. This insight is of great value if applied to the unfair and discriminatory nature of the educational system from the past, that have a constraining effect on the academic performance of some communities until today.

The freedom to choose how communities would overcome previous constraints is at the heart of the study. School governing bodies and especially the parental component can play a pivotal role to turn failing schools around. It is a strong belief in the study that the inherent capacity to overcome the factors that prevents or inhibit the performance of school governing bodies is found in the various stakeholders themselves. Obstacles in the running of school governing bodies can be overcome through capacity building, empowerment programmes and the will to overcome is essential. This belief is further strengthened by insights derived from the humanistic paradigm that takes the capacity and contribution of people seriously.

1.5.2 HUMANISTIC PARADIGM

The humanistic paradigm will be employed as a useful theory to understand parental involvement as a critical part in educational provision and performance outlined/implied in education legislation and policies. It is based on the premise that development is about people and that they should play a determinative role when it comes to development. This paradigm teaches that people have the capacity to transform their context because they are not only the beneficiaries of their own development but take an active role to satisfy their own needs.

The inclusion of the benefactors of development from the planning stage, participation in decision making, incorporation of their context and ability to be involved as equal partners are some other valuable elements in this paradigm. It implies that people are inherently empowered and have the capacity to make a meaningful contribution to the sustainable development of their personal context and the environment. These elements are very helpful when applied to the education context and more particularly to the research question, which addresses how the parental component in the school governing body can contribute to address underperformance in public schools.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is described as a broad approach to scientific enquiry, specifying how research questions should be asked and answered. It includes the consideration of worldviews; the general preference for certain designs, sampling logic, data collection and analytical strategies, guidelines for making inferences and the criteria for assessing and improving quality (Teddle and Tashakkori, 2009). When a specific research method is chosen, a specific strategy and procedure is preferred to implement research design, which includes sampling, data collection and analysis, and interpretation of the findings.

In this study the researcher will seek to distinguish between qualitative and quantitative research methods and how a mixing of both can benefit the research. The preference of the mixed methods approach will be explained and how the strategies and procedures that are followed can be of help for the study.

1.6.1 QUALITATIVE METHOD

The qualitative method provides detailed descriptions of actual situations and findings are produced that cannot be arrived at by statistical procedures. It is narrative in nature and describes complex phenomenon from the participant's point of view. Another positive contribution of this method is that it takes context seriously which is much needed for the nature of this study. The approach is change orientated while setting, interdependencies, complexities and context are dealt with in a spirit of openness and transparency.

This method uses observation, focus groups, interviews to collect data that brings in-depth descriptions and understandings of actions in terms of its specific context. In that manner a comprehensive picture is created that is contextual, explorative and descriptive. Qualitative findings are produced that truly reflect the perceptions and experiences of those who participated in the research.

1.6.2 QUANTITATIVE METHOD

Quantitative measurement allows the researcher to measure properties of phenomena through the assignment of numbers to the perceived qualities of things. Variable analysis (whereby variables are used to describe and analyse human behaviour) and experimental or statistical control (whereby sources of error are looked for in the research process) form part of the quantitative approach.

The techniques familiar in this method, like questionnaires, attitude scales (surveys), personality inventories, and checklists are associated with the gathering, analysis, interpretation and presentation of numerical information. On that note, this study will use a questionnaire as a research instrument to collect data, elicit and rate responses and analysis of data. It is a strategy that allows participants to use self-reporting to express their feelings, attitudes and beliefs toward a topic of interest and can be done through an attitude scale and a personality inventory.

It can be done through an attitude scale which includes the measurement of attitudes, beliefs, self-perceptions, intentions and aspirations, mostly done in survey research. Personality inventories, questionnaires and checklists are used for the measurement of the personality attributes of respondents.

The use of a questionnaire is more preferable in this study to gain the perceptions, attitudes and experiences of the members of the school governing body concerning the performance of the school.

1.6.3 MIXED METHODS

Mixed methods research is defined as the type of research design in which qualitative and quantitative approaches are jointly used in the types of questions, research methods, data collection and analysis procedures and or inferences chosen. The investigator collects and analyses data integrates findings and draws inferences by using both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study or program or inquiry.

The value of the mixed methods research lies in its ability to address a range of confirmatory and exploratory questions with both the qualitative and quantitative approaches and in that sense verify and generate theory in the same study (Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009:33). It also provides better or stronger inferences/conclusions, allows the opportunity for a greater assortment of divergent views and could lead to a re-examination of the conceptual frameworks (2009: 35). Because the use of one method can result in a tendency to overlook complexities, the use of qualitative methods (interviews) with quantitative tools

(questionnaires) generates findings that would have been overlooked otherwise (Elliott, 2004:145).

The mixed methods were employed in this study to bring together data gathered from the interviews (qualitative) and questionnaires (quantitative) and to put the findings from both phases in conversation with one another.

1.7 CHAPTER OUTLINE

In Chapter one an introduction is given where the problem which led to the research question is stated and the aims of the study formulated. A short overview is given of the literature review and theoretical framework, the research method to be followed and an overview of the chapters in the thesis.

Chapter two provides the theoretical framework with specific focus on the role of the theory of structuration and the humanistic development paradigm in education and development and the literature review.

The literature review covers an analysis of the relationship between development and education, the meaning of the terms dysfunctionality and underperformance in education, the factors/variables that contributes to it and the intervention strategies available to address it. The role of School Governing Bodies in addressing underperformance is discussed and underperformance will also be explored as it forms the basis for this study.

Chapter three provides a short analysis of the qualitative and quantitative methods in research and the preference of the mixed methods approach which is regarded helpful to answer the research question. A broad overview is given on the strategies and procedures followed when mixed methods are used in research as well as the advantages and limitations associated with it.

Chapter four deals with the empirical assessment of five schools that were used as case studies for the research and the preliminary findings gained from the research. The sample profiles are provided, the data collection strategy which is followed is revealed and the instruments used in the measurement of the key variables of the study are discussed.

Full details is provided about the data collection process, which includes gaining access to the subjects, data collection techniques and procedures, dates and settings of data gatherings. The procedures of data capturing and editing, data analysis and procedures will be described, followed by a discussion of the quality of data collected which includes the shortcomings, limitations and gaps in the data.

The last part of the chapter focuses on the results of the fieldwork, followed by a discussion of the main trends and patterns in the data and briefly highlighting the main findings of the study.

Chapter five provides insights drawn from the research and provides an outline of theoretical considerations, states limitations that came out in the research. It also offers recommendations and suggestions for further research and a conclusion.



CHAPTER TWO THEORETICAL FRAME WORK AND LITERATURE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework that forms the basis for the study and reviews literature that is relevant to the research, respectively from the fields of education and development but not limited to these.

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory of Structuration is used in the theoretical framework to understand the relationship between the agent (learners, parents, educators) and the structure (education system, society). The structural properties can be useful to understand and address the challenges that prevent/delay improvement in the performance and function of schools in certain less advantaged urban communities.

The humanistic paradigm functions as a useful theory to understand parental involvement as a critical part in educational provision and performance outlined/implied in education legislation and policies.

2.1.1 STRUCTURATION THEORY

Giddens has made a significant contribution in claiming that social structure and social action are two sides of the same coin, meaning that social action creates structures and that it also produces and reproduces structures that survive over time and space (Haralambos, 1995).

The basic elements of his structuration theory as outlined in his book, *The Constitution of Society. Outline of the Theory of Structuration (1984)*. Giddens's theory can be quite helpful in the analysis of development and education especially with regard to the role of parents in School Governing Bodies. These parents can secure excellent management and good governance in underperforming and dysfunctional schools. The elements that will be covered briefly are the duality of structure, time and space, rules and resources, constrain and freedom, reproduction and transformation and lastly social change.

It is the process aspect of structure which implies that action and structure are always in process and it explains why Giddens calls the theory structuration (Graaff, 1994). Bryant and Jary (2003:676) agree that the connection between structure and action is a fundamental element of social theory. He further states that "structure and agency are a duality that cannot be conceived of apart from one another...contained in his expression 'duality of structure' ...means people make society but are at the same time constrained by it".

Structuration is described as the process of the production, reproduction and transformation of structures, whereby humans produce structures through their action and those structures are in turn the medium of human action (Graib, 1992). The author further notes that Giddens makes his notion of duality of structure clearer when he goes beyond talking about structures to talking about systems or patterns of interaction where the use of rules and resources become the means of system reproduction (1992). Bryant and Jary (2003) agree that action and structure cannot be analysed separately as structures are created, maintained and changed through action while actions are given meaningful form only through structure.

It should also be noted that social production takes place over time and space and has implications for individual lives, social interactions and at an institutional level. When Giddens talks about structures ‘binding time and space’, he means that they enable these procedures to continue over shorter or longer periods of time across smaller or larger expanses of space” (Graib, 1992). Bryant and Jary (2003) argue that structuration means the relations that took shape in the structure and it can exist out of time and space, independent of the context in which it was created like the hierarchy between a teacher and a student that exists when they meet each other in another context.

Societies are affected by time and space differently and change takes place mostly in episodes. Graib concludes that Giddens’s “episodic characterizations represents a compromise between abandoning any overall, evolutionary view of historical development...putting forward an idea of historical change as entirely contingent” (ibid,1992:63).

Therefore any study that employs the theory of structuration in education should keep in mind the time and context in which the system developed and that its mark is left on the individuals and institutions that is produced by the system. It also cautions participants in the transformation of the education system not to be too optimistic to the point of being unrealistic to address the imbalances and unequal educational provision of the past, especially if the existing hierarchy is still endorsed in the system.

Bryant and Jary (2003) state that Giddens defines structures as consisting of rules and resources involving human action whereby the rules constrain the actions and the resources make it possible. Graib (1992) asserts that rules are embedded in systems of social interaction and make it possible for humans to follow routine and apply it in other contexts. Structural rules can thus be reproduced in other contexts by individuals and the same thing can happen to resources that are produced by human action and is changed and maintained by them (Haralambos, 1995).

The two forms of resources are allocative and authoritative resources and they emphasize the centrality of power to structuration theory and provide the means by which transformative rules are incorporated into social practices (Graib, 1992). Allocative resources consist of the material features of the environment which become resources through the actions of humans.

Authoritative resources can be described as the non-material features like the organization of time and space, the production and reproduction of the body and the organization of life-changes? (Graib, 1992). The ways in which humans apply these rules and work with these resources at their disposal, make it possible for them to have power and dominate one another in their interaction (Haralambos, 1995). Mncube (2009) applies Giddens's understanding of allocative and distributive resources to school governance, calling it a political activity. He points out the power struggle between education professionals and lay people, especially in how the parental component views the organization of the school in relation to the perspective of staff.

Some critics believe that material resources only have a constraining effect on the social lives of human agents by choice, however, there are resources over which humans have no control like the shortage of land for example (1995). As humans we face material and structural constraints but amidst the constraint we do have a degree of freedom in our actions (Graib, 1992). Giddens also provides us with insight into the transformative capacity that people have. People have some ability to make a difference in the flow of events through interaction, negotiation and compromise (Graaff, 1994).

Giddens brings with his idea of constraint, the elements of truth from the determinists; that human action is determined by outside forces; and the voluntarists also agree that humans act out of free will together (Haralambos, 1995). People's freedom can thus be reduced or limited, and in that sense bring constraint but it cannot determine action. We must therefore leave room for the unintended consequences that cannot be determined beforehand, especially in the field of development.

Giddens is sometimes accused of giving too much attention to the role of the humans as actors or agents in the creation and reproduction of structures, but it can be of great use in the development discourse and practice. People have inherent power to positively change structures, systems and societies over time and space and do not necessarily have the need to be empowered by outside forces. It means that they use the rules and resources already existing in the structure, system or society to draw new rules and generate resources materially and non-materially to make an impact. Haralambos (1995:971) states that "it involves people having the ability to transform the world around them through their actions,

as well as being able to reproduce it". The challenge is that human actions do not always bring the consequences that are intended, so there is always an element of surprise.

The result of reproduction and transformation is positive social change for both the agent and the structure. The creation of a new structure, system or society does not arise from nothing but can be recreated from what exists. Haralambos (1995) states that Giddens does not see social change as a given because humans need some predictability or confidence that their social life will be secure. Hence, when they do not experience that "ontological security" amidst the change, they might resist it. In discussing this element Bryant and Jary (2003) agree with Giddens's suggestion that structures like traditions, institutions, moral codes and other established ways of doing things are stable but can change through the unintended consequences of people's actions, when they ignore, replace or reproduce them differently.

Giddens is criticized for putting too much emphasis on the idea that a change in the behaviour of the human agent can lead to a change in the existing structures because he binds agency and structure too tightly. Giddens leaves room for the unintended consequences and unpredictability of the outcomes of action. Actors employ the social rules appropriate to their culture and use it with the available resources in social interactions. If rules and resources are used in this manner then it is not deterministic instead it is applied reflexively by knowledgeable actors (Bryant and Jary, 2003).

One of the practical implications offered by the structuration theory is the utilization of both micro and macro theories in social change. It takes context into account and still offers certain elements that can be helpful to understand an episode within time and space, and the ability that agents have in the process of structuration. It also takes the acknowledgement of the transformative capacity that poor and powerless people have. Graaff (1994) calls it sensitizing devices that will hopefully make social scientists realize that the particular context and its specific circumstances should be taken into account.

Giddens (2009) states that the education introduced by the colonizers was relevant to Europe and not the colonies, because it ignored their histories and cultural achievements. One of the legacies of colonial education is that an educational elite group was formed, and the majority of the population remained uneducated and illiterate. The policies of educational reform after colonialism did not completely alter the situation and the same situation prevails to date.

The South African education system was introduced during Dutch and British colonisation. Here a Western bias and specific view of educational provision was formulated that did not take into account the uniqueness of the African context. The result was that Africans

struggled then, and are still struggling today with an education system that was produced in the past and given structure, systems and patterns of interaction which only reproduces through the rules and resources available.

In a study on education and decolonization, Bray (1997) found that the Western Model of schooling was introduced in the non-Western societies by colonial regimes and missionaries with the specific aim of serving their interests which included providing a labour force for their economy. This was done without regard for the indigenous education systems, and with the formation of a new educated elite group in mind.

The transition from colonization to decolonization led to surface changes in education systems, whereby broadened access to education was now possible but fundamental restructuring limited (ibid, 1997). Giddens (2009:848) agrees that “education systems cannot stand apart from the society within which they are embedded and when society is rived with inequalities, schools also help to produce them.”

This section brings clarity to the fact that structuration provides an opportunity for human actors (whether they are learners, teachers, principals or parents) to reproduce and transform the structures and systems (educational system, school, community) to serve the needs and address the challenges of their time and space. There are certain constraints that relate to rules, (whether through policies, legislation and power relations) but through the resources available (transformative capacity and freedom of human actors), social change is possible.

Taking into account the context in which each episode is formed and exists, despite the unintended consequences, there is always room for positive social change. In the next section we will consider the places and roles that human actors can take and play to transform and reproduce structures in education and development.

2.1.2 HUMANISTIC THEORY

In collaboration with structuration theory, the humanistic paradigm provides a theoretical basis to understand humans as already empowered beings and that they provide a grassroots focus on education and development.

In this paradigm of development the support and recognition of the people centred approach and participatory development enjoy prevalence. People’s involvement in taking decisions for their own lives and the capacity they have to manage their own development is very central to this paradigm. Theron (2008) states that the shift in development lies in the

recognition that development entails more than just economic growth but that it also includes institutional, cultural, political and psychological issues.

The theories that preceded the humanistic paradigm, namely, modernization and dependency, had different perceptions of development. Davids (2009:22) states that “development is defined differently by different interest groups and intellectual traditions, each of which makes assumptions about what development is or is supposed to be.”

Modernization meant that the traditional values, attitudes and practices of the “backward” Third World must now be replaced by the modern western ones (Theron, 2008:6). This paradigm reflected a sense of Western arrogance and supremacy towards Third World Countries and therefore this theory does not take into account the uniqueness of the African context, and therefore an alternative to this theory is preferable and needed.

Dependency theory developed as a critique against modernization theory and claimed that the Third World Countries were underdeveloped due to the exploitation from the First World. It showed clearly from a systems perspective that the underdevelopment of the Third World was not because of a lack of capitalism but because development in the First World (core) Countries and underdevelopment in the Third World (peripheral) Countries are two sides of the same coin (Graaff and Venter, 2001). It is proposed in this paradigm that the best solution for Third World Countries is to de-link them from the capitalist system in favour of socialism.

In essence these classical theories all classified Third World countries as backward, traditional and underdeveloped. The basis for development is rather found in the humanistic paradigm that proposes more people centred and participation oriented techniques are relevant for our topic under discussion.

Max-Neef (1991), who is regarded as one of the fathers of the humanistic paradigm, argues that a new approach that interweaves development and human needs is needed. Such an approach must move beyond a make-shift form of a paradigm in times of crisis but should create conditions for a new way of conceptualizing development. Max-Neef (1991:14) further states that “it means acknowledging that the social and economic theories which have sustained and directed the process of development are not only incomplete but also inadequate”.

It leads to the realization that the heterogeneous and interdependent development models that are based on mechanistic theories and misleading aggregate indicators will only lead to frustration. What is needed is a theory of human needs for development that evolve from a set

of postulates. The basic postulate of human scale development is that development is about people and not about objects and that the acceptance of such a postulate leads to a certain set of questions.

Some of these questions are as follows: how can we determine whether one development process is better than another? A possible answer could be that it will be one that brings the greatest improvement in people's lives. The next question is; what determines people's quality of life and the answer could be that it depends on the possibilities people have to adequately satisfy their fundamental human needs. The last question that should be asked is what the fundamental human needs are, and who decides what they are? He argues that human needs must be understood as a system, because all human needs are interrelated and interactive.

Max-Neef (1991) proposes a trans-disciplinary approach that gains greater understanding. It will reach beyond the fields outlined by strict discipline e.g. when politics, economics and health converge. Here poor health could be regarded as the outcome of unsound politics and bad economics. It is the basic premise of this study to take the relationship between education and development seriously as two separate disciplines but acknowledges the need for an interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary approach.

Theron (2009) describes the value of an interdisciplinary approach at grassroots level as a toolkit that promotes the application of a range of management and analytical tools, adapted from a variety of fields and disciplines. This is to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programmes and projects.

It takes the normative stance on empowering the poor and marginalized groups by enhancing their capacity to take on an active role in determining and fulfilling their own needs. As an interdisciplinary field, it is characterized by its links and overlaps with public administration, anthropology, political science, economics and psychology. In such an approach, those skilled in the various sectors of development work with the beneficiaries of development to realize specific development objectives of the people in a participatory efficient and effective manner.

The humanist perspective is a move away from a prescriptive, top down, mechanistic and modernization type of development approach to a more integrated and holistic approach to development. It creates room for a variety of stakeholders and allows principles like people's participation, capacity building, empowerment, sustainability and self-reliance to bring about positive social change.

Humanist thinking about development embraces the view that development implies more than economic growth and includes the transformation of institutional, socio-cultural and political structures (Theron, 2009). It focuses on people at grassroots level and the following core values explain their basic needs.

The first core value, **people can be more than they are**, means that they have the potential and ability to improve their lives. The goal is to reach humanness which means striving towards social justice, participation in decision making, poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

People have the will to lead a meaningful life. This relates to their personal experience of subjective reality, their access to a sphere for meaningful existence and implies social reconstruction and participation in their own development together with access to education and the abolition of poverty and inequality.

The emphasis on the experience of the life world shows, that people are allowed to incorporate the specific meaning of their social reality or meaning-giving context into their desire to improve their situation. Such development initiatives have more legitimacy and would be more successful than those enforced from foreign contexts.

The desirable direction or focus of development initiative is prompted by people's own experience of their reality and entail the incorporation of indigenous knowledge systems. It also includes public participation in project planning, implementation and evaluation.

Consciousness refers to the fact that people must be both the targets and the tools of development, focussing on the aspirations and needs of the people as defined by themselves, their right to make decisions for themselves and to reject development interventions which do not address their well-being.

The core value of public participation and self-reliance implies that the full participation of the beneficiaries of development is of cardinal importance. It means dismantling from the top down, prescriptive and often arrogant knowledge transportation and communication styles, imposed on communities by outsiders.

Theron (2009) argues that the analytical point of departure of the micro-level approach needs to be people and their expression of social reality. Although there are many development themes in this approach, the focus here is on participatory development that can be described as self-sustaining- development controlled by the community. Davids (2009) argues that the dictum "development is about people" implies that people (the intended beneficiaries of development) are the most important in the process.

In his analysis of development theories, he portrays how people centred development was incorporated into policy making in post-apartheid South Africa. During those times, development was perceived as top down and divisive, more known as separate development, but through its redefinition in recent times, it is better known as integrated (holistic), people centred development.

Integrated people centred development leads to the integration between decision-makers and the intended beneficiaries of development. An integrated approach to development sees systems and problems as interacting wholes (Davids, 2009). It implies that development is a complex, multidimensional and interactive concept. For development to be meaningful, it must understand people in their specific, holistic contexts and thus be done in an interdisciplinary manner. In such an approach the principles of people centred development, public- participation; social learning, empowerment and sustainability become the building blocks of development.

Davids (2009) states that public participation cannot be separated from the dominant people centred development approach and that it is seen as a basic need and a democratic right. It should not be confused with consultation or involvement but should be understood as participation in decision-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development programs and projects and sharing the benefits of development.

The benefits of public participation includes greater acceptance of development activities by people (ownership); gives women and marginalised groups the opportunity to influence development; motivates people to accept responsibility for their own development (self-reliance); leads to capacity building and empowerment (organizational level); provides relevant and correct information to external development agencies; and creates a basis for understanding affordability issues and conditions for cost recovery. Some of the costs and constraints of public participation is that it can be time-consuming and costly, delay project start up, increase the demand on project managers and personnel, bring latent conflicts to surface, increase the risk that the project be co-opted by group interest and its participation exercises be seen as elitist because only a segment of the population is involved.

Davids (2009) states that the intention of the Reconstruction and Development Plan was to foster the concept of life-long learning, allowing people to participate on the basis of knowledge, skill and creativity. He describes people centred development as the product of a social learning process that is referred to as conscientisation by Freire, a critical awareness of one's potential to initiate and manage positive change for the benefit of oneself and others . Such individuals and communities refuse to see themselves as victims but as active entities

that have the ability and potential to change their environment. Davids states that “social learning (conscientisation) is closely linked to empowerment and self-reliance” (ibid, 2009: 21).

Davids (2009) defines empowerment as the process by which people, organisations or groups who are powerless become aware of the power dynamics at work in their life context. They develop the skills and capacity for gaining some control over their lives, exercise control without infringing on others and support the empowerment of others in the community.

This therefore means that it is a process that involves some degree of personal development; the process cannot be imposed by others but from within, it moves from insight to action as active individuals not victims; increase in power does not mean less power in others; it is a collective action whereby individuals work together to achieve a bigger impact (Ibid, 2009).

Sustainable development is defined as development meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (ibid, 2009). It means that development can be sustained without having a negative impact on the natural environment; in essence it is protected by it.

In conclusion, Davids (2009) argues that an integrated people-centred development is based on the idea that ‘Development is about people’. It implies that people should be at the epicentre of any development effort that is meaningful to them. It is a universal/global and not just a Third World phenomenon. It involves millions of people living in poverty and these people themselves should focus on development action and intervention. It further moves from macro-level quantitative approaches to qualitative micro level approaches, where community values and needs, local customs, public participation and indigenous knowledge systems are more important than technological transfers and infrastructure.

Davids (2009) further points out that such development is about just community, national and international relationships with dialogue at its heart. It is cloaked in the uncertainty of changing circumstances, changing needs and changing people. People have the right to reject any development proposal, program or project that is meaningless in their context and also reject the assumption that civilization is synonymous with Westernisation but acknowledge the view that in development there is room for diversity.

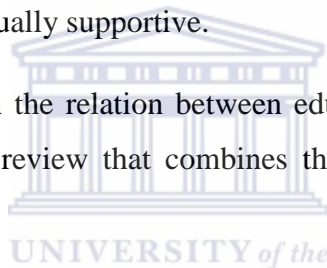
It is clear that development has both an individual (agent) or micro level and institutional (structure) or macro level. In both cases it is important to have room for positive change because both humans and institutions have the capacity to change. Therefore development cannot underscore people’s ability to participate; it must be seen as individuals living with

cultural, economic, political, psychological and institutional issues. They are resourceful and also need resources from other stakeholders, so that an integrative approach will guarantee the sustainability of development.

This section points out that the human actor or people have the capacity to transform their context because they are not only the beneficiaries of their own development but are taking an active role to satisfy their own needs. They must thus be included from the very first step in development, participating in decision making, incorporating their context into proposed developments and being able to take part in process with other stakeholders. This implies that people are already empowered and have the capacity to make a meaningful contribution to the sustainable development of their personal context and the environment.

This makes the theory of structuration and the humanistic paradigm relevant to our study because the child/parent (agent) is shaped by education and society (structure, system, institution) and that they shape each other in return. The emphasis on interrelatedness is of importance here because it is clear from development and education theory that these two fields are interdependent and mutually supportive.

The following section deals with the relation between education and development in more detail, focussing on a literature review that combines these two different yet interrelated fields.



2.2. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

The focus in this section will be on the fields of development and education, establishing a link between them, and highlighting its importance for educational provision and performance as well as social transformation.

2.2.1. DEVELOPMENT

Development can be defined as the positive improvement of people's lives in terms of economic, social, political, environmental, spiritual/personal and cultural aspects (Dinbabo, 2003). Theron (2008) argues that development is the inclusion of all aspects of the life of the individual and that it has a functional strategic planning process, an interdisciplinary partnership whereby a functional integration of resources and knowledge pool are created to make a difference in the lives of people.

James (1994) calls development the process by which members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to provide sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life, consistent with their aspirations.

Bender (2004) argues that the industrial era's perception of development as growth and expansion, an increase in speed, volume and size, is becoming more and more unacceptable by educationists and development workers. Instead, there is more respect for reducing outside dependencies and lowering levels of consumerism, and replacing growth for change. Development is thus the conscious effort of improvement and capacity building that leads to lasting change (ibid, 2004).

Zachariah (1997) states that development does not always mean economic growth, but in some instances may mean a deliberate decision not to promote economic growth. The goal of economic growth should be shaped and constrained by the commitment to develop self-reliant communities, protection of the environment, equitable distribution of the result of economic activity and the institutionalization of opportunities so that all people can participate in society.

He argues that "formal and non-formal education can be important tools for alleviating poverty and eventually achieving sustainable development (ibid, 1997). For Zachariah, the most effective way for schools to do this is to ensure that they do what schools are supposed to do; to teach literacy and numeracy skills, instil a strong sense of civic responsibility and lay the foundation for students to study other basic subjects (ibid, 1997). After evaluating five models of intervention programs for disadvantaged youths, he identified the community development model as helpful in combining education and development. This model "acknowledges that in order for education to contribute to poverty eradication or alleviation, opportunities need to be created not only for individual liberation but also social liberation" (ibid, 1997:483).

Bender (2004) confirms this important link between the two fields when he states that; community development is multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary in its approach, providing a holistic view about the community, where education plays an important role in it. Community development is further defined as "the purposeful effort by community members to learn together to guide the future education, training and development of themselves, and to make full use of their own, as well as external, resources" (ibid, 2004). Now that we have established the link between development and education, let us consider the developmental aspect of education.

2.2.2. EDUCATION

Giddens (2009) defines education as a social institution which enables and promotes the acquisition of skills, knowledge and the broadening of personal horizons. As one of

sociology's founding subjects it is seen as important in the socialization process for the transmission of society's values and moral rules (ibid, 2009). He distinguishes between the value of education to society and the individual with the theories of Durkheim and Parson. Durkheim describes the value of education to society as the ability to teach children mutual responsibility and the values of the collective good to help society function properly. Parson sees its value in individual terms' whereby a person is provided with the skills and knowledge needed to participate in society.

Zachariah (1997) defines education as a lifelong process during which the more established members of society selectively transmit the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values they deem important to less socialized members of that society (social reproduction function of education). The people who accomplish those new values, knowledge and skills are transformed by it themselves as well as their environment. It is especially the transformational value of education, where it is used as an instrument or tool for social change, having the potential to transform individuals and communities, which concerns us in his study.

Pretorius (1998) defines education as the practice of assisting and guiding the child to adulthood. He describes socio- pedagogy as the process of guiding the child in respect of his/ her social existence. He also believes that humans have two essential characteristics: namely they possess the ability to educate and they are social beings who cannot exist without belonging to a society. Pretorius (1998) asserts that all education has a social aspect to it and the existence and development of the child are determined and influenced, promoted and/ or hindered by his or her ability to handle educational and social situations. He concludes that education influences society and that the way in which a society educates its children will co-determine what particular type of society it will be in years to come.

Vygotsky (1978) developed the idea that cognitive development takes place through social interaction (Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana, 2002). According to Vygotsky (1978) meaning cannot be separated from social context. It is filtered down from the wider society to other levels of the system that include: local communities, families, peer groups, schools and classrooms (ibid, 2002). According to Donald et al. (2002), the educational implications of Vygotsky's theory is that knowledge is socially constructed, it varies from context to context and time to time and is built up and passed on through interaction (ibid, 2002:59). This theory has far reaching implications for the main focus of this study which is the role of parental involvement in educational provision.

McInerney and McInerney (2002) regard Erickson's (1968) psycho-social theory as a sound rationale for parental involvement in schools. They build on the contention of Erickson (1968) that schools need to be caring environments in order for children and their families to thrive (ibid, 2002). They conclude from research done that, "effective parental involvement is beneficial for students, teachers, schools and parents themselves" (ibid, 2002:421).

Pretorius (1998) states that the aim of education is to guide the child towards becoming a socialized or socially mobile person, able to participate meaningfully in society, cope with a variety of social institutions and digest changes in society to be ready, prepared and alert. Holberg (1993) concurs that social education fosters a critical awareness of values and attitudes in the pupil, enabling them to develop skills which will result in reasoned, responsible and confident adult participation in a changing society. Holberg (1993) argues further that schools are a reflection of the particular society that it serves and is thus the social organization that serves as the socializing agent for society. It is at this point that we find the connection between education and social development.

In the development field there is an attempt to understand how major theories of development, modernization, dependency and the humanistic paradigm impact on education. Let us consider the contribution by Cornwell (1997), which deals with the neo-classical, reformist and radical views of education and development.

The **neoclassical view** holds that education transforms individuals into responsible citizens who will cooperate with national governments who are trying to modernize society. According to this view "it is possible to invest in people in the same way that one would invest in infrastructure such as roads, buildings and factories... you create the potential to produce goods and services in the future". (Cornwell, 1997:82)

The productive capacity of people can be increased through an investment in formal education to reduce inequalities within societies. The redistribution of job skills will in turn lead to the redistribution of economic benefits that come in the form of salaries to people. This depends on certain factors like equal access to education, greater equity and justice. The reformist view holds that sharp inequalities in developing countries make the realisation of such an idea almost impossible.

The **reformist view differs from the** neo-classical view; it is argued that reformists ignore the actual conditions that prevail in developing countries. Some of the critical conditions are the lack of funds, large numbers of illiterate adults, high population growth rates and subsequent high dependency rates, lack of facilities and qualified teachers, high drop- out and

failure rates, general condition of poverty in rural and urban areas and irrelevant syllabuses that do not address the real needs of communities (Cornwell, 1997).

According to this view there is a paradox between the shortages of skilled professionals in the natural sciences, management and administrative positions and the increase of the educated unemployed in developing countries. They further believe that the existing education system trains people for the wrong kinds of jobs and that certain minimum skills like communication skills, life skills and production skills is needed to secure an income.

Therefore the governments of developing countries must introduce a system of education that meets the minimum schooling needs of most people, cheap to implement and flexible to meet specific needs (Cornwell,1997). The implementation of non-formal education will make it possible for out-of-school youth and adults that never had formal schooling to be attended to, and provide them with certain knowledge, values and skills that are needed in their social, cultural and economic context.

The **radical view** holds that people are not poor because of a lack of education but due to the socio-economic context in which education takes place. It will not help to bring equity in developing societies through new educational programs or the provision of more formal education, but a total restructuring of education through participation, empowerment and conscientisation will transform the society.

The element of conscientisation is based on the ideas of Freire who proposed a non- formal education whereby a strong participatory approach allows people to be part of the planning stage of education to make it relevant to the local needs of people, effective use of local resources at the implementation stage and greater control and decision making by them.

2.2.3. IMPACT OF THEORIES ON EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT IN SOUTH AFRICA

The approach to school governance and educational reform in the South African context represents a top down, rational and technocratic view of change (Naidoo, 2005:119). Some of the assumptions in such an approach entail that education systems are composed in orderly and predictable environments, and that schools will display the same outcomes, if provided with the same resources and rules. This is not true because some contributors argue that the continuation of a more narrowed instrumental and technical approach ignores the main problem of the achievement gap, which are structural inequality and the impact of poverty on learners (Spren and Vally, 2010).

Van Der Berg, S; Burger, C; Burger, R; Vos, M; Du Rand, G; Gustafson, M; Moses, E; Shepherd, D; Spaul, N; Taylor, S; Van Broekhuizen, H and Van Fintel, D, (2011:3) found that “the education system generally produces outcomes that reinforce current patterns of poverty and privilege instead of challenging them.” Education systems cannot stand apart from the society within which they are embedded and when society is raven with inequalities, schools help to reproduce those inequalities in the system (Giddens, 2009). When considering the role of education in empowering the poor, Zacchariah (1997) states that modern institutionalized formal education has not been a great equalizer of opportunities, conditions or results but a great sieve among the lower classes and non-urban areas (ibid, 1997).

Sarah Graham-Brown (1991) states that education socializes people into the role they will have in society and that there are certain filters in the education system, economy and wider society that tend to produce the existing social hierarchies. Education based on a formal system of schooling makes people believe that it will offer social mobility and a way of escaping from poverty.

There is tension between the idea of using education as a means of democratizing knowledge and creating a meritocratic society and limited opportunities offered by dependent economies. It is argued that educational provision is limited to a lack of funds and that poor people are the least to gain access to quality education. Education systems are derived from the Western Industrialized countries and that widens the gap between the aspirations of the system and the reality of the developing country. The lesson developing countries must learn is that they cannot afford education for all on the model of the advanced countries and that it leads to a growing imbalance in society and an increasing unemployment of the young on leaving school (Graham-Brown, 1991).

When one considers the South African context, there is a confirmation of what is found in international literature: that poorer children enter school with a lower cognitive level than more of the well-to-do children. Van Der Berg et al. (2011: 8) states that “it is worrying to see how far most children in historically black schools have already fallen behind their peers in historically white schools by the fifth grade, and that they in fact still perform far worse than the latter in Grade 3.”

Another important factor that impacts on schooling in disadvantaged communities in the South African context is the “education exodus” of learners from township schools to former Model C schools (Msila, 2005). Parents can choose between two options, on one hand they can follow the voice option, where they could decide to keep their children in township schools and try to change the school; and on the other hand, parents can follow the exit option

where they take their children out of historically Black schools. However not all parents can exercise the last option, due to poverty (Msila, 2005).

This is made more complex by legislation that governs educational provision. It is stated that “the Act itself is less effective in opening up access for learners from poor families to some of the best resourced schools in the country because admission is now restricted in terms of where one resides” (Phurutse, 2005). Reality for learners from a disadvantaged background is that wealthier communities with well- resourced schools will continue to serve the needs of the rich.

The double burden of poverty and the burden of attending a school that still reflects the neglect and under-funding characteristic of the apartheid era contribute to this underperformance. The solution is not just in further redistribution of resources, but is in addressing the systemic factors like management, motivation of teachers and expectations of parents.

Maarman (2009), who conducted studies in poverty settings in South Africa (informal settlements), agrees that education should enhance capability, taking into account the interrelatedness of teaching, learning and human development. It must help a person to develop the ability to think critically, creatively, solve problems, make informed decisions, cope and manage new situations and communicate effectively. He concludes from this that communities be afforded the opportunity to attend a school and receive education to develop their abilities. The lack of opportunity is further limited by factors that will be dealt with more extensively in section 2.2.5.

2.3 THE ROLE OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

In this section the term ‘school governance\ is defined, an outline of certain national and international legislation pertaining to school governance is provided, parental involvement in school governance is discussed, a distinction is drawn between school governance and management and lastly, the impact of governance on academic achievement is deliberated.

2.3.1 SCHOOL GOVERNANCE DEFINED

School governance means the determining of the policy and rules by which the school is to be organized and controlled (Ngidi, 2004). It is also defined as a radical form of decentralization whereby the schools become the primary means of stimulating and sustaining improvements (Mncube, 2009).School governance refers to the institutional structure entrusted with the responsibility or authority to formulate and adopt school policy

on a range of issues. School governance structures create an opportunity for all stakeholders to develop ownership of the school (ibid, 2009).

The terms decentralization and democracy feature very strongly in definitions that describes school governance. The main focus of the decentralization of school governance gives communities and specifically parents, who are important stakeholders, more say into educational provision (Tsoetsi, S; Van Wyk, N and Lemmer, E, 2008; Clase, P, Kok, J and Van der Merwe, M, 2007; Van Wyk, 2004; Xaba, 2004; Heystek, 2004; Adams and Waghid, 2005). Marishane (2011) states that many countries across the world are implementing policies of decentralisation which is aimed at improving the quality of education to meet the needs of the transformed society.

Decentralisation involves the shifting of educational resources and the responsibility taken when decisions are made about the use of these resources in schools and their communities. The objective is to improve service delivery through local governance which requires active participation by ordinary citizens in the affairs of the school, a true form of participative democracy. The problem with all forms of governance is the prevalence of power struggles amongst members which can inhibit service delivery or in an academic sense become a challenge to education provision. The power dynamics operating in governing bodies is an issue of international and local importance. Mncube (2009) states that school governance is a political activity because of the power struggle between the educational professionals and lay people because both entities have their own views about what schools entail and how they must be organized.

Xaba (2004) is of the view that the notion of being elected means that members have a constituency and must represent its interest e.g. parent interest, educator interest and learner interest. Xaba (2004) concludes that “it results in ineffective and dysfunctional governance and tensions among governors and principals as well as governors and staff”. Xaba (2004) continues that school governors are not there to be supported by their constituencies but to promote the best interest of the learners. This can be done when all governors realise that they are there to perform functions stipulated by the South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA) and reduce the notion of being watchdogs for the interest of their constituencies (ibid, 2004).

Heystek (2004) agrees that power relations can be best managed if training moves away from conflict management, a negative approach of expecting conflict, to focussing on team building and relationship training. He further argues that “relationships built on trust can do more for effective governance than all the technical and generalized training” (ibid,

2004:312). Ngidi (2004) also emphasises the fact that school governing bodies will be more accountable because they are put in a position of trust.

The best way to manage power relations is to uphold certain principles of representative and deliberative democracy, says Woolman and Fleisch (2008). This form of school governance, provides face-to-face relationships, creating trust, loyalty, friendship, kinship and commitment that cross the barriers of race, creed and class). Mabovula (2009) supports the idea of deliberative democratic school governance as a tentative solution to the problem of excluding learners from decision making in SGB's. Such school governance can be described as "an educational strategy that is intended to change the beliefs, attitudes and values of school governance stakeholders so that they can better adapt to change" (ibid, 2009:3).

Mabovula (2009) finds that members of school governance should rather work together as a group and not as separate entities and that it is possible if they can be more inclusive, coercion-free and open. Such an arrangement provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to learn about good communication, mediation and conflict reducing techniques, tolerance and civic responsibility and in the process the school serves the broader community.

2.3.2 NATIONAL LEGISLATION

There is legislation that guides educational provision in general and school governance in particular. The principles of accessibility, equitability and redress are prominent in all legislation pertaining to educational provision and school governance in South Africa. In chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) it is stated that the basic right to education is guaranteed to all individuals. It further states that the state should make education available and accessible for everyone and that equity and redress will be some of the basic principles that guide educational provision.

The White Paper on Education and Training of 1995 gives special emphasis to the redress of educational inequalities among people who have suffered in the past. The state's resources must also be deployed according to the principle of equity so that they are used to provide essentially the same quality of learning opportunities for all citizens. The Paper also envisions that the principle of democratic governance should be reflected in every level of the system.

The principles of redress, accessibility, equity and democratic governance are set out in the South African Schools Act of 1996 (herein referred to as SASA). According to Fontannaz (2009), the SASA set out the aspirations for a unified, national education system and provided the fundamental principles underlying the education policy framework; which is

influenced by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child that were ratified by South Africa.

The Act states it clearly that South Africa requires a new system for schools which will redress past injustices in educational provision; *provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners* and contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society. It also envisions to *promote the acceptance of responsibility for the organization, governance and funding of schools in partnership with the state*.

Articles 20 and 21 of the act make specific reference to the roles and functions of School Governing Bodies which are regarded as important stakeholders in educational provision (Van Deventer, 2003). The responsibilities with regards to school governance are extended on the basis of expertise and experience (Van Deventer, 2003). Some of these responsibilities are that the control of the school rests with the governing body and day to day maintenance with the principal. They can determine the admission policy as long as it does not contradict with national and provincial guidelines.

The School Governing Body (SGB) also determines the language policy for the school without contravening other policies. SGBs are empowered to draft a code of conduct for learners after consulting learners, parents and teachers; have the right to suspend a learner pending the decision of the provincial authorities to expel the learner; draft a mission statement for the school that state it's values and core beliefs; assist the principal and the educators in the execution of their tasks and should strive to involve all the parents in the activities of the school; selection and assistance in the appointment of educators and non-teaching staff.

SGBs can also make the school premises available to the community for community social and fundraising activities as well as for educational programs different from those of the school. Some additional responsibilities include the maintenance and improvement of the school property, buildings and grounds. They could also determine the extra-mural curriculum and choices of subjects, purchase textbooks and other educational and media materials and lastly uphold/support the enhancement of the values of democracy, equality, participation and local initiative.

2.3.3 LEGISLATION

Reforms in the South African education system are reflective of worldwide attempts to restructure and deregulate state schooling and to create devolved systems of education

(Naidoo, 2005). They have all begun to decentralize their school systems, with local decision-making and community participation as key areas.

This is based on international legislation and policies related to educational provision and performance like the Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26 of 1948 of the United Nations (Fien and Hughes, 2007). The Article states that everyone has the right to education and that it shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In this vision, education becomes accessible to all people without discrimination and connects it to all aspects of life so that education does not exist independently from other human and societal developmental values. Khoza (2007) states that the relationship between education rights and other rights can be described as interdependent because it is significant for a nation's development and serves a positive social function in helping to build values such as tolerance and respect for human rights.

Another important international development that impacts educational provision internationally and nationally is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Amongst other factors the MDGs highlight the achievement of universal primary education as one of their eight key priorities. Fien and Hughs (2007:12) states that “the achievement of every other goal depends on effective and comprehensive educational provision.”

Naidoo (2005) argues that legislation or regulation as a solution to the problem of representivity reflects the continuing dominance of a top-down theory of change in South Africa within and without the government. De Clercq (1997) stated early in the new education dispensation that the structural changes proposed by the policies to transform the education system, were not informed by the questions and engagements with the existing educational teaching and learning problems on the ground, but by the education experts.

The author continues that these top-down initiatives did not enjoy the support of bureaucrats and educators on the ground. These technically and formalistic devised reforms allowed conservative bureaucrats and educators to use discretionary powers to alter and adapt policy changes to suit their agendas and realities. Policy reforms do not assist in mobilizing and building the capacity of educators and disadvantaged communities.

Naidoo (2005) argues that the dichotomy between policy formulation and policy implementation is artificial because there are certain key interacting influences on governance. Firstly the connections between governance structures, the school, administrative structures and the political system; Secondly, the changing institutional and community

contexts that affect the school, and lastly individual local stakeholders with their own understanding of governance. These influences will lead to a more grassroots community spirit to school governing bodies that will facilitate greater participation in school governance.

Maluka (2004) argues that the democratization of education brought a range of new challenges to the lives of many South African parents because millions of them are still suffering the aftermath of apartheid education which was characterised with gross inequality and a long history of uneven development. Van Der Berg et al. (2011) states that anecdotal and case study evidence implies that the poor (parents) are often underrepresented and if they are present they are less vocal in school governing bodies. Let us consider their role in the democratic governance of schools.

2.3.4 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:14) use the term parental involvement or school governance interchangeably, stating that “these activities seek to bring together in some way the separate domains of home and school in the interest of the child’s learning and development.” It is clear from the literature review that parental involvement in school governance is encouraged from an educational and legislative perspective. The main concern for the study, parental involvement in school governance as a crucial contributor to the performance of the school, is strongly supported in the legislation, especially its role to assist the principal and educators in the assistance of their tasks.

Naidoo (2005) argues that the limited involvement of parents and learners in school governance is because policy makers anticipated that the election of school governing bodies would automatically lead to greater community participation. He asserts that despite the call for greater community voice from stakeholder participation and democratic citizenship, little space is left for communities to define the nature of governance and to fulfil this call.

Smit and Oosthuizen (2011) regard poor parental participation as the result of undemocratic actions such as over-politicisation of school governing bodies, the increased centralisation and bureaucratic decision making and misapplication of democratic principles. Smit and Oosthuizen (2011) propose that democratisation of the education system be improved by: training all stakeholders in education; improve parent participation; apply deliberative democracy principles like responsiveness, accountability, rational discourse in decision making; and values of equality, freedom, tolerance and respect.

Ferlazzo (2011:12) contrast the terms “family involvement” to “family engagement,” the former implying “doing to” and the latter implying “doing with”. He argues that a school striving for family involvement leads with its mouth, identifying projects and then telling the parents how to contribute. A school striving for engagement leads with its ears, listening to parents. He states that “the goal of family engagement is not to serve clients but to gain partners.”

Creese and Early (1999) argue that parents should be treated as equal partners and not clients because clients are passive in the receipt of services, dependent upon expert opinion and not always directly involved in decision making. While partners have equal strengths, equivalent expertise, they are able to contribute and receive services and even take responsibility.

Partnership is about stakeholders that can work together and harness resources toward a shared vision and lead to a mutual beneficial relationship. Botes (2008) states that true partnership brings to all partners the advantage of learning to see through the eyes of the other partner. Through the formation of partnerships partners can learn from best practice, share information, have roles clarified, and enhance participation in development. It is through partnership that we learn transparency, accountability, sustainability, ownership and empowerment.

True partnership will recognize that parents are empowered and know the challenges that can further or hinder the effective operation of the school and the progress of the children. Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:263) agree that “government acknowledges the fact that education can only succeed if all the role players accept their responsibilities” and that “parents and members from the local community are in the best position to determine the needs of their school as well as identify and solve problems.”

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009) describe the mutual relationship between teachers and parents as a partnership whereby teachers are aware of the impact that home background has on learning. Parents will become more involved in activities that promote the schools’ success, and both partners contribute to education and development in their community. The question is what kind of participation is expected from parents as partners in education provision? According to Clase, Kok and Van Wyk (2007) participation has different meanings for people in a country with such cultural diversity as South Africa. For some it may mean *community participation* that points to common and shared aspects of human interaction, or participation as *legal partners* that obtain the right to participate in educational processes; *regulated (cooperative) participation* that puts constrain on the nature of participation, and

weighed participation according to which certain groups of participants have more rights than others.

SGBs could make useful contributions to ensure the schools' efficiency and sustained improvement, if they are allowed to participate as equal partners (Clase, Kok and Van Wyk: 2007). There are actually concerns about the ability of parents to participate as equal partners due to the lack of knowledge with regards to their role in governance and management.

2.3.5 TRAINING OF PARENTS AS GOVERNORS

In a study done by Clase, Kok and Van Wyk, it was found that the SGB members were not sufficiently familiar with the content and conditions of the South African Schools Act and that it led to a lot of tension between the Department of Education and the SGB (2007). Factors identified in the study included that there was a mutual mistrust between the partners, lack of knowledge with regards to the SASA, inadequate communication, lack of transparency, lack of support for SGBs, the application of education law was not in line with SASA, fear of interference by the state and the refusal of the SGB to adapt to new changes in the education system.

Clase et al. (2007) propose that newly elected SGB members and department officials be trained on the content and conditions of the SASA. Mutual agreement should be reached about education law and its application in certain conditions. Training offered should be of a high standard and mutual differences in respect of language should be addressed. Knowledge and skills should be considered when SGBs are trained.

Tsotetsi, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2008) agree to these findings when they state that the ability of parent governors to govern schools depends on their skills, knowledge and experience of governance. Their ability to participate depends on their educational background (literacy level), and the biggest skills deficit occurs in disadvantaged and rural areas. It is thus "the state's responsibility, in partnership with other stakeholders, to develop capacity for governing bodies, which will ensure that SGBs perform their duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently". They regard successful training that is based on the needs of members as a prerequisite for effective, decentralised and co-operative school governance.

Some of the positive aspects of the training programs they studied show that training was offered at a suitable time. The members were trained at the beginning of their term of office and sufficient time for relevant training was provided. Training manuals and supporting resources were provided, while external agents provided training and administrative support.

The negative aspects of the training included inadequate funding of training programmes and that manuals were only written in English. A lack of sensitivity for the diverse needs of SGB members, a lack of key information that enable informed decisions and limiting contextual factors were also not conducive for training. Strategies to deal with learner misconduct in schools, and skills regarding the curriculum were needed (ibid, 2008:391-394). Tsotetsi, Van Wyk and Lemmer (2008) provide some guidelines for training programs which include organized training sessions that is provided in the vernacular of the various learners. Training should be needs driven, focussed on specialized tasks and adequately funded. The roles of different groups in the SGB must also be clarified.

Maluka (2004) confirms these findings in a study about the training programme that is necessary to equip parents to have the capacity to fully participate in the school governing body. The learning process was described as lecture based, parent's participation was virtually non-existent and they were denied an opportunity to be involved in new activities, to perform new tasks and functions, and to master new understandings.

Maharaj (2005) points out that that school governance is about people and that a discussion of governance policy must include the principle of lay participation. Critical questions were posed to the principle of lay participation such as, for whom and for what purposes are publicly funded schools intended? How should they be organized and by whom? How much involvement is appropriate for those who are neither employees nor students? When it comes to the formal qualifications of governors, he argues that the two outstanding qualities they must have is, a concern for the well-being of the children, teachers and others in the school community and common sense.

Lay participation implies a partnership, the collaboration between government, civil society, and the private sector in the governance of the schools. He continues that the partnership principle was deemed to help in the capacity building of governing bodies of which most of them are ill equipped, under-resourced and lacking effectiveness. The potential pitfall pointed out by Maharaj (2005) is that partnership can minimize the state's role and limit the application of policy interventions by the state which are necessary for dealing with developmental needs like unemployment, poverty and illiteracy.

The School Governing Body cannot be empowered through the increased participation of parents and students only but it should challenge the beliefs and practices of the professionals that have controlled the school for so long (Maharaj, 2005). They can be equipped with the necessary ideas and skills to have power over the management of teaching and learning. For

empowerment to be successful the necessary resources must also be provided and the circumstances and daily complexities of people's lives must be taken into consideration.

Ferlazzo (2011) proposes that the best way to empower families and communities is to develop a relationship building process focussed on listening. This can be done through pre-arranged home visits, where the primary goal is to listen to the wisdom of parents, who know their children best. The research findings show that home visits result in numerous academic benefits for children. It also leads to a parent literacy program which enables parents to become more actively involved and engaged with the school's activities.

Parent engagement becomes a two way communication, which results in conversation. Ferlazzo (2011:14) concludes that "as families move from being school clients or volunteers to being leaders in education improvement efforts, they gain more power." Training will thus become the result of a needs assessment based on the reality revealed by families through two way communications and a mutual relationship of trust and respect. Henderson et al. (2011) argue for the transforming of school family compacts which can become a catalyst for authentic school-parent cooperation. The agreement entails that each school develop an agreement or what they call a "compact" which outlines how parents, school, staff and students will work together and take responsibility for improving academic achievement. Henderson et al. (2011:49) conclude that "all students benefit from family involvement in education, and low-income and minority students benefit the most."

2.3.6 GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Professional management refers to the day to day administration of and organization of teaching and learning at the school and the performance of departmental responsibilities as it are prescribed by the law (Ngidi, 2004). Heystek (2004:308) states that School Governing Bodies "are not supposed to be involved in professional management activities like decisions about learning material, teaching methods or class assessments". Any involvement of these two role players in each other's demarcated roles, functions and responsibilities must be to ensure school improvement that includes improving teaching and learning.

Naidoo (2005) regards the majority of parents on the governing body and their delegated power in decision making as token participation. He argues that the distinction between governance and management becomes in reality a rubber stamp of decisions by the school authorities. According to Naidoo, "despite some variations, most SGB members consent to principals governing and managing their schools ... consensus decision making is a key tactic used to reinforce principal power" (ibid, 2005:116).

Maharaj (2005) points out that the distinction between Governance and Professional Management is becoming blurred because principals are trying to control the governing bodies while teachers on the other hand feel that governors want to become involved in the teaching discipline which is not their function. He indicates that there is a need to fine tune the distinction between governance and professional development.

Maharaj (2005) questions whether one can keep governance and management apart and answers by saying that schools are becoming more responsible and accountable to their communities. School Governing Bodies demand more accountability from teaching staff and indirectly influence perceptions of educators through general observation and disciplinary matters.

The recipe for an effective governing body can be found in the relationship that exists between the governing body and the principal. He argues that an “anti-power” stance between the principal and the governing body will enable them to “work well together in the spirit of mutual submission.” (Maharaj, 2005:239). He concludes that “the hazardous terrain between professional management and governance need not be conflict-ridden” (ibid, 2005:239).

2.3.7 IMPACT OF GOVERNANCE ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009) state that improved academic achievement is one of the *benefits for learners* when parental involvement is in place. Some of the other benefits are improved attitudes to learning, decreased drop-out rates, increased security and emotional stability as well as improved behaviour and better school attendance. McInerney and McInerney (2002:420) agree that “parental involvement in the education of their children is a good predictor of student learning and success”.

Maharaj (2005:56) states that “researchers have found little evidence to suggest that governing body activities impact directly upon a school’s core processes, although certain decisions of governors (about patterns of expenditure, staff appointments, use of facilities) do influence teaching and learning”. Mncube (2009) argues on the other hand that although this is true, parental involvement in education has been associated with positive academic outcomes such as higher grade point averages, lower dropout rates, fewer retentions and special education placements, and increased writing, reading and mathematics outcomes.

Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009) provide certain advantages of the shift in decision-making in school governance from a central to the local level. Those who understand the school environment the best, like principals, teachers and parents are involved. The principle of democracy is supported through the involvement of various stakeholders, and school

efficiency is increased through more efficient use of resources. The hostility to national policies is reduced through parental involvement in the local context and the sharing of financial management of schools between national government and local authority.

The *benefit of parental involvement for teachers* and schools include: an improved relationship among parents, teachers and schools, knowledge of the child's home-situation, increased commitment to teaching and lessening of the teacher's workload. The *benefit for parents and families* are an increased self-esteem, improved skills to teach their children and a decrease in the feeling of being isolated from the children's education.

Van Der Berg et al. (2011) confirms that parental involvement is detrimental to academic performance. Students and parents must be given more accurate feedback, and "familiarity with the standards may enhance the ability of parents to act as monitors for school quality and champions for their children's education." (ibid, 2011:6) Ferlazzo (2011) agrees that the right kind of school-family connections can produce multiple benefits for students such as higher grade point averages and test scores, better attendance, enrolment in more challenging courses, better social skills and improved behaviour at home and at school. Henke (2011) confirms that building a relationship with students and their families through home-visits by the teacher "resulted in an increase in academic achievement and test- scores, improved attendance and homework completion, increased parental involvement and improved attitudes about the school." (ibid, 2011:39)

The Teacher Home Visit Program is a crucial component in the success achieved by some school districts in America. The program created room for new teachers in their district to attend certain training sessions which would prepare them for the home visits. The first session focussed on relationship building skills, developing a listening stance and true partnership with parents while the second session focussed on how to conduct courageous conversations with parents as teachers about the academics program and attendance. Henke (2011) concludes that partnership with the parents became real for the first time. The creation of compacts between parents and the school where their children attend as well as the training of teachers to become actively involved in the home-background of learners seem like a worthy alternative to their current perspective on parental involvement.

Kamper (2008) emphasizes the crucial role of parent involvement in the success of schools whereby principals devised measures to attract parents' attention and break the apathy. School reports were only given to parents who appeared in person at the school. Parents are encouraged to serve the school in other ways if they cannot pay school fees and the school is made available for community projects like ABET training.

School governing bodies should take an active interest in the performance of the school that it governs (Taylor, 2009). The relationship between the principal and the school governing body with regards to the curriculum and the opportunities that it brings, to influence and monitor the academic performance of their schools, is of crucial importance. The SGB should also make it part of their responsibility to work on the compact between teaching staff and parents and facilitate a process to make the partnership between them real and effective. Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009:150) argue that the SGB “should play a leading role in and become the driving force behind the organisation of parent involvement ... if necessary ... establish a committee to deal with the matter.” They give confirmation to what is established about the benefits of parental involvement in education, namely improved academic achievement, improved attitudes to learning, decreased drop-out rates, increased security and emotional stability, improved behaviour and better school attendance.

2.4 FACTORS THAT DETERMINE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

In this section the focus will be on defining what is meant by school effectiveness and school improvement, underperforming and performing schools, the factors/variables that play a role in school performance and the intervention programs of the WCED.

2.4.1 SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

Stoll and Fink (1997) states that school effectiveness research seeks to describe what an effective school looks like. The aim is to ascertain whether differences in resources, processes and organizational arrangements affect pupil outcomes. They describe an effective school as one that promotes progress for all of its pupils beyond expectations based on initial attainment and background factors. It is also one that ensures that each pupil achieves the highest standards possible, enhances all aspects of pupil achievement and development, and continues to improve from year to year.

The factors that impact a school’s effectiveness are, professional leadership, shared vision and goals, a learning environment, concentration on teaching and learning, high expectations, positive reinforcement, monitoring of progress, pupils rights and responsibilities, purposeful teaching, being a learning organization, and home-school partnership.

The identifiable factors of ineffective schools are not the absence of the factors associated with successful schools but of “stuck” schools” according to Stoll and Fink (1997:34). These factors are a lack of vision (including lack of knowledge about their context, culture, and the change process), an unfocussed leadership by the principal, dysfunctional staff relationships and ineffective classroom practices.

2.4.2 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Stoll and Fink (1997) state that linking school improvement and school effectiveness to bring about educational change is a very recent phenomenon. Teddlie and Reynolds (2000:210) define school improvement as a “systematic, sustained effort, aimed at change in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively”.

It is different from a top down approach that sees the school as the centre of change only, but integrates it with a bottom up response that involves diagnosis, priority goal setting and implementation. It can be regarded as a “vehicle for educational change,” not just enhancing student outcomes but also strengthening the school’s capacity (Teddlie and Reynolds, 2000:211). A bottom up approach to educational change implies that improvement is owned by those at school level, and there is a focus on changes to educational processes as a whole and not just the school management alone.

The call for the link between school effectiveness and school improvement is part of what is known as a “new wave” of thinking about how to improve school quality. It is characterized by a context specificity whereby a thorough context analysis of the school is done before any attempt to change it is initiated. A school improvement plan is developed unique to the school (Teddlie and Reynolds, 2000).

A combination of improvement and effectiveness practices and strategies that are appropriate to the school is needed. Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) point out three types of strategies for different contexts. They are firstly, those strategies that assist failing schools to become moderately effective, secondly, those that assist moderately effective schools to become more effective and lastly, those that assist effective schools to remain so.

2.4.3 PERFORMANCE AND UNDERPERFORMANCE

Myers and Goldstein (1997) argue that failure exists in all education systems and that the performance of schools cannot be evaluated properly or fairly unless the contexts in which the school and teachers work are considered. This confirms what Stoll and Fink (1997:36) call the “generalizability of school effectiveness research findings”. Here the context in which studies is carried out, is not taken into account. The location, background of pupils and phase of schooling or grade levels constitutes the context, and should be considered when research instruments are chosen and the interpretation of concepts is done.

They prefer to use the term “troubled school” instead of describing such schools as failing or dysfunctional. Three categories of troubled schools are identified namely: *striving schools* (in trouble but determined to improve), *swaying schools* (time of touch and go; whether the

school will improve and/or survive) and *sliding schools* (fixed in a never ending downward spiral) (Myers and Goldstein, 1997:115). They argue strongly for a comprehensive understanding that takes the wider context, e.g. a school serving deprived and disadvantaged students, into account. Myers and Goldstein (1997:117) regard naming schools as “failing” and “successful” problematic because neither public humiliation and setting a target to declare winners, are helpful to improve troubled schools.

A possible way to be fair towards a school’s performance is to contextualise target setting (getting rid of an absolute, universally applicable target for all contexts) and understanding the purpose of the judgement (taking into account its practical consequences). They are critical about published information about schools because it has the potential to harm or mislead those who receive it. Myers and Goldstein (1997:119) state that their position on published information “causes [them] to be critical about educational performance indicators and their use.”

2.4.4 FACTORS/ VARIABLES

The variables/factors that have an impact on education can be categorised in three ways, the first line of direct interaction; which is the level where learning takes place (classroom), and the second level, which is the structures around the classroom (management systems, support and internal organization of the school, management and efficiency of the principal, senior management team, school governing body, district and circuit team, local, provincial and national government). The third and last level is the societal, where the questions are asked: what are the out of school factors impacting our performance? These are factors like hunger, diseases, clothing, safety, employment, drugs, transport (Fontannaz, 2009; Phurutse, 2005; Chisholm, 2005).

2.4.4.1 EDUCATIONAL FACTORS/ VARIABLES

Phurutse (2005) describes the achievement scores of learners at a particular exit point as one of the measures of school quality. Recent research illustrates that the majority of South African children performed well below the standards required by the national curriculum (Van Der Berg et al., 2011). South African grade 8 students achieved the lowest average scores in mathematics and science out of 46 countries in 2006. It was the lowest of the six participating African countries. In the years, 2000 and 2007 the South African grade 6 students perform slightly below average in mathematics and reading in relation to participating countries in the SACMEQ surveys (Van Der Berg et al., 2011).

These findings confirm that despite educational reforms, including more qualified teachers, lower pupil-teacher ratios and better access to resources, educational quality remains disappointing (Van Der Berg et al., 2011). In the South African context, schools that are regarded as underperforming have a matric/ senior certificate pass rate of less than 60% and those schools with a less than 20% pass rate are seen as dysfunctional. These schools are mostly found in the black and coloured township areas in urban and rural parts of the country (Van Der Berg, 2008; Van Der Berg et al., 2011).

Chisholm (2004:6) is of the opinion that “the quality of schooling in South Africa’s poorer schools is integrally related to questions of access, equity and democracy”. Van Der Berg et al. (2011) find in recent research that reformation to the administration; governance and funding of the education system did not bring educational quality, especially amongst the less advantaged schools.

The educational factors that have been identified in research are: the importance of textbooks in the class (Taylor, 2009), selection and professional development of teachers (Taylor, 2009), classroom size (Phurutse, 2005), and formal contact hours (Phurutse, 2005). Zaccharia (1997) names the following factors as important for provision of basic education in poor areas: adequate buildings and equipment, classrooms with the basic furnishings, well written syllabi, good quality textbooks and appropriately trained teachers.

The factors that are characteristic of effective schools are, good classroom management that maximize academic learning time; school routines that discourage disruptions; a safe, orderly, disciplined, not rigid school environment; teachers with high expectations for their student’s performance; collegiality amongst teachers and administrative staff; a principal and staff that display vigorous instructional leadership and vision; regular review of student progress and modification of instructional practices; and public achievement ceremonies. All these make a difference in the lives of students in Western countries, even in those from disadvantage backgrounds.

2.4.4.2 SYSTEMIC VARIABLES

The second level concerns the structures around the classroom that contribute to the educational effectiveness of the school like the principal, senior management team, school governing body, district and circuit team and government.

The principal provides school leadership and management, together with the senior management team. Principals should give more attention to time management and curriculum

development. Failure on their part to control time management is seen as symptomatic of the inability to take responsibility and exercise control over the work situation.

The lesson to be learned from successful schools is that they have strong account systems, know what needs to be done and have the systems to monitor it. Improvements will require new skills in teaching style and a higher knowledge level of teachers, they must be willing to use textbooks and extend the literacy skills of learners through writing exercises.

The remedy for underperformance is found in the improvement of what teachers do in their classrooms and what principals do to provide guidance and direction to instructional improvement. Some of them are the tightening up of attendance, the organizing of the time table and learning course, and the re- skill of teachers. These include the running of the classroom, how seating is planned, the time table is followed and resources are used (Taylor, 2009; Phurutse, 2005; Zaccharia,1997).

Kamper (2008) highlights the principal's role in demonstrating effective leadership in high poverty set ups. His research focused on how some schools in poor communities overcome severe poverty related issues such as hunger, homelessness, illiteracy, unemployment, gangsters, drug abuse and a fatalistic mindset, while others under the same circumstances do not.) Kamper (2008) found that some schools in poor communities achieved pass rates from 70% to 90% between 2002 and 2005. The performance of these schools is attributed to the effective (invitational) leadership of the principal that "emphasized the crucial role of parent involvement in their schools success" (ibid, 2008:4-5).

2.4.4.3 NON-EDUCATIONAL VARIABLES/ OUT OF SCHOOL FACTORS

Fontannaz (2009) is of the opinion that education is defined both by the past and the current socio-economic conditions which reflect the environment in which education reforms are being implemented. This requires a systemic approach and collaboration with stakeholders like health, social development, safety and security.

Fontannaz (2009) asserts that poverty affects the affordability of, access to and potential benefits from education. The chances that a child has to be successful are definitely limited by, having no access to electricity, lack of transport to school, and lack of food. These disadvantaged children perform poorly when compared to a child who has access to these basic needs.

In addressing the question why achievements are so low, Chisholm (2005) points out that children must perform household, childcare and agricultural duties at home before they come

to school and then do some maintenance at school like cleaning classrooms and toilets, and fetching water especially in rural areas.

Taylor (2003) argues that we have relative assurance that poverty has a central differentiating effect on success at school. He continues that resources do have an effect on schooling outcomes but that some schools make better use of the same resources than others working under the same conditions. Taylor explains that “some of the poorest and poorest resourced schools regularly produce schooling outcomes equivalent to those of better-resourced schools” (ibid, 2003:130).

In 2003 children in 7% of households were always or often hungry, 17 % were sometimes hungry and 92% between the ages 7-18 were regularly hungry and continue to attend school (Fontannaz, 2009). The National School Nutritional Programme was initiated by the government to reduce hunger, alleviate the effect of malnutrition on the capacity to learn and by doing so, improve school attendance, punctuality and general well-being. The targeting strategy was to identify geographic areas where poverty levels were high, prioritize areas according to the severity of poverty and identify needy schools within these areas.

Some of the challenges experienced in this programme are, the inefficiency to deliver these services in rural areas where the road networks are limited, the lack of accountability to the School Governing Body and parents, disappearance of food from these schools or it's diversion to other unintended beneficiaries, mismanagement and large scale collusion and fraud in tendering and contracting procedures (Fontannaz, 2009). The challenges are to improve school and provincial accountability, tighter procurement and contracting controls and supplier payment transparency, that the funds allocated can benefit hungry children in the schools.

The Department of Education has also developed a national framework on health and wellness to promote good health among learners and teachers. Some of the programs include peer education programs to educate the youth about HIV/AIDS, guidelines for the management and prevention of drug abuse amongst learners and the spread of health and hygiene playing cards, and training files on food safety distributed to schools in all provinces. In many cases there are no clinics to address everyday ailments like poor eyesight and diseases, such as cholera, that affect children (Chisholm, 2005).

One of the most challenging health issues is the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the teaching community, especially amongst educators in poor schooling conditions (Phurutse, 2005). The impact of HIV/AIDS on children is worrying, in particular where they either lost one or both

parents, due to the disease. Chisholm agrees that the impact of HIV/AIDS on schools and teachers is a major public issue and that gains of education for all are being undone by the pandemic (2005). The result of this is that children lose out on their attendance because they must look after their sick relatives or they leave school to go work to support their households affected by HIV/AIDS (Fontannaz, 2009).

Another factor is the “high prevalence of violence in our schools which manifests itself in the form of substance abuse, rape assault, vandalism and theft” (ibid, 2009:36). Chisholm states that the rape of school girls, sexual violence, teenage pregnancy and its connection with access to schooling and drop-out rates is vital in understanding social action.

In his study of factors affecting teaching and learning, Phurutse (2005) challenges the idea that learners located in poor school conditions: schools charging low fees, with large classes and HIV/AIDS-infected educators, will do poorly compared to those in better-off conditions. He states that “educational context does play a role in the educational performance of learners, but the agency of the learners and other people in the specific context play an equally critical role in getting good matric results” (ibid 2005:16) It is his opinion that structural determinism, where those in poor conditions tend to perform poorly, can be transcended by the agency of the people in such communities. Although resources alone cannot improve the quality of education, working conditions of teachers must be improved and disparities between schools in urban and rural, poor and wealthy communities have to be rectified.

The findings from Kamper’s (2008) research proved that some schools in poor communities achieved pass rates from 70% to 90% in the period between 2002 and 2005. They effectively overcame poverty, hunger, homelessness, illiteracy, unemployment, gangsterism, drug abuse and a fatalistic mindset and managed to send happy motivated learners into the world. Kamper (2008) regards the school as a catalyst of community development in high poverty settings from an educational, social and ethical perspective.

The following section briefly outlines the intervention strategies of the Western Cape Education Department to address underperformance and the role of social participation, in particular parental involvement or governance, in this provincial strategy.

2.5 INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN EDUCATION

In terms of the specific focus on educational provision in the Western Cape, a Strategic Plan (WCED, 2011) was formulated by the WCED to address underperformance in schools.

According to this plan the WCED and Western Cape Government will improve the life chances of all its children through the provision of quality education.

The WCED's aim is to achieve optimal results by ensuring that children will remain in school for as long as possible. To support learner participation the Department will amongst other things provide: teachers who are caring, knowledgeable and organized to support schools, teachers and learners; teachers who are present and prepared; teachers who use textbooks and funding to maximize success, and make schools more safe and effective.

The intention of the strategy is to create an enabling environment for partners in the educational system. In order to contribute towards quality education it will involve teachers, unions, school governing bodies, private sector, and others in the governing of the schools. It is stated that "the majority of the children in the Western Cape are not achieving their academic potential and that it is largely due to poor levels of accountability for performance from education officials and educators, weak school management and leadership" (WCED: 2010: 2-10).

In a recent media release by the WCED it is stated that the improved results of the 2010 National Senior Certificate examination is a product of targeted and sustained interventions at underperforming schools. The successful interventions included, target setting for schools, the provision of extra text books and resources, subject specific support and additional tuition in subjects with high enrolments and low pass rates (WCED, 2011). Let us now consider each of these interventions separately.

2.5.1 WCED INTERVENTIONS

Target setting for school improvement include: the number of **additional passes** at each school (861 more than in 2010) and the traditional **pass rate**. The learners enrolled for the National Senior Certificate in 2010 decreased from 47 055 to 41 728 in 2011 and the WCED encourages learners who failed in the previous year (with between 1-3%) to rather re-enter the system as full-time candidates and not part-time learners as in the other provinces.

Learner and subject specific support through the **Top up programme** will mean additional textbooks are given to (Grade 12) learners in critical subject areas like Life Sciences with high enrolment rates and low pass rates. The **Tips for Success booklet**, that gives learner support to Grade 12 in their preparation for the National Senior Certificate examination, is also provided to the schools.

A **tutor programme** focussed on the needs of the learners is also used by the WCED and tutors must have a proven record of success at their respective schools. The WCED in partnership with the University of Stellenbosch also provides the **Telematics programme** that is expanded to more schools, even to Grade 11 learners and those that cannot participate in the programme at school level can buy the telematics DVD's at a minimum cost. The presenters have excellent presentation skills and subject knowledge to teach and additional materials are provided by curriculum planners to complement the lessons. Radio broadcasts will be done in subjects with high enrolment rates and **exemplar question papers and answers** developed for Grade10-12 is available on CD to all schools.

Educator and school support include **management support** which will be improved in underperforming schools, **subject specific support plans** to each school and districts, **subject concepts** where candidates scored low marks will form the basis of teacher development courses and **exemplar assessment** tasks are given to schools on CD to develop standardised and high quality tasks

Improving the management of schools is important. Their concern is about schools that underperform despite significant resources and support poured into the school. Principals are responsible for managing their schools and ensuring that their educators give quality education. Principals will now be held accountable for the schools' performance in the context of the law (WCED, 2011). New principals are given to 13 schools with less than 60% pass rate and others are monitored on a weekly basis.

The WCED have written letters to all underperforming schools, wherein they are requested to set out the steps they will undertake to improve their performance. Performance contracts that strengthen accountability will also be given to principals and deputy principals.

It is clear that the strategy to improve educational provision in the Western Cape is in line with the national and international efforts to address the educational and systemic factors that impact academic performance. The focus on target setting, learner and subject support, tutor and telematics programmes, teacher development, improved management and bigger responsibility and accountability from principals, is of great necessity. There are actually some challenges with such a strategy.

2.5.2 IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNANCE UNDERSTATED IN WCED REPORT

Except at the end of the letter, where parents together with teachers and principals are requested to feed the plan and help the WCED to achieve their targets, governance is not

taken seriously as a determining factor for school improvement and educational effectiveness.

The WCED (2010:1) states that:

the challenge for 2011 is to create an approach that builds on, sustains and fine tunes the strategies we already have in place so that they add even greater value for our educators and learners, as well as, help to achieve even better results at the end of this year.

The problem is that the provision of resources and support to underperforming schools reflects a top down, technocratic, mechanistic and highhanded approach, and not so much an approach that takes the power and resources embedded in other role players like the School Governing Body into account. The creating of an approach that sustains and fine tunes strategies to add value needs both the accountability and responsibility of governance and management.

Another problem is the focus on the “better results at the end of the year” to prove how effective these strategies are in improving the image of performance in the Western Cape compared to other provinces. There is nothing wrong with the setting of targets and the implementation of strategies to increase academic performance but “better results at the end of the year” does not address all the factors playing a role in achieving these results in less advantaged communities.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Giddens’ structuration theory provides the basis for a responsible understanding of the structure of the education system and role that actors like learners, teachers, principal and parents can play to restructure it. There are particular rules as portrayed in education policy that constrain but also endow the freedom of actors to use resources available to work towards positive educational change. It requires willingness and commitment from all actors to work within the available time and space to restructure and transform systems and processes that limit or delay educational provision and academic performance.

Humanistic theory is helpful to address the shortcomings of the modernization and dependency theories that follow a more mechanistic, technocratic and top-down approach to development and education. On the other hand a more people centred, bottom-up and grassroots approach espoused by the humanistic paradigm brings a sort of balance in both fields. The emphasis on an interdisciplinary, multi-disciplinary and trans-disciplinary approach takes the context in which development and education happens seriously. It is led by the principles of participation, empowerment, capacity building, self-reliance and sustainability.

The insights gained from the literature review indicate that education systems can help to achieve sustainable development but low quality education can become a poverty trap. It is not so much the broadening of the resource base on educational provision that will bring better educational outcomes but also the reform and restructuring of the educational system. It is clear from research that education systems reinforce poverty and taking into account the various factors impacting educational provision can be a first step to contextualize underperformance in schools.

The importance of parental involvement and engagement as equal partners in educational provision and in particular governance is analysed. It becomes clear from various contributors that there are challenges inhibiting and preventing parents from participating in governance, especially in disadvantaged areas. The need for more contextualised training is encouraged, with more focus on participation. The distinction between management and governance is addressed to show how an unbalanced relationship between them can further inhibit or prevent a school from performing at its peak.

The Strategic Plan of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED, 2010), to address underperformance in its schools, focusses on governance and parental involvement is not considered as rigorously as other factors. A strong tendency to emphasise the role of management and especially the role of the principal is more prominent. It ignores the role of parental engagement that is in essence a “doing with” approach to address underperformance and create more effective and efficient schools.

The WCED’s strategy ignores the multi-disciplinary approach proposed by various contributors which will allow different sectors to pull both intellectual and human resources together for the improvement of life and education in poor communities. It strengthens the position that governance in education requires participation and partnership from and between all stakeholders if educational challenges must be met to improve the academic performance of underperforming schools in disadvantaged communities, whether rural or urban.

Nkosi’s (2011) article in the Mail and Guardian entitled, “Public education sector challenged to reform” proposes that a new social compact is needed to improve education in South Africa. A social movement to improve education is proposed that will move beyond ideological interest to a national interest, providing a new social compact for quality schooling. In the article reference is made to Brazil, where better results have been achieved with far more limited resources, using social participation as a vital link in reform policies, mobilizing all segments of society to help transform education.

The need for social or public participation to address underperformance in the South African education system can be addressed constructively through such a social compact between all the stakeholders in education. This implies not just the mentioning of parents as stakeholders but as equal, active participants.

The next chapter focuses on the research methodology and details the research approach and provides a justification for the use of mixed methods in answering the research questions in this research study.



CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focused on the approach followed to gather data for this study. It consisted of a section that examined the methodological orientation of the study and a justification for the use of different methods in educational research. The focus was on the usefulness of a mixed methods approach in educational research and in particular how the use of both a qualitative and a quantitative phase could be valuable to the topic.

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) distinguish between research methodology and research methods. Research methodology can be described as a broad approach to scientific enquiry specifying how research questions should be asked and answered. The differentiation includes the consideration of worldviews; the general preference for certain designs, sampling logic, data collection and analytical strategies, guidelines for making inferences and the criteria for assessing and improving quality. They describe research methods as specific strategies and procedures for implementing research design, including sampling, data collection and analysis, and interpretation of the findings.

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The next few paragraphs focus on the qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approach and its relevance in relation to our research topic.

3.1.1 QUALITATIVE METHOD

Babbie and Mouton (2001) state that qualitative researchers attempt always to study human action from the perspective of the social actors themselves and the primary goal is describing and understanding and not explaining.

They provide the following key factors that distinguish qualitative from quantitative research. Qualitative research is conducted in the natural setting of social actors; focuses on process rather than outcome; the actor's or insider's perspective is emphasized, the primary aim is in-depth descriptions and understandings of actions; the main concern is to understand social action in terms of its specific context rather than to generalize to some theoretical population; the research process is often inductive in its approach, resulting in the generation of new hypothesis and theories; lastly that the researcher is seen as the "main instrument" in the research process (ibid, 2001).

Teddle and Tashakkori (2009:6) define qualitative methods “as the techniques associated with the gathering, analysis, interpretation and presentation of narrative information.” The answer to research questions in this method is narrative in form, and data analysis is done through the use of various techniques including categorical strategies and contextualizing (holistic) strategies. They refer to qualitative data analysis as thematic analysis because these strategies can also result in the generation of themes.

Heystek (2004) prefers to use a qualitative method in most of his work to get detailed descriptions of actual situations in schools through the use of in-depth interviews. Tsotetsi et al. (2008) describe qualitative approaches to research as methods that produce findings not arrived at by statistical procedures. It can also be used to answer questions about the complex nature of a phenomenon, to describe it from the participant’s point of view.

In his study of the manifestations of capabilities poverty with learners attending informal settlement schools, Maarman (2009) uses a qualitative research method to carry out an in-depth investigation into the complexity of the lives of these learners. Through the use of semi-structured focus group interviews, a comprehensive picture was created about the learners’ experiences. The same approach is followed by Moloi et al. (2010) in their study about learner’s perceptions on what contributes to their school’s success. They believed because their study focussed on exceptional schools that managed to rise above their circumstances, a qualitative research method was more suitable.

Focus group interviews are described as a semi-structured group discussion, moderated by a discussion leader, held in an informal setting, with the purpose of getting information through group interaction (ibid, 2010). It is based on the assumption that group interaction will generate a widening of responses, activate details of perception and release inhibitions that sometimes discourage participants to disclose information. Rich data is produced through the participation of informants who share their experiences, understandings, attitudes and beliefs (ibid, 2010). Mncube (2008:81) asserts that “interviews allow intimate, repeated and prolonged involvement of the researcher and the participant, which enables the researcher to get to the root of what is being investigated.”

Pillay (2004) uses a qualitative research design in his study of describing the experiences of learners in informal settlements. The qualitative research design is described as contextual (focussing on a specific social and educational context), explorative and descriptive (gaining insight into the experiences of the learners). Mncube (2008) employs the qualitative approach to ascertain the opinions and experiences of various governors regarding the involvement of learners in school governing bodies. He used the case study method, a variety of data

gathering methods which include observation, in-depth interviews and document analysis to understand the internal dynamics of a school governing body.

Maharaj (2005) argues that the central feature of qualitative inquiry is its naturalistic essence, whereby the research setting is a naturally occurring event with no predetermined course and the researcher has openness as to what the result of the investigation will be. In qualitative research, fieldwork is central because it brings direct and personal contact with the people studied for a period of time. This approach makes description and understanding of external observable behaviours and internal states (values, opinions, attitudes) possible (ibid, 2005). Fieldwork entails interacting with policy texts and documents related to school governance and also interviewing people associated with school governance.

Maharaj (2005) asserts that the qualitative approach requires a holistic perspective so that greater attention is given to setting, interdependencies, complexities and context. Such an approach is change orientated and takes the complexity of the world seriously while putting great emphasis on the importance of context. Another important feature of this approach is that of flexibility that makes way for unexpected shifts in direction. As understanding deepens and situations which in essence mean greater openness are identified, tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty, responsiveness and spontaneity could be recognised.

3.1.2 QUANTITATIVE METHOD

Babbie and Mouton (2001) define the quantitative paradigm as the quantification of constructs. Hereby the researcher believes that the best way to measure properties of phenomena is through quantitative measurement, assigning numbers to the perceived qualities of things. Another way to do it is through variable analysis whereby variables are used to describe and analyse human behaviour and lastly through experimental or statistical control for sources of error in the research process (ibid, 2001).

Teddle and Tashakkori (2009:4) define quantitative methods “as the techniques associated with the gathering, analysis, interpretation and presentation of numerical information.” In this method, research questions guide the investigation to get answers to unknown aspects of a phenomenon of interest, which is presented in numerical form. In quantitative data analysis, numerical data is analysed, using techniques that simply describe the phenomenon of interest or look for significant differences between groups or among variables.

In his research on the perception of educators about the efficiency of school governing bodies, Ngidi (2004) prefers the qualitative method, using a questionnaire as a research instrument to collect data, elicit and rate responses and analysis of data. Clase, Kok and Van

der Merwe (2007) also follow a quantitative approach in their investigation on the tension between school governing bodies and education authorities. They developed a structured questionnaire based on the theoretical background found in the literature review and the experience of the researchers.

3. 3 MIXED METHODS APPROACH

Teddle and Tashakkori (2009) state that mixed methods research is referred to as the third path, the third research paradigm, and the third methodological movement but they prefer to describe it as the third research community. It emerged “as an alternative to the dichotomy of qualitative (QUAL) and quantitative (QUAN) traditions during the past 20 years” (ibid, 2009:4)

Johnson et al. (2007) state that this third methodological movement has been given names like blended research, integrative research, multi- method research, multiple methods, triangulated studies, ethnographic residual analysis and mixed research. They prefer the term mixed research and integrative research because it does not suggest a limitation of mixing to methods only. In research done by Johnson et al. (2007) on the criteria used by leaders to define the term “mixed methods” state that 19 definitions were found amongst the participating methodologists. The central themes covered in these definitions are firstly, what is mixed, secondly, when or where in the design mixing occurs, thirdly, what is the breadth of the mixed research, fourthly, why mixing is carried out in the research, and lastly what is the orientation of the research.

Johnson et al. (2007) offer their own definition based on these themes which is that “mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combine elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g. use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data-collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration”. They refer to mixed methods research as a type of research whereby mixing would occur within a single study, within a program of research or across a related set of studies. This is best expressed through the qualitative-quantitative continuum whereby several overlapping groups of mixed methods researchers or types of mixed methods research are incorporated.

Johnson et al. (2007) define mixed methods research as an intellectual and practical synthesis based on qualitative and quantitative research, “offering a powerful third paradigm choice that often will provide the most informative, complete, balanced and useful research results”.

It is regarded as an important approach for generating research questions and providing answers.

According to Teddlie and Kashakkori (2009), mixed methods research is defined as the type of research design in which qualitative and quantitative approaches are used in types of questions, research methods, data collection and analysis procedures and or inferences. In this kind of research the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates findings and draws inferences by using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in a single study or program of inquiry.

The value of the mixed methods research lies in its ability to address a range of confirmatory and exploratory questions with both the qualitative and quantitative approaches and in that sense verify and generate theory in the same study (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). The general view in the past holds that qualitative research questions are exploratory because it is concerned with generating information about unknown aspects of a phenomenon and quantitative research questions are confirmatory, aimed at testing theoretical propositions.

Another value added by the mixed methods approach is that it provides better or stronger inferences/conclusions and in that way offsets the disadvantages that certain methods have by themselves (ibid, 2009). This is seen when in-depth interviews are used in conjunction with mailed questionnaires. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009:35) state that “one type of data gives greater depth whereas the other gives greater breadth; together it is hoped that they yield results from which one can make better (more correct) inferences.”

The quantitative and qualitative components of the research may add value when the findings lead to two different conclusions. It allows the opportunity for a greater assortment of divergent views and could lead to a re-examination of the conceptual frameworks and the underlying assumptions of the two components (ibid, 2009). These divergent findings may lead to three outcomes which is a possible transformation of data types, inference quality audits and the design of a new study or phase for further investigation. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) states that the diversity of ideas is a major strength of mixed methods but the convergence of ideas that comes through developing bridges between diverse conceptualization of mixed methods can also become its biggest challenge.

Sammons (2010) regards the flexibility of mixed methods research to address multiple and diverse research questions simultaneously through qualitative and quantitative techniques as a big attraction for researchers. It has the potential to generate new insights through a combination of general statistical findings and thick descriptions of specific cases

exemplifying those findings. Sammons (2010) also argues that mixed methods studies must be designed to ensure that different phases of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis can feed into each other in a productive and mutually enhancing way.

Sammons (2010) argues that mixed methods designs focus on the value and fruitfulness of using evidence from both paradigms to address a broader range of research questions and produce more interesting findings than both of them on their own. Clark and Badiee (2010:276) agree that mixed methods research “is appropriate when a study’s purpose and research questions warrant a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches.” They provide practical guidance about how research questions must be conceptualized and written when mixed methods studies are conducted.

The three key elements that define the focus of a study are, the content area (referring to the topic or research problem), the purpose of the study (describing the primary intent, objectives and goals of the researcher), and the research questions (derived from and extended by the purpose). Clark and Badiee (2010) distinguish the purpose from the research question as being more specific and represent the actual questions that the researcher wants to answer. The research question sets the boundaries to the research project, clarifies its direction and keeps the research from becoming too extensive. The research question dictates methods and is regarded as the hub of the research process (ibid, 2010).

Mertens et al. (2010) illustrate how mixed methods can be utilized in a transformative context. They are of the opinion that the transformative paradigm allows for the inclusion of important contextual factors such as social justice, power and oppression, addressing the type of questions asked, type of designs used and the kind of information gathered benefitting the local community).

Mertens et al. (2010:195) states that the transformative paradigm “arose partially because researchers and members of marginalized communities expressed dissatisfaction with the dominant research paradigms and practices ... limitations ... associated with these paradigms that were articulated by ... who have experienced discrimination and oppression”. It is also clear from this paradigm that members from diverse communities who were marginalized in history and whose voices have been ignored are brought into the world of research to enhance social justice.

Mertens et al. (2010:198) further state that “the relationship between researchers and participants is a critical determinant in achieving an understanding of valid knowledge within a transformative context.” A partnership is formed between the researcher and the

community, and through the mixed methods design the informational needs of the community are addressed, taking into account the historical and contextual factors of the community when methodical decisions are made.

The transformative approach suggests the need for community involvement and the cyclical use of data to inform decisions for the next step in the research. In the transformative paradigm use is made of sequential designs using first quantitative methods followed by qualitative methods or vice versa that is rooted in its belief system or a parallel design involving the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods at the same time during the study.

Mertens et al. (2010:208) state that researchers conducting development studies recognize that “their work is improved when they use qualitative participatory assessment tools in which stakeholders participate ... include case studies, participant observation, focus groups, semi-structured interviews ...” It is said of participatory activities that they raise the awareness of stakeholders to their right of having a voice in the evaluation process, informing and empowering them to make decisions and take actions that lead to the improvement of their programs.

Elliot (2004) calls for greater use of multi- method approaches in educational research because the use of one method (quantitative/ surveys) can result in a tendency to overlook complexities. His concern is that a methodology that involves the distribution of forms and collecting responses, can lead to its validation purely by statistical means. The use of qualitative methods (interviews) with the quantitative (questionnaires) can bring some findings in the research area that would have been overlooked otherwise.

Elliot (2004) demonstrates that greater insight can emerge if multiple methods are employed. He concludes his study by saying that the survey informs them about important similarities and differences in reported attitudes, values and behaviours while the detailed interviews and observation of actual practises help them recognize more complex realities.

Mncube (2009) makes use of a mixed methodology of qualitative and quantitative approaches in his research on democratic school governance. It includes the use of in-depth interviews, observation and reading of source documents and using questionnaires to reach a wider population of respondents. Van Wyk (2004) also employed the mixed methods approach in the research of school governing bodies in using questionnaires and detailed interviews.

Smit and Oosthuizen (2010) use a mixed methods approach in their study of improving school governance through participative democracy and the law. They used a quantitative

method to analyse variables, factors and indicators which they collected using a survey. The use of interviews in their research assists to verify, confirm and refute findings of the quantitative study.

The value of mixed methods research lies in its ability to describe, predict and understand social phenomena better, especially with regard to variation and differences in educational effectiveness (Sammons, 2010). It is the false dichotomy between qualitative approaches (largely associated with educational effectiveness research) and quantitative approaches (associated with school improvement research and teacher development) that caused both types of research to suffer.

In the past the quantitative approach focussed on educational effectiveness investigations, identifying and measuring differences in school or teacher effectiveness, explaining and predicting statistically the variance of student outcomes. The qualitative approaches were used in school improvement and teacher development, associated with case studies, action research that generates thick descriptions of school and classroom processes and participant perspectives, with limited investigation of its impact on student outcomes (ibid, 2010). This approach was used especially in studies similar to this one, focussing on improving or turning around schools or on those viewed as effective despite disadvantaged contexts (ibid, 2010).

Mixed methods research designs must thus focus on the value and fruitfulness of using evidence from both approaches to address a wide range of research questions and produce findings that they cannot reach on their own, for both practitioners and policy makers (ibid, 2010). The types of designs helpful for educational effectiveness research and school improvement research are multi-level mixed designs and fully integrated mixed designs.

Multi- level mixed designs examine organizations with a hierarchical structure like schools and classrooms. They focus on the consequences of clustering data in educational settings “to allow for investigation of the impact of school and neighbourhood context” (ibid, 2010). Fully integrated mixed designs are regarded as the most complete manifestation of mixed methods research designs because it allows for the mixing of qualitative and quantitative approaches in all phases of a study.

The following paragraphs outline the characteristics of mixed methods research. They are methodological eclecticism, paradigmatic pluralism, diversity at all levels of the research, emphasis on continua not dichotomy, is an iterative, cyclical approach to research, is a focus on the research question, is a set of basic signature research designs and analytical processes,

has a tendency towards balance and compromise, and a reliance on visual representations (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 2010).

Tashakorri and Teddlie (2010:5) reject the “either-or” approach followed in the methodology of qualitative and quantitative paradigms in favour of a guiding methodological principle called, *methodological eclecticism*. By this they mean that “practitioners of mixed methods select and then synergistically integrate the most appropriate techniques from a myriad of QUAL, QUAN and mixed strategies to thoroughly investigate a phenomenon of interest.”

Methodological eclecticism comes from the rejection of the incompatibility thesis which means that it is inappropriate to mix qualitative and quantitative methods due to fundamental differences between the paradigms supposedly underlying those methods. Alternatively, the compatibility thesis means that combining these approaches is appropriate in many research settings (Tashakorri and Teddlie, 2010). Methodological eclecticism rather brings a freedom to combine methods that can bring the best answers to research questions (design quality).

Paradigm pluralism is defined by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) as the belief that a variety of paradigms may serve as the underlying philosophy for the use of mixed methods (ibid, 2010). Practitioners of mixed methods respect thus the theoretical and philosophical stance of other researchers. The emphasis on *diversity at all levels* of the research enterprise, moves from the broader conceptual dimensions to the narrower empirical ones, extending beyond the methodological eclecticism and paradigm pluralism. The emphasis on *continua* rather than a set of dichotomies, replaces the either-or from the paradigm debates in favour of continua that describe a range of options from across the methodological spectrum.

The characteristic that points out the cyclical approach which moves from grounded results through inductive logic (context of discovery) to general inferences through deductive logic (context of justification) to tentative hypotheses or predictions of particular events or outcomes (ibid, 2010). All mixed methods research goes through a full cycle once, regardless of the starting point. Mixed methods research can also be described as a *set of basic signature research designs and analytical processes*, commonly agreed upon although going by different names and diagrammatic illustrations.

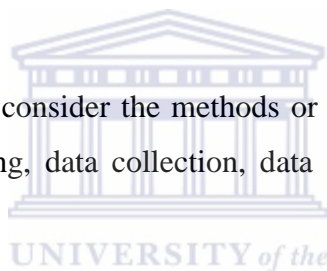
Teddlie and Tashakkori (2010) define parallel mixed designs as a family of mixed methods design in which mixing occurs in an independent manner, also called concurrent, simultaneous and triangulation designs. The design and analytical processes are called “signature” because they are unique to mixed methods research and other signature designs

include sequential mixed designs, conversion mixed designs, quantizing, qualitzing and inherently mixed data analysis.

Implicit in the third methodological community is the tendency towards balance and compromise and again, as learned from former characteristics, a rejection of an either-or of the incompatibility thesis. There is an inclination towards generating a balance between the excesses of the qualitative and quantitative methods, creating a unique identity for mixed methods research. In such an identity there is a decline of confrontation amongst paradigms, paths are created for fruitful dialogue and an eagerness to learn how to cooperate and work together (ibid, 2010).

The last characteristic focuses on the reliance on visual representations like figures and diagrams and a common notational system which incorporate more dimensions as the processes from which they evolve. It is stated that “mixed methods research designs, data collection procedures, and analytical techniques lend themselves to visual representations, which can simplify the complex interrelationships among elements inherent in those processes” (ibid, 2010).

The last part of this section will consider the methods or specific strategies and procedures like the research design, sampling, data collection, data analysis and the interpretation of findings.



3.3 1 GENERATING QUESTIONS IN MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

The generation of research questions is the first part of the conceptualization phase in mixed methods research and dictates the planning process which includes the selection of a specific mixed methods research design, sampling strategy, and data collection. The reasons given for doing research varies from personal reasons, reasons associated with advancing knowledge and societal reasons. Mixed methods research questions “are concerned with unknown aspects of a phenomenon and are answered with information that is presented in both narrative and numerical forms” (Teddlie and Tashakkori , 2009).

The formulation of the research question is regarded as a dynamic process in which the component questions are re-examined and reframed as the study progresses. The two approaches followed to frame research questions are firstly, to propose an overarching mixed research question and afterwards expanding it into separate quantitative and qualitative subsections. The second approach is to formulate separate qualitative and quantitative questions followed by an explicit question about the nature of integration (Teddlie and Tashakkori , 2010). In this study the first approach to formulate a research question will be

followed, which is an overarching mixed research question that is afterwards expanded into separate qualitative and quantitative subsections.

3.3.2 MIXED METHODS RESEARCH DESIGNS

In mixed methods research, researchers create designs that answer their research questions effectively, which is different from an approach whereby researchers choose from a menu of designs in quantitative research or one whereby they follow either the qualitative or quantitative approach completely (Teddlie and Tashakkori , 2009). There are many reasons why various typologies of mixed methods design are followed by researchers. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) assert that typologies help researchers decide how to proceed when designing their mixed methods studies. They are useful in establishing a common language, help to legitimize the field because they provide research designs different from the other approaches, and are useful as a pedagogical tool.

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009:142) distinguish between quasi-mixed designs and true mixed methods research designs on the basis that a study is only mixed if integration of approaches happens at all stages of the study. They argue that the “concept of quasi-mixed designs is important because it allows researchers to distinguish studies that are technically mixed because they have both quantitative and qualitative data from studies that are truly mixed because they meaningfully integrate quantitative and qualitative components.”

A key component prevalent in mixed methods typologies is whether it is a parallel mixed design or a sequential mixed design. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) describe parallel mixed designs as those mixed methods projects where the phases of the study occur in a parallel manner that is either simultaneously/concurrently or with certain lapses in between. Sequential mixed designs on the other hand refer to mixed methods projects where the phases of the study occur in chronological order, with one strand emerging from or following the other.

There are seven steps that can help a researcher to move from determining the appropriateness of a mixed methods design to the selection or development of the best design for the study (Teddlie and Tashakkori , 2009). The researcher must firstly determine whether the study require a mono- method or mixed methods design. There should secondly be awareness about the existing typologies of mixed methods design and how details can be accessed. Thirdly, the ideal is to choose the best available mixed methods design but at the end researchers must be able to generate their own.

The fourth step deals with the awareness of the criteria emphasized by each mixed methods typology and its application to the study. The general criteria must be listed before the specific criteria for the study is selected, this is the fifth step. A sixth step is that selected criteria must be applied to potential designs that ultimately lead to the selection of the best research design. The seventh and last step states that a new mixed methods design must be developed with flexibility and creativity because there is no best design at the starting or involvement of a research project.

3.3.2 SAMPLING STRATEGIES FOR MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

There are four broad categories of sampling procedures in the human sciences, probability, purposive, convenience and mixed methods sampling (Teddlie and Tashakkori , 2009). The first three sampling designs form the background for the development of the mixed methods sampling.

3.3.2.1 PROBABILITY SAMPLING

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) state that probability sampling techniques are basically used in quantitative studies, aiming at representativeness and the degree to which the sample accurately represents the entire population. An accessible population is described as the total number of elements, subjects or members for which it is possible to collect data. There are three basic types of probability sampling (random sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling) and a combination of two techniques is called multiple probability techniques.

3.3.2.2 PURPOSIVE SAMPLING

Purposive sampling techniques are used in qualitative studies and are defined as selecting units based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study's questions. It is also defined as a type of sampling where particular settings, persons or events are deliberately selected for important information that can only be provided by them. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) provide certain characteristics of purposive sampling which is firstly that it addresses specific purposes related to research questions, are secondly selected because it uses the expert judgement of researchers and informants, its procedures focus thirdly on the depth of information that can be generated by individual cases, and lastly because the samples used, are typically small (30 or fewer cases).

They highlight three basic families of purposive sampling techniques namely sampling to achieve representativeness or comparability, sampling special or unique cases, sequential sampling, and multiple purpose techniques that involve a combination of two techniques (Teddlie and Tashakkori , 2009).

3.3.2.3 CONVENIENCE SAMPLING

Convenience sampling involves drawing samples that are easily accessible and where participants are willing to be involved in the study. It might not be regarded as the most appropriate to answer the research question and can also be seen wrongly as a purposive sampling technique (ibid, 2009). There are two forms of convenience samples, namely, captive sample (a convenience sample taken from a particular environment where individuals find it difficult to participate) and volunteer sample (where individuals freely agree to participate in the study).

3.3.2.4 MIXED METHODS SAMPLING

Mixed methods sampling techniques involve the selection of units or cases for a research study using both probability sampling and purposive sampling strategies. A defining characteristic of mixed methods sampling strategies is the ability of the researcher to combine probability and purposive sampling techniques creatively. The strand of a research design, a phase of study that includes the conceptualization, experiential (methodological/analytical) and inferential stage, is important in mixed methods research.

The mixed methods researcher can choose procedures that generate representative examples or use sampling techniques that yield information rich cases. Teddlie and Tahakorri (2009:180) state that “combining the two orientations allows the researcher to generate complementary databases that include information with both depth and breadth.” Another characteristic is that mixed methods studies include multiple samples that vary from a small number of cases to a large number of units or cases. Sampling decisions are also made before the study starts and place a premium on using expert judgment across the research strands. While both numeric and narrative data is generated from samples, the technique may yield to one or the other dataset.

3.3.3 DATA COLLECTION IN MIXED METHODS

The main goal of the study is to find credible answers to research questions and these answers are only credible if the well-being of the participants are ensured (Teddlie and Tashakkori , (2009). In the American context institutional review boards monitor research projects in all disciplines. They are responsible for evaluating and approving research proposals and before a study is done, one must firstly determine what level of risk the study might pose to the psychological, physical and social well-being of participants. In the next step informed consent, agreement from the participant to participate in the research study, understanding the

risks involved should be completed. This includes the participant's right to privacy which entails issues of anonymity and confidentiality should be told.

Data collection strategies in qualitative studies comprise of three elements, namely observation, interviews and documents, while quantitative data collection strategies include questionnaires, tests and some form of structured interviews (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). The qualitative strategies generate narrative data that is thematically analyzed while quantitative strategies generate numerical data that is analyzed statistically.

Detailed and specific research questions lead to the use of instruments or protocols that is more pre- designed and structured while the opposite happens when questions are less detailed and less specific. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) assert that mixed methods studies are situated between these two extremes.

Several reasons are provided for not labelling data collection strategies either qualitative or quantitative but rather to view it as a QUAL- MM- QUAN data collection continuum. The major data collection strategies can generate qualitative and quantitative data, research studies benefit from a mixed approach that include different data collection strategies, the conversion of data from one form to the other blurs the distinction between qualitative and quantitative data collection strategies, and specific techniques within each traditional collection strategy are placed on a continuum from highly structured (QUAN end of continuum) to a highly unstructured (QUAL end of the continuum). The major data collection strategies in mixed methods research and some data quality issues will now be discussed.

3.3.3.1 OBSERVATIONS

The observational data collection strategy is defined as the recording of units of interpretation occurring in a definite social situation based on visual examination or inspection of that situation (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). The two dimensions of observational research are the structured-unstructured dimension (which varies according to whether the observation used structured or unstructured data) and the participant-observer dimension (which varies depending on how much the observer is actually part of the social situation).

3.3.3.2 FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups are defined as a separate data collection strategy, which includes an interview and an observational technique (ibid, 2009). It allows access to information like the attitudes and experiences of participants in a non-threatening environment. Some characteristics of a focus group is that it consists of five to ten participants, composed of a homogenous group, a procedure whereby a moderator conducts a group interview with the assistance of someone,

sessions last no longer than two hours and involve a focussed discussion of a topic of interest (ibid, 2009). The data in a mixed methods study is usually qualitative in nature but can also use quantitative data collection strategies to supplement the major findings of the study.

3.3.3.3 INTERVIEWS

Interviews involve one person or interviewer asking open-ended or close ended questions of another person called the interviewee (ibid, 2009). It gives interviewers a chance to get clarity on vague answers. In a qualitative study there is keenness towards open-ended interviews because it generates considerable information that can lead to the re-conceptualization of the issues.

There are three kinds of open-ended interviews, informal conversational interviews which are the least structured, the general interview guide approach which is more structured, and the standardized open-ended interview which is the most structured. The open-ended interview can occur face to face, over the telephone or the internet (ibid, 2009).

Kvale (2006) describes interviews as giving a voice to common people, presenting their life situations in their own words, and opening close personal interaction between researchers and their subjects. In the process a personal relationship of trust is established that has the potential for manipulation and domination of the interviewer over the interviewee. Kvale (2006:483) is critical about the fact that an interview is seen as a dialogue because “it gives an illusion of mutual interests in a conversation, which in actuality takes place for the purpose of just one part- the interviewer.”

One of the power dynamics in an interview is that the interviewer rules the interview by determining the time, initiating the interview, deciding on the topic, posing the questions and following up on the answers and closing the conversation. It can also be seen as a one-way dialogue because the interviewer asks and the interviewee answers. Kvale (2006) see it as an instrumental dialogue because it serves as an instrument providing the interviewer with descriptions, narratives and texts, interpreted and reported with the interest of the researcher at heart. It is further described as a manipulative dialogue serving the hidden agenda of the researcher, and where the researcher holds monopoly over the interpretation of the interviewees' statements.

Kvale (2006) provides some alternatives to these personal and consensus seeking interviews. The interview is known as a Platonic dialogue when it becomes a conversation that stimulates the interviewee and interviewer to formulate their ideas about the research theme. Actively confronting interviews creates the possibility of public conversation and argument but when

it became a battle whereby the interviewer deliberately provokes conflicts and emphasizes divergences, it is known as an antagonistic interview. When the arguments of opposing sides are carefully reported it is called dissensus research but is known as advocacy research when representatives from different positions and social groups critically interpret the interviews from opposing sides to gain well-documented and well-argued dissensus. The psychoanalytic interview takes place when the patient lies on the bed and answers questions with the therapist who in return gives answers back to the patient.

Kvale (2006:489) regards “transparency and acceptance of power, conflicts and dissensus as contributing to the objectivity of interview research, in line with a dialectical conception of knowledge as developed through contradictions”. In conclusion thus ethics is just as important as methodology in interview research and requires from interviewers to be both participant and observer, realising that it may contribute to the empowerment or further oppression of the interviewee.

3.3.3.4 QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaires allow participants to use self-report to express their feelings, attitudes and beliefs toward a topic of interest (ibid, 2009). This strategy requires a level of reading ability but where literacy is not an issue it functions as an efficient data collection strategy. Questionnaires can also be open-ended, close-ended or both but a keenness towards close-ended questions is prominent in quantitative studies. The fact that researchers can mail their questions to respondents is a major advantage and is less expensive to conduct. An extensive follow up method is followed to remind respondents but some respondents never participate and their non-response may lead to attrition which can become a threat to the external validity or generalizability of the findings.

The two most frequently used types of questionnaires are the attitude scale and the personality inventories. Attitude scales include measures of attitudes, beliefs, self-perceptions, intentions, and aspirations. It is a questionnaire that is mostly used in survey research and the construction of a formal attitude scale is very difficult and time consuming. Personality inventories, questionnaires and checklists are used for the measurement of the personality attributes of respondents.

Some of the commonly used personality inventories include measures of self-perceptions, locus of control and self-efficacy, especially by educational researchers that collect data regarding personal attributes which is related to behaviours (Teddle and Tashakkori, 2009).

Mixed methods questionnaires can either be open-ended or close ended items like when a researcher asks broad open-ended questions to elicit candid unrestricted information from respondents, followed by a number of closed-ended questions with a pre-planned response format.

3.3.4 DATA ANALYSES IN MIXED METHODS.

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) hold the view that the basic strategies for analysing qualitative and quantitative data must first be understood before one looks at its usage in mixed methods. Let us first consider them before we continue with mixed methods data analysis.

3.3.4.1 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

During qualitative data analysis, various forms of narrative data are converted from raw material into partly processed data which are then subjected to a particular analysis scheme. It is regarded as predominantly inductive in nature, is iterative (involving a back and forth process between data collection and analysis), and eclectic (employing an eclectic mix of the available analytical tools that best fits the data set under consideration) (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

The three general types of qualitative data analysis is firstly, *categorical strategies* (that break down narrative data and rearrange those data to produce categories that facilitate comparisons leading to a better understanding of the research question); secondly *contextualizing strategies* (that interpret narrative data in the context of a coherent whole text that includes interconnections among statements and events); and *qualitative data displays* (that are visual presentations of the themes that emerge from qualitative data analysis).

3.3.4.2 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

During quantitative data analysis, numeric data are analysed, using a variety of statistical techniques (ibid, 2009:256). Three different quantitative data analysis techniques are descriptive versus inferential statistics, univariate versus multivariate statistics and parametric versus non-parametric statistics.

The above authors further define descriptive methods as the procedures used for summarizing data, with the intention of discovering trends and patterns, and summarizing results for ease of understanding and communication. Inferential techniques are generated after descriptive results have been examined, normally used for testing hypotheses or for confirming or disconfirming the results obtained from the descriptive results. Univariate statistics involve

linking one variable that is the focal point of the analysis with one or more other variables while multivariate statistics link two or more sets of variables to each other (ibid, 2009).

3.3.4.3 MIXED METHODS DATA ANALYSIS

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) describe mixed methods data analysis as the processes whereby qualitative and quantitative data analysis strategies are combined, connected or integrated in research studies. The typology of mixed methods data analysis is organised around the five types of mixed methods design implementation processes which is parallel mixed methods data analysis, conversion mixed methods data analysis, sequential mixed methods data analysis, multilevel mixed data analysis and fully integrated mixed methods analysis.

Parallel mixed methods data analysis is the most used mixed methods data analysis strategy in the human sciences and has been associated with other design concepts such as triangulation and convergence (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). They state that “it involves two separate processes, quantitative analysis of data, using descriptive/inferential statistics for the appropriate variables, and qualitative analysis of data, using thematic analysis related to the relevant narrative data” (ibid, 2009:266).

The two sets of data analysis are different but both provide an understanding of the phenomenon under study which is linked, combined or integrated into meta-inferences. When the two sets of parallel analysis is allowed to “talk to each other” it is known as “cross over tracks analysis” whereby findings from the two methodological strands are intertwined and inform one another throughout the study (ibid, 2009:269).

Conversion mixed methods data analysis takes place, when collected qualitative data are converted or transformed into numbers (quantitizing), or quantitative data are converted into narratives or other types of qualitative (qualitizing), according to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009). They describe quantitizing narrative data as the process whereby qualitative data are transformed into numerical data that can be analyzed statistically.

Qualitizing numeric data is described as the process whereby quantitative data are transformed into qualitative categories or narrative form (ibid, 2009). Both quantitizing and qualitizing involves one data source and its conversion to the other form but inherently mixed data analysis implies that qualitative and quantitative information is used as a data source to interlink questions (ibid, 2009).

Sequential mixed methods data analysis takes place when the qualitative and quantitative strands of a study occur in chronological order in order for the analysis in one strand to emerge from or depends on the previous strand (ibid, 2009). During a sequential QUAL to QUAN analysis with typology development, a qualitative phase occurs first, followed by a quantitative phase and the analysis from the two phases are interlinked. During a sequential QUAN to QUAL analysis with typology development, a quantitative phase occurs first, followed by a qualitative phase, and the analyses from the two phases are related to one another. In an iterative sequential mixed analysis, the analyses of data from a sequential study have more than two phases.

Multilevel mixed data analysis is described as a general analytic strategy in which qualitative and quantitative techniques are used at different levels of aggregation within a study to answer interrelated research questions (ibid, 2009). It occurs when one type of analysis (QUAL) is used at one level (students) and another type of analysis (QUAN) is used at another level (classroom).

Fully integrated mixed methods analysis takes place when there is an interactive mixing of qualitative and quantitative analyses characterized as iterative, reciprocal and interdependent. This form of analysis helps to break down the barriers between the traditional qualitative thematic and quantitative statistical dichotomy in analysis (ibid, 2009).

Before we discuss the inference process on mixed methods research we must keep in mind that the assessment of quality is a process that was already followed in the other methods. Bryman, Becker and Sempik (2008) already established in research amongst social researchers that there are variations in the levels of support for various quality criteria in social science.

Findings suggest that there is support for the relevance of validity, reliability and generalizability as criteria for judging the quality of quantitative research (Bryman, Becker and Sempik, 2008). The criteria of replicability has received less support in that type of research. Respondents regarded the relevance of validity to qualitative research considerably higher than generalizability and replicability. Bryman, Becker and Sempik (2008:274) assert that “findings relating to both generalizability and transferability imply that issues to do with the ability to generalize to populations or settings are not major concern among social policy researchers”.

Their findings show a preference for a combination of traditional quantitative research criteria and qualitative research criteria for the judging of quality in mixed methods research,

and using different criteria for the quantitative and qualitative components of a mixed methods investigation (ibid, 2008). The criteria which stands out in a mixed methods research is that it should be relevant to a research question, procedures used in the research should be transparent, the findings should be integrated and the rationale for using a mixed methods approach should be outlined.

Alicia O’Cathain (2010) provides a comprehensive framework in her assessment of quality in mixed methods research. She highlights the need for a comprehensive framework which includes offering a structured description of a complex issue with the purpose of facilitating understanding and also addressing the need of a variety of stakeholders that want to assess the quality of mixed methods research (ibid, 2010).

After evaluating the three approaches (generic, individual and mixed) to assess the quality of a mixed study, O’Cathain (2010) expresses preference for a mixed methods approach, hereby “inferences are drawn from the whole mixed methods study-meta-inferences-not simply from each component” (ibid, 2010:535). O’Cathain (2010) places the comprehensiveness of the mixed methods approach at the core of her framework which consists of certain domains which is planning quality, design quality, data quality, interpretive rigor, inference transferability, reporting quality, synthesizability and utility.

The next section focuses on Teddlie and Tashakkori’s inference process and their proposed integrative framework to assess quality.

3.3.5 INFERENCE PROCESS IN MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

The term inference refers to the last and most important stage of the research process. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) use it for three related concepts, which is the inference process (making sense out of the results of data analysis), inference quality (an umbrella term denoting the standards for evaluating the quality of conclusions made) and inference transferability (the degree to which these conclusions may be applied to other similar settings).

Inferences are regarded as conclusions and interpretations that are made on the basis of collected data in a study and denote both a process and an outcome of the research (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). It does not only answer research questions but also develop new understandings and explanations for events, phenomena and relationships.

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) provide some general guidelines for making credible inferences during the data collection and analysis phases. The research purpose and questions

must be kept in the foreground of all analyses and interpretations. Each question must be stated separately and examine or summarize all of the results relevant to the question. Tentative interpretations are made about each part of the results and the answers or interpretations to the questions must be examined to see if they can be combined, compared, contrasted or explained.

What must also be kept in mind, the quality of inferences in a mixed methods study depends on the strength of inferences emerging from the qualitative and quantitative strands of the study. The strength of a good mixed methods study depends on the extent to which the purpose for using those methods is fulfilled, and lastly inferences depends on the mixed methods design. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) see the quality of inferences as, making judgements about the quality of the method and data obtained, and making judgement about the quality of inferences, interpretations and conclusions. After addressing the characteristics of good inference in qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods research, Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) came up with an integrative framework. They describe it as a crucial stage in the study where they integrate (compare and contrast, infuse, link, modify one on the basis of the other) the two sets of inferences generated by the two strands of the study.

3.3.5.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD INFERENCES IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

A good inference is seen as capturing the meaning of the phenomenon under consideration for study participants, it should thus be seen as authentic. A good inference is also credible and transparent. Some contributors see the following as aspects of goodness. The foundation which provides the philosophical stance and context to and informs the study; the approach that deals with the specific grounding of the study's logic and criteria; collection of data that deals with explicitness about data collection and management; representation of voice, whereby researchers reflect on their relationships with participants and the phenomena under exploration; the art of meaning making, presenting new insights through the data and chosen methodology; and implications for professional practice (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) provide techniques for evaluating and enhancing the quality of inferences, like dependability audit, confirmability audit, member checks, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, thick descriptions, and reflexive journaling and triangulation techniques. Overall, these strategies strengthen the credibility of the research, fitting the reality of the participant and the construction and representation of that reality by the researcher.

3.3.5.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD INFERENCES IN QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), a good inference establishes relations between variables while providing reasonable certainty that such relations did not happen by chance, but sometimes through tests of statistical significance. Another characteristic is that its intensity matches the demonstrated magnitude of the relationship between variables, supported by the results of data analysis. It is also regarded as free from the systematic bias in interpretations of the results because the researcher reports and evaluates the research.

3.3.5.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD INFERENCES IN MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

There are three different views on the quality of inferences in mixed methods research. Some consider mixed methods as a vehicle for improving the quality of inferences that are potentially obtainable from an either qualitative or quantitative strand in the study; others argue that mixed methods research is potentially susceptible to weak inferences because it is difficult to use different designs to answer one research question; and lastly given the assumption in consistency between the standards for assessing the quality of inferences derived in mixed methods research is impossible (Teddlie and Tashakkori , 2009).

The challenge for researchers in the mixed methods approach is to employ three sets of standards for assessing the quality of inferences, which is to evaluate the inferences derived from the analysis of quantitative data using quantitative standards; evaluating the inferences made on the basis of qualitative data using qualitative standards; and lastly assessing the degree to which the meta-inferences on the basis of these two sets of inferences are credible.

3.3.6 INTEGRATIVE FRAMEWORK

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) view the integrative framework as a strategy to reduce the gap between the two sets of standards. It incorporates many of the standards of quality from the qualitative and quantitative approaches, providing partially common sets of standards.

Two criteria play an important role in evaluating the quality of inferences in the framework which is design quality and interpretive rigor. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) define design quality as the degree to which the investigator has selected and implemented the most appropriate procedures for answering research questions, including questions related to the following criteria namely design suitability, design fidelity, within-design consistency, and analytic adequacy).

Interpretive rigour refers to the degree to which credible interpretations have been made on the basis of obtained results. In order to assess rigour and improve quality of inferences certain criteria (interpretive consistency, theoretical consistency, interpretive agreement, interpretive distinctiveness, integrative efficacy and interpretive/integrative correspondence) are proposed. Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) summarizes that the first component (design quality) addresses the quality of the data, design, and data analysis procedures and the second component (interpretive rigor) addresses the process of making inferences on the basis of the findings from the study.

O' Cathain (2010:539) argues that "the concept of inference quality from the Teddlie and Tashakkori model has been replaced with quality because although a research team's inferences and the quality of data on which they are based must be assessed, methodological rigor should be assessed independently from inferences". The reason provided is that if those inferences are good then stakeholders and researchers outside the team can develop their own inferences and test its integrative rigor. After assessing her comprehensive model which includes a wide spectrum of criteria for quality, O'Cathain (2010) points out certain challenges to which we will refer shortly.

The first challenge is that it is time consuming and difficult to apply too many criteria. It is important to identify the most important criteria and to prioritize them according to its need for the study. Another challenge is, whether the assessment of quality is done in the individual components or the whole mixed methods of the study. The integrative framework addresses quality in the individual components and the whole of the study but whether it is comprehensive enough is to be seen.

3.4 RESEARCH METHOD

This section makes use of the mixed methods, outlining the steps that were followed in the research. At first the research question were stated; the research design explained; the sampling strategy; data collection and analysis; and the inference process applicable to the research.

3.4.1 RESEARCH QUESTION

The overall aim of the research were to determine how and why some formerly identified dysfunctional and underperforming schools in less advantaged urban areas improved their performance while others did not.

From the preliminary readings on educational research it has emerged that some researchers choose either a qualitative approach (Heystek, 2004; Adams and Waghid, 2004; Kamper,

2008; Tsotetsi et al., 2008; Maharaj, 2005; Maluka, 2004) or a quantitative approach (Ngidi, 2004; Xaba, 2004; Clase et al. 2007), and others prefer to use a mixed methods approach (Van Wyk, 2004; Mncube, 2009). As a result, a mixed methods approach was followed to achieve the overall aims of this study.

The research methodology consists of a literature and empirical study that covers the fields of education and development and specifically related to the critical state of education in the Western Cape in South Africa and the role of school governing bodies to enhance performance.

3.4.2 SAMPLING

In this research study the researcher chose five schools based on the mixed method sampling technique whereby both probability and purposive sampling is used. The schools will be selected from the list of underperforming and dysfunctional public schools from less advantaged urban areas in the Western Cape. Schools improved from being underperforming/dysfunctional schools before 2010 to be successful and others that remained underperforming and dysfunctional after the 2010 academic year will be selected. The School Governing Bodies of these schools were used as focus groups and the chairpersons, secretaries and treasurers targeted for semi-structured interviews while the other members of the SGB were used for the questionnaires.

3.4.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The School Governing Bodies of the participating schools were subjected to focus group interviews and the chairperson, secretary and treasurer were interviewed using semi-structured interviews. School Governing Body members, representing different stakeholders of the SGB, from the five participating schools were surveyed using the questionnaire.

Participants were informed about the objectives of the project, the risks involved, their right to privacy/confidentiality and why informed consent is needed from them to participate in the research project. After consent was given by participants, a process was followed whereby permission (found in Appendix A) was requested by the researcher and the University of the Western Cape to the Western Cape Education Department to do research at the participating schools and it was granted by the WCED (found in Appendix B). The interviews were conducted from March to June 2011 and the questionnaires were administered from January to March 2012 at the participating schools.

Semi- structured interviews (found in Appendix C) were used as a qualitative method to do research with SGB members from each school as the focus group. The aim was to get their

opinions and experiences regarding the academic performance of the school and determine the educational, systemic and non-educational factors at play in their performance.

Questionnaires (found in Appendix D) were administered to all members of the governing bodies of the respected schools. The aim was to reach a wider population of respondents and determine the general opinion towards the academic performance of the school.

3.4.3.1 INTERVIEW

The **semi structured interview** (found in Appendix C) questions consisted of the following:

- a) The first set of questions focused on the relationship, support, communication and trust with the principal, School Management Team (SMT), Department of Education (DoE) and parents.
- b) The second set of questions focused on the intervention strategies from the Department of Education (NSLA) and the Western Cape Education Department.
- c) The third set of questions focused on the training the School Governing Body received.
- d) The fourth set of questions focused on the parents in the SGB's knowledge of policies pertaining to education and their role in governance and management.
- e) The fifth set of questions focused on the factors that cause underperformance and dis-functionality at schools as well as possible solutions to these challenges.

The interview phase was conducted as a focus group with the Chairperson, vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and additional persons present at a scheduled meeting in a venue provided by the school. The meetings occurred mostly in the evenings in order to accommodate working parents but where lack of transport and other challenges were prevalent the meetings occurred during school times, with consent from the principal.

Initially, the researcher used a voice recorder during the semi-structured interviews. After concerns were expressed by the participants about the use of a voice recorder the researcher decided to not use it as a means to record responses.

3.4.3.2 QUESTIONNAIRE

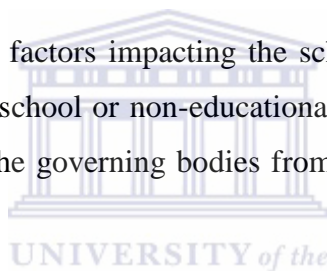
The questionnaire (found in Appendix D) is based on an established research design in educational research in the South African context (Clase, Kok and Van der Merwe, 2007). The purpose of the empirical investigation is to determine whether the reaction/response of the interviewed members of the governing body (Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer)

corresponds to the response of the other members of the governing body. This phase of the research is quantitative in nature, the empirical investigation consist of two research phases, a data collection phase (phase 1) and interpretations of the findings (phase 2).

A structured questionnaire was designed based on the theoretical background developed from the literature review and the questions used in the semi-structured interview. The questions are designed with the intention of ensuring that the nature and variety of the questions are representative of the theoretical chapters in the study and the response from the already interviewed members of the participating School Governing Bodies.

The questionnaire consisted of 33 items relating to the factors impacting school governance; the questions are divided into three categories in no particular order, to create a measure of objectivity. Respondents were required to complete the questionnaire by circling the appropriate number of their choice for each item on the four point scale. The respondents were requested to base their choice on their experience of the governance and management of the school as members serving on the SGB.

The three categories covered the factors impacting the schools performance, which are the educational, systemic and out of school or non-educational factors. The **questionnaire** was administered to all members of the governing bodies from the participating schools and the following themes were covered:



1. The main educational factors that pose a challenge to the school's performance.
2. The main systemic variables/factors that pose a challenge to the school's performance.
3. The main non-educational factors that pose a challenge to the school's performance.
4. The role of the School Governing Body in addressing these (educational/systemic/non-educational) challenges.
5. The success of current/possible intervention strategies to address performance of the school.

Initially, the survey phase presented some difficulties with the distribution of questionnaires. Due to the workload of some principals, it became difficult to have their full assistance. The researcher had to follow up weekly with participants at the schools to get the questionnaires back.

The researcher translated the questionnaire into isiXhosa in order to have broader participation. At the end, only 37 of the 50 questionnaires were completed and returned to the researcher. The data from the schools were first analysed according to responses from participants from each school and then analysed per school in relation to comparison of data with that of other schools.

3.4.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The data received from the semi-structured interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded. The responses to the questions were grouped according to the themes stated earlier and analysed to get the overall opinion about the schools performance and what could be done to improve it. The data received from the questionnaires of each school were presented in tabular form and interpreted together to have a holistic perspective on the responses of the participants from the SGB's in the schools.

3.4.5 SUMMARY

The data received from the interviews and questionnaires were analysed and the findings interpreted around the stated themes. The findings were interpreted in the light of current literature on the themes covered.

In this chapter different approaches in research methodology were outlined and analysed to explain why the use of a mixed methods approach is more preferable in the study. The mixed methods approach allows room for the use of a quantitative and qualitative phase in the study, providing the most appropriate procedures to gather narrative and numerical data which can answer the research question most effectively, and get findings from which we can derive certain inferences.

The next chapter explains how the use of the mixed methods approach proved to be helpful in gaining rich data from targeted schools, the procedures that were followed to interpret it and the insights gained to answer the research question.

CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results of the fieldwork, followed by a discussion of the main trends and patterns in the data and ends by highlighting the main findings of the study.

4.1 SAMPLE PROFILE

The five schools identified from the list of underperforming public schools are from less advantaged urban areas in the Western Cape. Schools purposely selected are those that were graded as underperforming since 2010 and they improved to performing in 2012. The names of the schools were replaced with pseudonyms to protect the identity and confidentiality of the schools and participants in this study.

4.1.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOLS

The quintiles used by the WCED, to classify the schools based on the environment they find themselves in, contextualises and adds a rich context to research findings. It is based on the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSF) which requires the allocation of funds to schools according to their poverty scores. The poverty score of each school assigns it to a quintile rank (Q1 to Q5) which based on a predetermined formula, governs the amount of funding the school receives (Chutbar and Kanjee, 2009).

The poverty score or quintile rank of a school is based on the poverty level of the community in which it is located. This score is calculated using national census weighed household data on income dependency ratio (or unemployment rate), and the level of education of the community (or literacy rate). The current amount allocated to schools that falls in a particular quintile are as follows:

Q1 schools receive R960 per child annually

Q2 schools receive R880 per child annually

Q3 schools receive R880 per child annually

Q4 schools receive R480 per child annually

Q5 schools receive R165 per child annually

Kamper (2008:2) confirms the usefulness of these quintiles to understand the impact of poverty on effective and equal provision of education. He states that

South African schools are categorised into five quintiles of 20% each, ranging from very poor schools to affluent schools and funded accordingly using a sliding scale whereby schools are identified as poor based on the relative poverty of the community, to determine exemption from school fees and to ensure that poor learners are indeed able to attend the more affluent schools.

There was strong opposition to these quintile ratings because some argued that it rather worsened equal education provision. A group that strives to work towards that end, Equal Education, welcomes the scrapping of school quintiles because they argue that current and planned measures fall far short of remedying unequal and poor quality education. In the existing system, schools are divided into five groups and receive funding based on the group that they are in. The funding model is progressive, with poorer quintiles receiving more than wealthier quintiles.

Potgieter (2012) reports that the influx of learners from previously disadvantaged communities to former Model C schools make such grading unbearable because quintile ratings is per school not per individual learner. It is also reported that the Department of Education plan to implement a new funding model in 2013, which will address some of the concerns that are raised with regard to quintile ratings and allocated funding.

All the participating schools are classified as quintile 1-3 schools because they are situated in high poverty areas with the exception of one school, which is situated in a better resourced area but still rated as a quintile 1 school.

4.1.1.1 SCHOOL A

School A is rated as a quintile 4 school (which receives R480 per learner) and is situated in the Education Metro Central District (Education District 1) serves learners from various areas. The area was formerly classified as a Coloured area and most of the parents of children who attend the school have none or low formal academic qualifications. It is a well-known gangster infested area, with a low economic status and high unemployment rates. The pass rate of the school had dropped consistently from 37% (2010) to a low point of 27% (2011), resulting in the school being classified as a dysfunctional school.

4.1.1.2 SCHOOL B

School B is rated as a quintile 4 school (R480 per learner) and is situated in the Education Metro Central District (Education District 1). It serves learners from various areas and they are representative of various ethnic and cultural groups, predominantly Coloured, African and learners from other African countries. The area is on the boundary of the City of Cape Town

and is an industrial or business area where many of the parents are employed. The area has a diverse group of learners from various socio-economic levels; some parents have top positions and high literacy rates and others are unemployed or have low incomes with no formal qualifications. The pass rate at this school varied until recently as it improved to over 60%, being classified as a performing school.

4.1.1.3 SCHOOL C

School C is rated as a quintile 3 school (R880 per learner) in Education Metro North District (Education District 2) and is situated in one of the biggest informal settlements in Cape Town. It is serving learners from various areas and learners are all African and represent mostly Xhosa, Sotho, and Tswana speaking groups. The parents are mostly working in other parts of Cape Town and even outside the Western Cape. Many learners live with relatives or in child-headed families. The literacy rate is low and most parents have no formal qualifications. Most parents are either unemployed or have a low income. The pass rate of the school has followed a downward spiral and the 2011 result in the national matriculation examination was 30%. Consequently, the school is rated as a dysfunctional school.

4.1.1.4 SCHOOL D

School D is rated as a quintile 3 school (R880 per learner) Education Metro Central District (Education District 2) and is also situated in an informal settlement area and serves learners from far and close areas at the school. Students are mostly from Xhosa speaking backgrounds. Parents are mostly working in factories in the neighbouring industrial area, businesses and farms. Parents have low literacy and no or less formal qualifications. Low income and unemployment is also prevalent in these areas and it makes travelling to school from these remote areas a challenge for learners. The pass rate of the school has improved from 43% (2010) to 52% (2011) but the school is still classified as an underperforming school.

4.1.1.5 SCHOOL E

School E is rated as a quintile 4 school (R480 per learner) and is situated in Education Metro Central District (Education District 1) and serves learners from within the area. Learners are mostly from the Coloured community, English speaking and from various religious backgrounds. The area is also plagued with gangster activity and drugs as well as with high unemployment rates and low academic prospects. Parents are mostly early school drop outs

and literacy levels are not very high. The school had a drop from 71% (2010) to 56% in its 2011 matric results and is now classified as an underperforming school.

4.1.2 THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

The School Governing Bodies (SGBs) of all schools used in the research were constituted in 2009 and most members that participated were elected at meetings by parents except for the educators and non-teaching staff that were recommended by their constituencies (South African Schools Act, 1996). The SGBs meet on a quarterly basis although some meet on a weekly or monthly basis to discuss school governing body related issues or to assist the school as needed. Participants are in agreement that these meetings are not well attended.

Meetings with parents whose children attend the school are held twice a quarter and usually focus on the sharing of information events and reports. Parents are informed about challenges facing the school and feedback is given on the performance of the grades. The interest of the parents is ascertained, they are told what the struggles at the school are, and they address problems and see that the school is functional. Examination results are discussed and any other matter that concerns the governance and management of the school is reported.

4.2 KEY FINDINGS

The researcher used semi- structured interviews with focus groups consisting of School Governing Body members from each school and after that phase questionnaires administered to the same focus groups. The next two sections deal with the findings that have come out from the two phases.

4.2.1 KEY FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS

The researcher used semi- structured interviews with focus groups consisting of School Governing Body members from each school. Semi- structured interview questions were directed at the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer of the SGB from the participating schools. In the interview phase a list of 60 questions were posed to participating members (found in Appendix D). The aim was to get their opinions and experiences regarding the academic performance of the school and to determine the educational, systemic and non-educational factors that impacted their performance.

These questions dealt with the educational, systemic and non- educational factors that impact on the performance of the schools. The responses were structured in the report around the following themes:

- a) The first set of questions dealt with the themes of relationship, support, communication and trust with the principal, School Management Team (SMT), Department of Education (DoE) and Parents.
- b) The second set focussed on intervention strategies from the Department of Education and in particular the Western Cape Education Department.
- c) The venue, time and quality of training were addressed in the third set of questions.
- d) The knowledge of policies pertaining to education and the role of participants in governance and management were also covered.
- e) The fifth and last set of questions focused on the factors that cause underperformance and present challenges faced by the participants.

The themes that emerged from the data of the analysis follows

a) Relationship, support, communication and trust with the principal, School Management Team (SMT), Department of Basic Education (DBE) and Parents

In terms of these important relationships, question 77 dealt with communication, questions 79-80 with trust and questions 82-84 with conflict experienced. All schools reacted positively to the questions whether or not they had a good relationship or received support from the principal. They all confirmed that they would describe their communication with the principal as good and that they can trust him. In some cases it was impossible to see how they could have a good relationship, communication, trust and support but they are not given the relevant policies from the WCED or attended appointment processes of staff.

The responses gained from the questionnaire points to the ambivalence present in the SGB with regards to the support and relationship they have with the principal. Participants confirmed the existence and importance of a good relationship with the principal but simultaneously pointed out challenges they have with their principals. Heystek (2004:309) confirms that “principals have long years of experience, the participative and democratic management approach is also new for most of them. not even their experience can prepare them for this changed situation.” He proposes that the SGB should support the principal and educators in the performance of their professional functions without overstepping the professional line of responsibility and establish a relationship of mutual trust and support (2004:311).

There were mixed responses from amongst participants about the School Management Team (SMT). In some schools the relationship with the SMT is described as good, but in others the SGB complains about never meeting them. The response from some participants in the questionnaire overwhelmingly supported the finding that the School Management team is having a good, even excellent relationship with the SGB.

The schools responded negatively about whether they have a good relationship with the WCED/ DBE and see the WCED/DBE support mostly as crisis control and slow reaction to their real needs. One of the educators responded, *“We only see the WCED when something goes wrong, especially when the school have bad performance in matric end of year results”*. In some cases such a relationship is seen as non-existent with the SGB and mostly happening with the Principal. At School C the parent component complained about the lack of communication between the SGB and the WCED, *“we communicated with the Department about teacher appointments and received no answer till date...communication is mostly with the principal”*.

In terms of their relationship with parents SGB's describe that relationship as good, very good and even excellent. Although there is room for improvement in terms of parental attendance at meetings the lines of communication are open, especially with regard to Grade meetings where parents are able to meet the classroom teacher and peruse the workbooks of their children.

b) Intervention strategies of the Department of Education (NSLA) and the Western Cape Education Department

Questions 53-68 deal with intervention strategies of the national and provincial Departments of Education. The participating SGB's had mixed reactions to their knowledge of interventions from the DoE (NSLA)/WCED.

In all the cases the parent component was not quite informed about the interventions and could not elaborate on whether it was correctly targeted, nor on the relevance of these interventions nor on what other interventions were needed. The teaching component and non-teaching staff on the SGB were familiar with these interventions. Where knowledge existed about interventions, it was mostly limited to telematics classes and extra classes or tutoring.

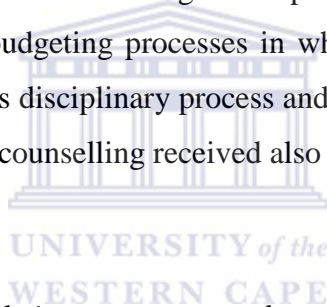
The members were informed about the academic performance of the schools and could see that these interventions help towards the improvement of the schools' pass rate. Participants from School E responded, *“We are proud because our school pass rate increased from 54% (2009) to 73% (2010)”*. One of the educators reminded that the out of school factors make a

guaranteed improvement in the 2011 matric results an uncertainty. As one of the parents responded, *“Is the school responsible to change the factors like gangsterism, gun-shooting, drug abuse and teen age pregnancies that impact the school’s performance”*.

c) Training for SGBs

The questions 43-52 dealing with the training received by participating school governing bodies, received an overall positive response. All the SGB’s received training that was initiated by the principal but some saw it as valuable (4 from the 5 schools) and respondents from School C had some reservations. The language in which training was given (English) the home language of many participants and the training was not presented in a suitable fashion.

One of the parents from School C responded that *“the training was given at a venue that is far removed from the community where we stay, which make it difficult to attend due to transport problems”*. The training needs of most participants were met but they regarded the need for more financial management training as important to understand the financial management of the school and budgeting processes in which their input is required. Some areas that requires more training is disciplinary process and procedures (School D and School E) while safety training and Aids counselling received also strong support as training needs.



d) Education policies and their role in governance and management of the school

In terms of their roles and responsibilities (questions 10-11) the participating SGB’s responded that they see their roles as maintaining discipline and school order, financial management and fundraising, to endorse policies (e.g., leave, transport, support school), oversee needs, point out problems and see that the school is functional (School D). The SGBs work on behalf of parents and learners with staff and report to parents. The SGB is the link between parents and school and are the voice of the parents. They are responsible for fundraising, attending to money matters, the maintenance of school buildings and to see that the school is in a good condition. They are to ensure that students come to school on time.

Questions 69-71 dealt with their understanding of the roles and responsibilities that they have on the school governing body. The participants in this research mostly serve in the positions of Chairperson (2/5), Vice Chairperson (1/5), Secretary (4/5), Treasurer (4/5) and additional members (3/5) without a designated role. In terms of the SGB’s understanding of financial management and their role in that regard most of them responded that the financial officer of

the schools also serves on the board (3/5) and that they are familiar with their role in budgeting and they also expressed the need for further financial training.

All of them showed a clear understanding of the role of the SGB to govern and of the Principal to manage the school from day to day. The lowest level of schooling is Grade 8 and most of the SGB members passed Grade 11 or held a post matric qualification (question 76). A limitation in the research was that all the questions were in English and were not always easily translated/ understood in isiXhosa.

SGB members can balance their work and responsibilities in the SGB (question 85), they do not recommend that members must be paid (question 86) and describe their motive for being involved as love for the children, interest in their community and school and trusted by parents (question 87). As one of the parents stated, *“Involvement in the SGB gives me better insight to the needs of the school and also as a parent to the needs of our children”*

e) Factors that impact performance

The factors that influence the performance of schools include teachers who feel unappreciated, demoralized, late coming and absenteeism of learners and teachers, too much focus on union matters, safety and tardiness of the WCED to address issues, lack of money/finances, discipline amongst children and teachers; children travelling from various locations which were sometimes far from the school.

An educator from School C stated that *“the label of being underperforming lay upon teachers only take them on a guilt trip but do not address the real issues that improve performance”*. Parents from School E feel treated as intruders by the management of the school, have the feeling that they are just endured as a necessary stakeholder and given assistance with reluctance. The educators from School D felt that the SGB chairperson think the hiring and firing of teachers is his responsibility which make them uncertain about their future.

4.2.2 KEY FINDINGS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaires were administered to all members of the governing bodies of the respective schools. The aim was to reach a wider population of respondents and to determine the general opinions about the academic performance of the school.

In this phase of the research, the focus was on the main trends, patterns and findings that emerged from the data. The responses of participants were filled in on the questionnaire and reported in the tables provided in Appendix E. The findings for educational, non- educational and systemic factors which impact the performance of the schools are presented in that order.

The data source for this phase is the interview data. The last section will deal with an integration of the findings from the two phases.

4.2.2.1 EDUCATIONAL FACTORS

The educational factors cover what happens in and outside the classroom, with specific focus on teaching and learning but not excluding systemic factors. The emphasis in this section was on the category focussing on educational factors (questions 1-10) and it was also evaluated within particular themes.

Table 1 presents the responses given by participants and the totals scored. The educators were rated 54% (20/37) for attendance and 72% (27/37) for their performance while the attendance of learners was rated at 43% (16/37) and for their performance at 67% (25/37). The attendance of learners must be interpreted in the light of the distances travelled and the availability of transport. The schools received an average of 43% (16/37) for literacy and 62% (23/37) for numeracy. Participants rated the availability of textbooks at 29% (11/37). Interventions to address learner barriers were rated 27% (10/37) and the involvement of parents in the learning process of their children at 48% (18/37). The overall academic performances of learners in the 5 schools were rated at 54% (20/37). The outcome from the findings is in line with research done in schools situated in high poverty settings (Taylor, 2007; Phurutse, 2005; Zaccharia, 1997).

4.2.2.2 SYSTEMIC FACTORS

Table 2 below presents the responses of participants to the questions dealing with the systemic factors impacting academic performance. When it comes to the relationship with the principal, ratings were 32% (12/37) good and 24% (9/37) excellent which confirm the positive relationship that exists between half of the participants with their principals while some others have their reservations. It is confirmed through the scores given for the overall management 29% (11/37) and administrative assistance 21% (8/37). Relationship and support from the school management team (SMT) was also rated as excellent 27% (10/37) and good 38% (14/37). The relationship with the DOE received a poor score of 24% (9/37) as well as the rating of their interventions 27% (10/37) in the schools. Research prove that the relationship between the principal, SMT and DOE is crucial to a schools success (Kamper, 2008; Heystek, 2004)

The participants provided between average and good 29% (11/37) ratings to express their knowledge about education policies. The same applies to the value of the training that they received as governors 32% (12/37). On the question of how they rate their involvement in the

governance of the school they have given themselves between 35% (13/37) and 22% (8/37), a rating between poor and good. They have also rated their involvement in the academic performance of the school as good 48% (18/37) and average 32% (12/37).



Table 1: Responses on questions dealing with educational factors.

QUESTIONS	SCHOOL A			SCHOOL B			SCHOOL C			SCHOOL D			SCHOOL E			EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR
	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	0/37	0/37	0/37	
1	1	6			2	6	1	4	1		3	3		1	6	6/37	20/37	7/37	
2	1	5	1		8		1	3	2		6		1	5	1	3/37	26/37	6/37	
3		3	4		5	3		3	2		2	4		3	4	0/37	16/37	16/37	
4			7		1	6		1	2		1	1	4		7	2/37	2/37	25/37	
5		1	4		3	2		1	1	2		1	5		1	4/37	7/37	17/37	
6		1	4		1	7		1	1	4		2	4		1	4/37	6/37	23/37	
7			4	3				1	1	4		2	3	1		4/37	11/37	11/37	
8	1	3	3			4			2	2		3	2		1	3/37	10/37	14/37	
9		1	3			8			1	2		1	3		1	0/37	4/37	18/37	
10		1	4			4				5		3	3		1	0/37	5/37	20/37	



Table 2: Responses to questions dealing with the systemic factors

QUESTIONS	SCHOOL A			SCHOOL B			SCHOOL C			SCHOOL D			SCHOOL E			EXCELLENT GOOD AVERAGE POOR			
	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE POOR	0/37	0/37	0/37	
11	4	2		3	3		1	2		1	4	1		4	2		9/37	12/37	6/37
12	5	1		1	4		1	1		1	4	1		5	1		11/37	8/37	6/37
13	5	1		6	2		1	3		5	1		5	1		10/37	14/37	6/37	
14	4	3		1			1	2		4	2		4	3		7/37	12/37	4/37	
15		2	3		4		1	3		1	2	2		2	3		1/37	6/37	15/37
16		1	3		5		2	2		3	2		1	3		0/37	6/37	17/37	
17		4	3		1		2	3		4	2		4	3		0/37	11/37	11/37	
18	2	4	1		1	7		1	2		3	1		2	4	1	4/37	12/37	12/37
19	3	4			4			1		1	5		3	4			6/37	13/37	5/37
20		4	3		4	4		2	2		5			4	3		0/37	18/37	12/37



Table 3: Responses on questions dealing with Non-educational factors

21		2		4	4	1	1		1	2			2	2/37	4/37	11/37	
22	1	3	3			3	2	1		1	4	1	3	3	5/37	9/37	10/37
23	3	4			8	3	3			1	4	1	3	4	10/37	22/37	1/37
24			3			1	2	2		1	1	4		3	2/37	3/37	12/37
25		1	4			1	2	2				2	3	1	1/37	5/37	13/37
26			4		2	1		2					4		1/37	0/37	16/37
27		1	5		3		1	3		1	1	4	1	5	1/37	4/37	19/37
28		2	4					3		1	1	2	2	4	1/37	5/37	12/37
29		2	2		8	2		1		1	1	2	2	2	3/37	13/37	7/37
30		2	3		1	7	1	2			2	2	2	3	0/37	8/37	17/37
31		5	2		4		1	4		1	3	2	5	2	1/37	13/37	14/37
32		1	4		4		1	3			4	2	1	4	0/37	6/37	17/37
33			4		5			3			1	2		4	0/37	1/37	17/37

4.2.2.3 NON EDUCATIONAL FACTORS

The participants regarded the impact of social problems to be a highly negative and determining factor on the academic performance of their schools; this can be seen in the over 70% response when the scores from poor 43% (16/37) to average 29% (11/37) is combined.. Transport was not considered to have such a huge impact on schooling and was rated 20% by participants. The availability of electricity is not a problem at the schools participating because participants rated the availability to be excellent (27%; 10/37) and 78% (22/37) good. Hunger is considered to have a huge impact on learning, and this item rated over 70% when responses from poor (43%; 16/37) and average (27%; 10/37) are combined. The impact of poor health on the performance of the school was also considered to have a negative impact on learning, especially when the combined responses average (35%; 13/37) and poor (35%; 13/37) poor are taken into account. Low income was also rated as a determining factor when it comes to academic performance with a score of 43% (16/37) average and 43% (16/37) poor.

More than 51% (19/37) of the participants regarded the lack of safety a factor that can impact on educational performance negatively. The physical facilities, which included toilets, tables and chairs, school premises, amongst others, were also rated inadequate for educational purposes, more than 40% (15/37). When it comes to the impact of the area in which the school is situated on the performance of the school, participants regarded it to have half a chance of impacting educational performance considering the 35% (13/37) from good to poor 27% (10/37). The involvement of the community in the school was rated as crucial for the school's success, given the medium to high percentage of over 60 %, which include average and good responses combined (46% 17/37 and 22% 8/37). This is in line with research done at schools where parental involvement is high (Maarman, 2009; Kamper, 2008; Ferlazzo, 2011).

Interventions by the School Management Team were also given a positive rating of over 70% (when the responses from good to average 35% (13/37) and 38% (14/37) are combined). Interventions done by the Department of Basic Education was given a negative rating of over 70% when the average 46% (17/37) and poor 27% (10/37) responses are combined. Parental involvement in addressing these non-educational factors is not rated very positively considering a combined score of over 80% in responses rated from an average of 46% (17/37) average to a poor rating of 41% (15/37).

4.3. INTEGRATION OF KEY FINDINGS FROM BOTH PHASES

The following section deals with the findings of both the interview and questionnaire phases. The purpose was to determine whether the findings agree or support the findings from previous research, and whether there were any significant differences and similarities.

A Theme: Relationship, support, communication and trust with the principal, School Management Team (SMT), Department of Education (DOE) and parents.

The findings from the questionnaires confirm that the principals of the participating schools enjoy an overall good relationship with the governing bodies, provide the necessary administrative support and were regarded as generally good managers of the school. In two of the schools the principals received ratings in the poor category (2/5 (School C) and 2/8 School B). In these schools during the interviews the parental component had strong views about the lack of trust in the principal. The chairperson of School C claimed that “*he refuse to call governing body meetings because he want the school to operate without an SGB to ignore the voice of parents on his performance*”. At this school the principal was stoned and thus chased away from the school during a parent meeting. He was placed on special leave during the questionnaire phase of the research. This is the outcome of power-relations that has never been resolved and is in line with outcomes from other research (Naidoo, 2005; Heystek, 2004; Xaba, 2004; Smit and Oosthuizen, 2011).

The school management teams received overwhelming support from the school governing bodies in both phases of the research. What was striking was that the group participating in the second phase had a stronger representation of staff members than the first phase. In School C the relationship with the SMT was perceived to be poor (2/5) and the same applied to the situation in School B (7/8). It indicates a break in the relationship between the SGB and the SMT.

Findings from both phases of the research show that the relationship between the Department of Education and SGBs received low ratings. In the first phase (interviews) the relationship was described as crisis control while in the second phase (questionnaires) some schools rate an average of 4/8. School B is rated 3/8 average, a 2/8 poor rating to School A, and an average of 3/6 for School E with regards to their relationship with the Education Department. The low ratings (average to poor) towards the DOE confirm the strong break in relationship coming from findings in the interview phase.

B Theme: Intervention strategies of the Department of Education (NSLA) and Western Cape Education Department.

The same applies to the rating of the DOE interventions to address underperformance in the school, in School A, it is 3/7 in both the average and poor columns, in School B it is 3/8 and also 3/7 in School E. In all the schools the principals did not reply to questions rating their performance or those of the DOE. It is clear from these findings that a lot needs to be done to restore the relationship with the DOE and between the principals and some SGB's.

Intervention efforts by the school management team and DOE to address non educational factors were also attended to. Participants regarded social problems, lack of transport, hunger, poverty, and low income having a huge impact on the academic performance of schools in high poverty areas. They rated the intervention by school management and the DOE as not effective in addressing these factors.

Participating schools rated interventions by the principal and school management team to address the non- educational factors as ineffective. 8/10 rated School A non-educational factors as average to poor while School D is rated 5/6 from average to good. The DOE is rated by School A 6/10, School B rated them 4/8, School C 5/6 and at School E 6/7 from average to poor. It is clear from these statistics that despite interventions by the DOE it is not deemed effective by most of the school governing bodies in the research. It confirms the results from the interviews that the relationship the schools have with the DOE is not helpful for the overall purpose to address the factors that cause underperformance in the participating schools.

Parental involvement also received strong ratings from average to poor, School A (7/10), School B (8/8), School C (6/6), School D (6/6), and at School E (7/8). Overall it is clear from the ratings given by SGB members that parental involvement in addressing these non-educational factors is stronger in the average and poor columns which explain the inability of the school to raise its performance. It confirms the results gained from interviews held by members of the SGB's at participating schools that parental involvement is one of the biggest challenges when the academic performance and the factors that contribute to its success are discussed.

C Theme: Training

The participating schools gave an overall positive response to the question about how they would rate the training they received as SGB members. At School A (9/10) participants rated the training between good and (4/10) average (5/10). At School B an average of 7/8 were rated, School C 4/6 were rated from average to poor, School D had a good rating 5/6 and School E a 6/7 from good to

excellent. These results confirm earlier findings from the interviews that SGB members from the participating schools hold a positive response to the training offered. It is also in line with findings from other research done that effective training has positive results on parental involvement and the overall school performance (Tsotetsi, et al., 2008; Maluka, 2004, Maharaj, 2005).

D Theme: Education policies and their role in governance and management

The participating schools differed in their response to the question on their knowledge about education policies. Some schools like School A rated the knowledge they have of education policies from good (6/10) to average (4/10). School C were rated 4/5 from average to good, a good 4/6 for School D and School E received 4/7 from good to a 3/7. School B is the only participating school that rated their knowledge of educational policies 7/8. One must just take into account that most participants in the second phase of our research consisted of education and non- education staff while participants in the first phase (interviews) were from the parent component on the SGB.

On the question of governance the following ratings were given, School A (1/8 excellent and 7/8 good), School D (1/6 excellent and 5/6 good), and School E (3/7 excellent and 4/7 good). This shows clearly a strong and positive involvement in the governance of their schools. In the case of School B (4/8 average and 4/8 poor) and School C (1/5 average and 4/5 poor) the opposite is true. The respondents do not regard themselves being involved enough in the governance of the school. In the interviews the question focussed more on whether SGB members understood their roles which were answered positively but when it came to their involvement in the governance, some schools struggle heavily.

E Theme: Factors that impact performance

These factors have been covered broadly in the questionnaire with the first 10 questions focussing on educational factors. Participating schools showed that they do not experience huge problems with learners and educators but in the area of addressing learning barriers and parental involvement they experience challenges.

The second part (questions 11-20) which focussed on systemic factors was answered overtly positively. However, the challenge highlighted is in the respondents' relationship with the Department of Education and in how far some schools are allowed to be involved in the governance of the school.

The last part (questions 20-33) that dealt with non-educational factors gave an honest perspective on how social realities like drug and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, hunger, low income, unemployment, ill-health, safety and physical facilities played a role in the performance of a school. The impact of these realities differs from community to community where the schools are situated.

4.4 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The leading issue in the research study was the role that the SGB can play to improve underperformance in schools and more specifically, how parental involvement can impact in this regard. The schools that participated in the research are formerly classified as underperforming. These schools obtained a pass rate of less than 60% in the national matriculation examination and are located in the Western Cape.

The results from the two data sources used in this study, interviews and questionnaires, were grouped into five broad themes that emerged from the data analysis: theme A: Relationship, support, communication and trust with the principal, (SMT), (DOE) and parents), theme B: (Intervention strategies of the Department of Education (NSLA) and Western Cape Education Department), theme C: (Training), theme D: (Education policies and their role in governance and management), and theme: E (Factors that impact performance). Results were categorised as educational, systemic and non- educational factors that impact on the performance of the schools.

The results indicated that a great deal of trust exists and that a positive relationship exists between the principal and the SMT and SGB. Some schools showed an exception to this trend (namely, School C (dysfunctional), School D (underperforming) and School B (performing). In the one school (New Castle) the relationship deteriorated so badly that the principal was stoned at a parent meeting by angry parents and children. Consequently the school was closed the next day and the principal suspended from the school for some time.

By the conclusion of phase two of the research conducted at the school, the principal had not yet returned and the vice principal was temporarily appointed to lead the school. In another school (School D), the principal who led the school during the interview phase of the research was replaced by the vice principal and was redeployed to another school, during the final examinations. The overall view of the relationship which SGB's had with principals was rated positive and most of the participating schools remained positive. However, in some schools the relationship was not perceived to be positive, like at School C and School B.

At School B the relationship between the principal and the SGB chairperson deteriorated to such an extent that they could not work together anymore. The SGB remained functional and the results of the school improved substantially in the final examination of 2011. This school turned the challenges into an opportunity to improve their results and no intervention was needed from the Department unlike in the cases of School C and School D.

Kamper's (2008) research into the role of effective leadership in high poverty settings found that "invitational leadership...is indeed the characteristic leadership style in successful high poverty settings." It highlights the principal's passion for uplifting the poor and unshakable belief in the potential of high poverty learners to excel personally and academically. These principals show pastoral care for learners', teachers' and parents', and show the ability to think and act as visionaries. They set and maintain high standards, inspire and motivate others, build team spirit and pride and explore opportunities to meet the school's needs. The leadership characteristics highlighted by Kamper (2008), are confirmed by Gray and Streshly (2008:2) in their study about what principals do to move schools from good to great.

A principal should firstly build solid relationships to establish a foundation for sustaining improvement over the long run. They should be humble when they consult with stakeholders while they are exercising professional will; give credit when things go well and accept the blame when things go badly.

The study showed that successful schools have principals that were ambitious about the school, they were willing to follow a transformative process and not a single programme or event was quickly successful.

Highly successful principals resolve what needs to be improved; such as improving student learning at their schools. They are willing to confront the brutal facts as opportunities, get the right people on board and drive the educational engine with passion. They maintain a vision of improving student achievement and build a culture of discipline that supports the vision.

In most of the schools the relationship between the SGB and the Department of Education was described as "non-existing" to "crisis-control" only. Some of the schools pointed out that the overemphasis on the end of year results in the national matriculation examinations, contributes to this unproductive relationship between them. The focus on negative results in one area (mathematics and natural science) leads to ignorance towards successes in other areas (high performance in economic and management sciences), amidst the high impact of non-educational factors.

One of the principals explained how heavily the focus is on certain administrative duties required from the principal while other equally important educational and systemic responsibilities are neglected. He reportedly left the school almost every day at 17h00 and sometimes had to return later in the evening to attend to other duties related to the school.

There is a strong request for the WCED to be more open to listen and understand the unique context in which schools operate if performance is to become sustainable. In one of the schools, during the interview phase the relationship with the WCED was described as very good to excellent, because of the personal relationship that was established with educational officials with the SMT and SGB. In that particular school the principal had been rewarded for his good leadership and management but despite those successes the pass rate dropped the following year and as one of the SMT members said, *“You have no guarantees of success in a gangster related and poverty stricken area like ours”*. It is these realities that have to be taken into account when policy and actions are considered to do intervention at a particular school.

The prominence of long and not short term improvements must also be considered. Davies (2006:144) defines culture of sustainability as “the ability of individuals and schools to continue to improve to meet new challenges and complexity in a way that does not damage individuals or the wider community but builds capacity and capability to be successful in new and demanding contexts.” He further argues for a balance between long term and short term success in schools because the danger is that “short-term bench marks can be seen as the outcomes and not indicators of progress.” These two are not in conflict or opposites but must be seen as part of a holistic framework where short term assessments are seen as guides on the long term journey (Davies, 2006:148).

An interesting development that happened during the questionnaire phase is the reluctance of principals to fill in the sections that evaluate their performance and their ratings of the WCED. One wonders, if such an excellent and good relationship exists, why there exists the inability of self-assessment and a critical evaluation of the interventions by the Department. It could have been helpful not only for the research but also for future deliberations to address underperformance in schools generally.

Parental involvement in the school governing bodies of the participating schools is receiving high scores/ratings which indicate a strong commitment from parents to see the school succeed. As we heard from more than one of the parents in the interview phase, *“my passion is children, whether my children are here or gone I will participate, it is my duty as a member from the community”*. They saw their involvement in the school as part of their duties as members of the community and as a form of community development. It confirms the

correlation established between education and development in the literature review and the theoretical framework of the research discussed in chapter three. In historically disadvantaged areas the school is the hub of community development becoming the place from where churches, early childhood development centres and even political meetings congregate.

Participants expressed concern about the reluctance of parents to attend parent meetings, even when the pass rate or challenges in a particular grade are discussed. The inability of parents to assist their children with homework and to motivate them to participate in interventions from the school and the WCED is also of grave concern. As one participant comments, *“the intervention (telematics classes) is arranged for a Saturday morning, if parents can just make sure that their children attend but that is not even happening”*. In the research it was pointed out that some of the challenges are that schools are situated in gangster dominated areas, which makes it difficult to travel at night to meetings, parents work late and are seldom allowed to leave the workplace to attend meetings during the daytime. Another factor is the literacy rate of parents and the fact that some homes are child headed or learners live with their grandparents, or even friends of the family. The long distances that children must travel to school, by foot or public transport impacts on their performance at school. Low income and unemployment of parents, together with the difficulty for parents to attend meetings at night or over weekends, were also a big challenge.

These findings are comparable to those found in similar settings discussed in chapter two but the outstanding academic performance of some individuals coming from the same disadvantaged backgrounds remains to be accounted for. Kamper (2008) finds from studies in high poverty settings that poverty, as it appears in deep rural areas and in townships with a high incidence of squatter camps and informal settlements, cannot prevent schools from performing. *“The schools managed to successfully beat the poverty-related odds through an unshakeable belief in the possibility of success and sheer determination in realising it”* (Kamper, 2008:7).

Moloi et al. (2010) conducted studies on learners’ perceptions about what contributed to their school’s success. The schools were situated in historically disadvantaged areas. Some of the findings indicate that dialogue between teachers and learners (reciprocal act of listening and responding) is fundamental to the academic success of these schools. The basis for all this is found in the mutual acceptance which exists between teachers and learners and also the involvement of parents and the wider community in the learning process (ibid, 2010).

The low literacy rate amongst parents from previously disadvantaged communities, their working conditions together with a stronger emphasis on parental involvement in the

completion of homework make it almost impossible for children to perform academically (Maarman, 2009). Therefore attendance of training provided to school governing bodies is of the utmost importance to parents, as it helps to build their capacity as important role players in education provision. The concern that training is not always given in their mother tongue (vernacular) and presented in such a way that parents cannot fully participate or understand has come out from the findings.

It is important for service providers that deliver school governing body training to be familiar with the unique context of participants and when facilitators do training to do their presentations in a language that is understood by all the participants. If important documents/information can be available in the mother tongue of participants and even interpreters are available at the training, this could help a lot. In most communities there are interpreters working in the local courts who can be of help in that regard. Proper analyses of challenges in the context of participants and available resources to address them are becoming crucial in the training of school governing bodies.

When literacy is such a big challenge for especially the parental component in school governing bodies, then it is understandable why access to educational policies is a challenge. From the findings in the interview phase of the research it is clear that parents do not have access to all these policies that affects their participation in the SGB because it is provided to the principal and not always communicated to them. The participants in the questionnaire phase, which included more educators and staff managing the school on a daily basis, are informed about education policies.

Training is of the utmost importance and more focus must be given to educating participants about existing policies and change in policies that affect their governance role. The reason for the uprising against one of the principals was that he did not communicate the change of policy with regards to “NO FEES” and was still requesting from learners and parents to make unreasonable contributions. The result of that miscommunication and conflict has already been referred to in another paragraph of this section.

Participants overall understood their role as governors and the management role of the principal and the school management team. In one of the schools it has become apparent that the SGB interfered too much in the day to day running of the school (management) and that it caused a lot of tension between the chairperson (an attorney) and the principal. It led to a break down in their relationship, which even impacted on the participation of the principal and his team in the research project. At the time of the conclusion of the research in the second phase a new school governing body was established and seemingly a better

relationship might follow between the SGB and the SMT. In another school, some non-teaching staff who are on the governing body regarded their presence at the school as an advantage for the relationship between the SGB and the SMT. They are more readily available for disciplinary matters and personnel issues and are communicating with the principal on a daily basis. They even know the educational officials by name, whether they are curriculum advisors, IMG managers, educational psychologists, etc.

The impact of non- educational factors like social problems, (alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, gangsters, etc.), hunger, sickness and disease, low income and unemployment of parents, on educational provision cannot be underestimated in the participating schools. One of the educator's commented, "*we have tested 60 learners for drug use early this morning and three were tested positive and it is not yet break time*". He explained that after break more would be tested positive for drug use during school time, not to mention the dangerous weapons that they will discover if learners are searched.

The findings show that non-educational factors are having a high impact on the academic performance of learners and subsequently the school. An educator said that the label of "underperformance" hangs like an albatross around their necks. After more than 20 years of teaching mathematics, he will never be allowed to become an assessor in the national matric examination marking system because of the classification of the school. He knows of people who have become teachers recently but because of the rating of their school would not be allowed to mark in the national marking centres. The participant regarded this labelling of the school as one of the most demoralizing factors in the self-confidence of staff, learners and stakeholders associated with the school. This happens despite individual success stories and other positive results in sport, arts and culture and non- scientific subjects.

The fact that all these factors (educational, systemic and non- educational) are so intertwined makes distinguishing amongst them almost impossible. In the final analysis, the findings prove that interventions to address underperformance in public schools cannot happen without the contribution of the school governing body, where governance and management meet. The leadership and management provided by the principal and the school management team is heavily dependent on the parental component. Parents are regarded as the primary educators of their children and most informed about the challenges prevalent in the community context that impacts on educational provision.

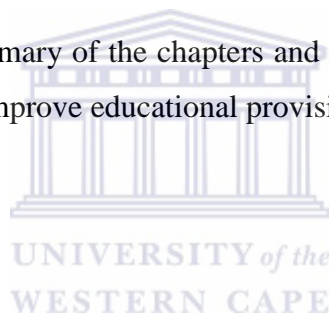
Most underperforming schools have the desire or will to become functional and move from being labelled a "failing" or underperforming school to a successful school. Murphy and Meyers (2008) provide some general turn around insights to turn around failing schools. The

authors argue that there is no magical formula to determine a school's success and that a one size fits all solution does not exist. Because schools fail or underperform for many reasons in a particular context, turn around strategies must be tailored to fit their needs (ibid, 2008).

Murphy and Meyers (2008) provide eight key lessons. They argue that turnarounds can work but success is not guaranteed because it is difficult to sustain. The mixing and matching of interventions make a comprehensive approach possible that can be helpful in specific contexts. The principal's ability to provide effective leadership is central in successful turnaround schools. While the principal leads teachers, they also involve the community and build capacity. Capacity is built through the development of a positive learning environment, establishing a shared vision and creating relationships to ensure cooperation.

Teachers must be convinced to buy into the turnaround intervention, and be partners and facilitators of the process. Parents must be engaged in the process, the school should get the necessary resources to implement interventions and consistently assess themselves to monitor success and identify focus areas that still need to be addressed (ibid, 2008).

The final chapter provides a summary of the chapters and recommendations on how the role of school governing bodies can improve educational provision in public schools.



CHAPTER FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

In this final chapter the focus is on the general findings and insights drawn from the research and, secondly it provides an outline of the theoretical considerations. Thirdly limitations are noted and fourthly the researcher offers recommendations and suggestions for further research. Finally an overall conclusion is stated.

5.1 GENERAL FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

The research question focussed on the role of school governing bodies to address underperformance in public schools in less advantaged urban areas in general and the contribution of the parental component of the body in particular.

During the course of the study it became clear that the intention of the national education department to give preference to schools that improved from underperforming to performing is not sustainable. This is due to the unpredictability of the intention to measure performance according to end of the year results in the national matriculation examinations. In the second phase of the research that was completed after the 2011 national matriculation results, the academic performance of schools have either improved or declined. Therefore, not all the participating schools in the research have improved their results and this points to the challenge of judging schools as performing and underperforming without regard to a particular context. The one-size- fits-all approach in measuring performance was found to be unrealistic and unfair considering the unique challenges faced by schools in their particular context.

It also emerged from the study that the role of school governing bodies presents a fourth tier of government (besides *national, provincial* and *local tiers*), and a form of participative democracy that enables decentralization of educational provision remains a challenge in today's education dispensation (Woolman and Fleisch, 2008; Naidoo, 2005; Smit and Oosthuizen, 2011). A balance between governance and management is something to be pursued actively by all stakeholders involved in education but sensitivity to the interest of those serving on the school governing body and alertness to the power play embedded in governance cannot be ignored or underplayed. After so many years in the democratic dispensation of South Africa, and with huge financial support from government to enable transformation in educational provision, the outcomes still reflect the imbalances of the past and these imbalances have become clear in the literature explored for this study and the empirical research (Van Der Berg et al., 2011).

The literature review pointed out that education must be placed within a broader context. The school exists in the community and the children in need of education, which is an undeniable human right, come from a particular social milieu. The relationship between education and development is one of interdependence and mutual benefit and must be observed critically in order to guarantee improved academic performance (Bender, 2004). This will enable us to secure a better life for all South Africans in a sustainable way.

It is clear from the literature that the slow socio-political, economic and overall human resource development of South Africa impacts negatively on educational provision for those that still live in previously disadvantaged areas, amidst the recorded successes of some schools and individuals situated in it. The exodus of performing learners from schools in disadvantaged areas, who can afford to attend better resourced schools, is further contributing to the decline in the academic performance of schools in disadvantaged areas (Msila, 2005). The result is that a skills drain takes place in the classroom because teachers prefer to be employed in schools that can offer permanent positions with better salaries and benefits. The parents participating in the school governing bodies of schools situated in previously disadvantaged areas do not always have high literacy levels or academic qualifications and this can inhibit or constrain their participation in certain areas of governance.

The relationship between management (as performed by the principal and the school management team) and governance (as performed by various stakeholders including the parent component) is crucial for the schools' success. This is confirmed by Miss Sisi Sodlaka, principal of Masiyile (Kayelitsha) whose school improved their pass rate from 34% (2010) to 86.8% (2011). She first had to get policy in place for educators to know what is expected from them, instil discipline at the school and get parents involved in order to see learners coming to school punctually every day (Die Burger, 6 January 2012).

The results from the research at the five schools showed that the schools which show a decline in performance have a serious break down in the relationship between the management and governance of the schools (School C). Some participating schools have a better relation between governance and management but still had a decline in their performance (School A- dysfunctional and School E- underperforming) due to other non-educational factors. Therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach or magic recipe to turn around underperforming schools does not exist but the unique challenges of the particular context should be seriously considered when writing policy and finding interventions to address underperformance.

The training of parents, with no or low academic qualifications and the reality of a high illiteracy rate in previously disadvantaged areas, is necessary if parental involvement and participation are regarded as crucial contributory factors to the performance of learners and the whole school. Evidence from the literature and the empirical study show how the lack of training inhibits the participation levels of parents. It also points to their inability to understand certain policies and processes and how these can lead to the use of parents as rubber stamps to justify or support the agenda of management without considering the governance aspect (Van Der Berg et al., 2011). Though it tends to create a fourth tier of 'government', it allows for a form of participative democracy which enables parents to make a meaningful contribution to educational provision. This form of parental participation is primarily taking place in the management and governance of the school but is not limited to it; the relationship with the WCED is included.

The role of the officials, representing the WCED at the school, should not be limited to the office of the principal but must be extended to a relationship with the governing body. The literature and empirical study point to fact that the WCED only appears when crisis strikes, such as when academic underperformance must be addressed. However, holistic school development expects them to become more actively involved in the broader context of the schools. Projects like the safe schools project, feeding schemes and drug testing are helping but an active role in management and governance of these projects will be of greater assistance.

A grave concern was that policies are only available to principals and conflict arises when they interpret these policies in a way that bring estrangement in their relationship with stakeholders like the parental component (the interpretation of the "no fee" policy at School C). A grass roots or bottom up approach would mean that participants are involved in the making, interpretation and implementation of policy, a true characteristic of participative democracy. People are not made to obey policy but policies are made to serve people and their contexts. In the school context that is even truer if underperformance must be addressed more effectively, especially in areas where non-educational factors play a big role. Therefore, the availability, interpretation and implementation of policies can assist both management (the principal and his school management team) and governance (the parents and other stakeholders) in the school governing body.

The slow pace of socio-economic development and its impact on schooling in previously disadvantaged areas is clear from the literature and results of Van Der Berg's (2011) empirical study. Learners from these areas still suffer from what is described by Van Der

Berg (2011:4) as the “double burden of poverty and attending schools in disadvantaged areas.” Amidst the individual cases of performing learners and schools in those areas, the general reality is that children who suffer this dual burden are still starting school with a disadvantage to those in more fortunate areas and more resourceful schools. The literature points out that more should be done to improve early childhood development (ECD) in these underdeveloped areas, in order to get quality in the foundation phase (Phurutse, 2005). Some participants blamed their underperformance on the weak preparation done by their feeder (primary) schools while primary schools suffer due to a lack in the ECD phase.

The negative impact of low income, unemployment, hunger, sickness and disease, lack of transport and gangsterism on the academic performance of learners in particular and schools in general is an undeniable fact. The level of impact and the importance of one factor over another differ from community to community but overall it is a reality that schools in disadvantaged areas must contend with on a daily basis. The recent uprising against poor service delivery in some areas serves to prove the discomfort and growing unhappiness of communities with poverty. It affects all levels of peoples’ existence wherever poverty occurs and this is most visible in the education field. Interventions to address academic underperformance cannot underplay the impact of these non-educational factors on the performance of learners and the school. Pillay (2004:8) proposes that “any intervention with these learners should adopt an eco-systemic approach ... interventions should not be limited to the school but should cover a variety of systems in the lives of learners, such as the government, the school, the family, and the community”.

Interventions must thus be targeted strategically, keeping in mind the educational, systemic and non-educational factors that impact on the academic performance of schools. School governing bodies should be made more aware of and become more actively involved in interventions at the schools.

In this study, some participants did not know about the kinds of interventions taking place at their schools and were therefore not in a position to judge whether it was correctly targeted or not. Having a good relationship with the principal can have very little effect if governing body members do not know the pass rate of the school; interventions followed by the school to address underperformance, and are not becoming actively involved in resolving issues at the school.

5.2 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The theory of structuration as developed by Anthony Giddens (1984) has been helpful to understand the relationship between the agent (learners, parents, educators) and the structure (education system, society). We have seen how the processes of the production, reproduction and transformation of education as a structure, has been shaped in South Africa and the challenges they currently pose to education provision. It brings a sense of constraint because it seems as if we cannot really transform the education system without addressing the inequality and imbalances of the past. At the same time we experience a freedom, provided by legislation and policy, creating an enabling environment to address these challenges in education.

Both literature and empirical study have confirmed what is espoused by the theory of structuration that any transformation of education should keep in mind the time and context in which the system was developed and that individuals and institutions are also products of the system (Van Der Berg et al., 2011; Graham- Brown, 1991; 50; Maluka, 2004). Those involved in the transformation of the education system should not be unrealistic when addressing the imbalances and unequal educational provision of the past because it is proven that the past is still with us.

The importance of rules and resources is also emphasised in Giddens' theory, meaning that rules are embedded in systems of social interaction and make it possible for human beings to follow routine and apply it in other contexts. Structural rules can thus be reproduced in other contexts by individuals and the same thing can happen to resources that are produced by human action and are changed and maintained by them. The implication is that the changing of legislation and policy should be a dynamic process, keeping in mind that context is always changing and the application of these rules will have different consequences in other contexts. The availability of resources and prevalence of power dynamics will definitely have an impact when rules are applied.

The transformative capacity of the human agent must actually never be ignored or underestimated. Positive social change for the agent and the structure is the result of system reproduction and transformation, which does not take place out of nothing but is re-created.

The importance of a positive and radical change is at the heart of this study, to assist the transforming of a previously race based, unequal and undemocratic education system into a system of equal opportunity and quality education for all. The interrelationship that exists between the agents of change (learners, educators and parents) and the structure (education

system) make such a change possible, especially if we value the contributions by each component involved in education.

The freedom provided by the rules and resources (legislation, policies) available today and the constant criticism of its efficiency and effectiveness, together with the reality of limitations and constraint posed by the socio-economic conditions in which schooling takes place, make educational provision a huge challenge today. Using the time and space at our disposal, allows us to create within the context provided for educational provision a positive and lasting change. The involvement of all stakeholders as equal participants is needed at every step of this strategic process of education transformation.

The humanistic paradigm reminds us that people must be involved when decisions are taken that affects them and they have to part of the management of those decisions that affect their future development. Moving away from a prescriptive, top down, mechanistic and modernization type of development approach towards a more integrated and holistic approach, creates enough room for equal participation of stakeholders. Based on principles like participation, capacity building, empowerment, sustainability and self-reliance, this paradigm makes better involvement and participation possible in order to ensure positive social change. This is confirmed through research done in various contexts (Naidoo, 2005; Ferlazzo, 2011; Creese & Early, 1999; Botes, 2008).

At the heart of the transformation of our education system is the intention to decentralize education provision and make all stakeholders part of its policy development, facilitation and implementation. The literature review and empirical findings revealed that the education 'playing' field is not level for all participants, especially not for the parental component in school governing bodies of underperforming schools in previously disadvantaged areas. Where parents are empowered and their capacities built through training, participation and constructive decision-making are guaranteed.

Some of the core elements of the paradigm that are helpful to build the capacity of the SGB, especially the parental component to assist their struggling schools, is the belief that people can be more than they are, meaning that they have the potential and ability to improve their lives. In that sense people are already empowered or have transformative capacity (Graaff, 1994; Theron, 2009; Davids, 2009).

Other elements deal with their will to lead a meaningful life which relates to their personal experience of subjective reality and their experience of the life world (meaning giving context) which they desire to improve. The implication of these two elements is that there

exists with school governing bodies the will to improve the performance of the school. The unique context of each SGB should be taken into account when interventions are decided upon.

The converse of this is a fatalistic mind set which is encouraged by the labelling of schools as dysfunctional and underperforming. Further deteriorating socio-economic conditions in the areas of these schools can also be found and this increases the fatalistic attitudes. The drive of the SGB's parents to lead a meaningful life that refuses to accept the label of academic underperformance and deteriorating environment of their school, can have great value that leads to a vision of positive social change. The will to lead a meaningful life and refusal to accept the academic performance of their school and deteriorating environment that is not conducive to learning as final can have great value for a vision of positive social change.

Recent decisions by the WCED, to close 20 schools in the Western Cape clearly show the need for balance between the technocratic approach that is followed to close the schools and the input from the communities affected by these drastic changes. The need to address underperformance and to improve quality education must be done in relation to the needs of the community in which such schools operate. Parents are complaining that they have been neglected in the process while the WCED claims that they have taken the input of the schools and other stakeholders into account before such decisions were taken.

The transformative capacity of the agents (children, parents, educators, principals) affected by the change and the ability of the structure (school and education system) to adapt and to restructure plainly shows the relevance of the structuration theory and the humanistic paradigm for educational change. The unintended consequences of the decisions taken will only become clear when these radical changes are implemented.

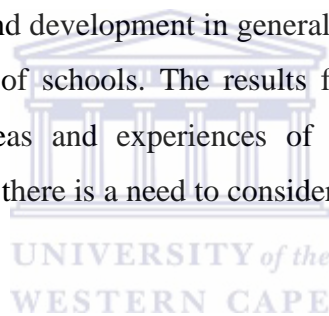
5.3 LIMITATIONS

The interdisciplinary nature of the study, which is the relation that is drawn between education and development, may raise the impression that both of these fields are not properly treated in the research. The researcher is trained in the field of development studies and might have a tendency to overemphasise the developmental aspect of education. Due to the nature of the research question, a thorough literature review was done in the area of education with regards to the role of school governing bodies in addressing underperformance at selected public schools in the Western Cape. Some other critical issues related to the field of education might have been neglected or received less attention.

The schools that participated in this study are from underperforming schools in urban areas in the Western Cape and may not comprehensively reflect the overall state of schools classified as underperforming. Another limitation is that some schools were chosen in 2010 on the basis of their performance and their results might have improved or declined in 2011, which might impact on the initial research question, that is, to study schools that improved from underperforming to performing.

The principals and members of governing bodies have also changed in the last year, which implies that the participants in the two phases (interview and questionnaire) have also changed. Therefore the results are not necessarily similar in both phases of the research. The difficulty to collect distributed questionnaires from the participating schools and the amount retrieved can also be a limiting factor when it comes to interpretation of the findings. Gaining access to participating schools and the members of school governing bodies was also a challenge.

However, these limitations have not prevented the researcher from understanding the relationship between education and development in general and how school governing bodies can impact on the performance of schools. The results from the empirical research are a reasonable reflection of the ideas and experiences of participating members and their respective schools. Consequently there is a need to consider the recommendations which flow from the empirical research.



5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher recommends that the terms ‘underperforming’ and ‘dysfunctional’, which serve as labels to describe struggling schools, be reviewed because they do not help to instil a sense of pride and offer a vision of possibilities, but rather contribute to a fatalistic mind set. This fatalistic mind set can be seen in the way that learners look after their schools premises and the teachers’ attitudes towards learners. The aim is to create the will to overcome the factors that limits or inhibits the performance of the school. Research proves that a positive mind-set and grassroots approach to education leads to sustainable school effectiveness (Myers and Goldstein, 1997; Kamper, 2008).

The researcher recommends that the principals be re-oriented and assisted by experienced and more successful principals (retired or in active service) instead of being removed during a critical time during the term of the school calendar (like in the third and fourth term). It is unfair towards acting principals, who when results are tabled, have to take responsibility for failures or successes.

The training of parents as governing body members should be presented in the language of the participants as far as possible. They should also be trained at a time and venue that is easily accessible to all, especially for those in gangster controlled areas, who live far from the schools that their children attend. Parents receive no remuneration for their participation in school governing bodies and a form of honorarium might assist those who travel far to attend meetings and are involved in the various activities of the SGB.

The WCED should do more to build a relationship of mutual trust with the school management team and the school governing bodies of underperforming schools. The impression that the WCED is quick to criticize but slow to assist if real needs hit the schools is strongly maintained by participating schools. Schools perform better when both school management teams and school governing bodies are known and know EMDC officials throughout the school year. It is clear that with a good relationship between the schools and the EMDC that it is easier to deal with challenges impacting the performance of the school but also rewarding best practices that improve the schools performance.

The overemphasis on end-of-year results at the expense of the broader context in which results are produced also needs to be addressed. It is clear from the literature and empirical research that such an approach to address underperformance is not sustainable because a school's high performance in one year is not necessarily repeated the following year. More strategic focus is needed in the short and long term to produce sustainable school performance. The educational, systemic and non-educational/ out of school factors must be addressed in a holistic manner, keeping in mind the uniqueness of the context of each school that needs intervention (Myers and Goldstein, 1997; Stoll and Fink, 1997).

The researcher applauds the WCED for the decrease of underperforming schools from 78 to 30 in the last national matric examination and recommends that they continue with the new training framework for school governing bodies. The recently presented training framework, which regulates training done by SGB service providers, can be of great assistance to the current Strategic Plan of the WCED.

The training framework determines that service providers should be knowledgeable about education in general and informed about the expectations of the national Department of Basic Education and the Western Cape Education Department. They have to be prepared to work within the training framework of the WCED to ensure that there is standardization. Facilitators must be equipped and knowledgeable about the topic, able to answer difficult questions and willing to find out the right answers.

Service providers must obtain good information about the schools to be trained, use real life examples, ensure the town and building is suitable for training (venue), that the time of the training fits everybody and that the facilitators are on time at training to set things up.

School governing bodies need to know that they serve the best interest of the school, they must equip themselves properly, they should not take over the roles of other role players, they should make their main interest the educational best for the children, and in everything they do support the educational success of the school. The purpose of the whole training exercise is to ensure that the most important knowledge and skills are transferred so that the best people serve on the SGB and good participation is ensured, especially from the parent component.

The training framework and the strategic plan are steps in the right direction to improve the educational success of schools in a holistic and sustainable manner.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

More research needs to be done on the relation between the academic performance of schools and the impact of non-educational factors. Short and long term interventions must also be explored that can address the factors that have an impact on educational provision, especially if a sustainable and lasting solution is to be found for underperformance in schools.

More research should also be done concerning the best possible training for principals and school governing body members. This is to ensure that they are best equipped for the task of school governance and management. They could then forge better relationships that enable a stable and prosperous school learning environment.

The idea of re-positioning schools as centres of community life is an interesting topic for further research in the relation between development and education. From the onset of the research it has been made clear that the school and the community have a relationship of interdependence and if managed correctly can have a mutual benefit. The literature study and empirical research pointed to the indissoluble link between the academic performance of the school and the impact of non-educational factors stemming from the socio-political and cultural environment in which the school finds itself. In the process of re-positioning the school as a centre of community life, already established relations between the school and the

community, whereby the premises can be utilized by the community for community development can be further explored and even broadened.

5.6 CONCLUSION

This study sought to respond to the research question, “How can school governing bodies assist underperforming schools?” which has been fully addressed. The use of mixed methods to have a full view of the factors that impact on the performance of schools and the role of the different stakeholders, particularly the parental component, has proven to be successful. The information provided by the literature study and the empirical data obtained from the two phases (namely the interview and questionnaires) enabled the researcher to draw certain conclusions and make appropriate recommendations.

The study has established that there is a strong link between development and education and the duet seeks to bring about lasting positive change for both the individual and the structure. The theory of structuration and the humanistic paradigm helped the researcher to acknowledge how the education system was shaped in a particular time and space, the constraints and potential freedom offered by the system, the rules (received from legislation and policy) as well as the resources (whether financial, socio-political and economic) that still have a determining effect on quality education provision.

The theoretical framework helped the researcher to acknowledge the real agents of change and the immense potential embedded in them when they became not only the benefactors but also involved in the needs analysis, planning and implementation of projects that should lead to development. The researcher followed an inter- and trans-disciplinary approach which allowed the study to move freely between the two fields of development and education. Applying these theories to education allows space for a grassroots and bottom up approach which take seriously the potential of a social compact or partnership among the different stakeholders in education. The partners engaged from the premise that everybody is participating as equals, although there might be differences in literacy and educational qualifications.

The relationship between governance and management can be mutually benefitting for the school if a relationship of trust and respect is established. It is clear from the literature review and empirical research that for some schools the relationship between governance and management is still difficult to maintain but whatever the challenges are for a school, where

the lines of communication are open, they are tackled collectively to produce sustainable solutions.

Training for school governing bodies should not just focus on the technical roles and responsibilities but also on the establishment of a mutual benefitting relationship between governance and management. The schools that perform academically well have one thing in common; the relationship between different stakeholders, educators, learners and parents is based on mutual respect and trust. A mutually agreed vision and strategic plan that is owned by everyone involved in the school guarantees the schools success.

The role of the principal as the strategic leader, who must create an inviting and welcoming culture at the school, should be encouraged. Where that is done, improvement in the academic results of the school and the best relationship between the school and other stakeholders and role players like educators, parents and the community are accomplished. The principal alone cannot make the success of the school possible and therefore the need for a partnership between the various stakeholders should be created.

Learners have not received enough attention in the study as to their responsibility in improving their academic performance and thus taking the school from an underperforming to a performing level. The focus was more on the role of the school governing body, focusing on the role of the parental component, to address the factors that can lead to improving the performance of the school. However the attitude and responsibility of learners to be accountable for their academic success cannot be emphasised enough (Phurutse, 2005; Moloji et al., 2010; Mabovula, 2009). The parents can help when learners need assistance with homework but in disadvantaged areas there are several factors as cited above which prevent or inhibit the contribution of parents. The positive results from learners attending schools in disadvantaged areas clearly illustrates that improvement is possible against the odds in their settings (more colloquial than conventional).

The relationship between the school management team, school governing body and the WCED is mostly described by participants as unacceptable because it is more focussed on crisis management and end of year results. It is proposed in the study that the WCED should explore ways to create a more transparent and beneficial relationship with the various stakeholders and especially the school governing body to ensure more sustainable and lasting improvement and educational effectiveness.

Finally, the role of school governing bodies to address underperformance in public schools is indispensable insofar as the concerted effort of the various stakeholders involved is concerned. The contribution of the parental component, that do not always share the same literacy and academic level of the other participants on the school governing body cannot be underestimated, though the members of the SGBs require appropriate training and further development to ensure sustainable success.

The passion for the whole development of the school and love for their children attending the school can be helpful to stop the exodus of learners from schools in disadvantaged areas. In order to achieve that, the schools must develop a new commitment to full attendance during the school calendar, more focus on teaching and learning, and a strong effort to address non-educational factors that hinders or inhibits the academic progress of learners should be their focus. The resources needed to enhance success like adequate textbooks for every child, proper equipment like tables and chairs, taking responsibility for the tidiness of classrooms and the school premises and involving business to invest in development projects can be helpful.

Creating a welcoming and inviting environment for all stakeholders must be the overarching objective of all principals. The humility to admit if they struggle in areas can become helpful when interventions are proposed. Interventions can become more focussed and correctly targeted which is beneficial to the educational success of the school and thus improvement of the community. Attracting the best educators to the school can be a challenge because governing bodies do not have large budgets at their disposal like the more resourceful schools. In the filling of posts the school governing body should do their utmost to ensure that the best suitable candidates are placed in the school.

The stakeholders of the school, whether from governance or management, must accept responsibility for efforts to improve the school in its internal and external environment. The intention of the WCED to reposition schools as centres of community life is a step in the right direction. Acknowledging that schools exist in a community which provides an opportunity for all stakeholders to take responsibility for the effective and efficient education provision is needed. Addressing the educational, systemic and non-educational factors which directly and indirectly impact performance should be their focus.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Letter requesting permission from WCED



Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535, Cape Town, South Africa

Telephone : (021) 959 3858/6 Fax: (021) 959 3865

E-mail: pkippie@uwc.ac.za or jwl@netactive.co.za

Director: Research Services

WCED

Private Bag X9114

Cape Town

8000



Dear Dr. Cornelissen

Re: Permission for a Masters student to do interviews with School Governing Body Members in selected schools in the Western Cape. We appreciate the access granted by the Department of Education in the past.

Daniel Andrew needs to do interviews with School Governing Body members in selected schools as part of his research. His research entails the study of how and why some formerly identified dysfunctional and underperforming schools in less advantaged urban areas improved their performance while others did not. Also looking at, the role played by the School Governing Body in improving performance as a stakeholder, especially the role of the parental entity.

He will need to meet with the School Governing Bodies of the following schools, Schools A, B, C D and E. He already conducted interviews with the School Governing Body chairpersons, secretaries and treasurers of the respective schools in conjunction with the Pro Poor Policy Project that is endorsed by the WCED. He will just verify findings from the previous research with a questionnaire to the rest of the members in the respective SGB's.

I am hereby requesting permission for him to explain the purpose of the questionnaire and its completion at their SGB's meetings. A relationship is already established with the respective SGB chairpersons and school principals of the partaking schools. Access to these schools is required from September to October.

We understand that no one will be under any obligation to work with the student on her project and we will ensure that anonymity is maintained in order to protect the identity of the participants. The student will not interfere with the normal work of the educators at the schools. We intend to submit a copy of the thesis to your office on its completion.

I appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Lorna Holtman

Directorate Postgraduate Studies



Appendix B Letter of consent from WCED.



WESTERN CAPE Education Department RESEARCH

Provincial Government of the Western Cape

awyngaar@pgwc.gov.za

tel: +27 021 476 9272

Fax: 0865902282

Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000

wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20111005-0011

ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mr Daniel Andrew

Division for PG studies

UWC



Dear Daniel Andrew

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: AN INVESTIGATION INTO HOW SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES CAN ASSIST WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF UNDERPERFORMING AND DYSFUNCTIONAL SCHOOLS IN LESS ADVANTAGED URBAN COMMUNITIES IN THE WESTERN CAPE

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **19 January 2012 till 30 March 2012**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.

11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
The Director: Research Services

Western Cape Education Department

Private Bag X9114

CAPE TOWN

8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Audrey T Wyngaard

for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**

DATE: 06 October 2011



Appendix C Interview Probes

1		When was this SGB constituted?	
2		How was it constituted? Was it elected by a meeting of parents?	
3		How long have you served on this SGB?	
4		Where you elected or co-opted?	
5		How often do you meet?	
6		When you meet, do you have a quorum? (all the time/most of the time/hardly ever)	
7	a	How often do you meet with the parents?	
	b	What is the purpose of the parent meetings?	
	c	Are these meetings well attended?	
8		What are the roles and functions of the SGB?	
9		What is your role?	
10		Do you have the following:	
	a	Constitution	
	b	Mission statement	
	c	Admission Policy	
	d	Language Policy	
	e	Religious Policy	
	f	Code of conduct	
	g	Times of school day Policy	
11		Did the SGB draw up the following: (If not did you play any role, if yes, what?)	
	a	Constitution	
	b	Mission statement	
	c	Admission Policy	
	d	Language Policy	
	e	Religious Policy	
	f	Code of conduct	
	g	Times of school day Policy	
12		Is the SGB responsible for the following: (If not do you play any role, if yes, what?)	
	a	property and asset management	
	b	Budget	
	c	Financial control	
13		How good is your relationship (with principal, SMT, DOE, parents).Explain.	
14		How good is the support you get from the principal? Explain	
15		How good is the support you get from the DOE? Explain	
16	a	Do you regularly receive relevant documents (e.g. policy)?	
	b	If not, who is responsible for distributing documents to you? Why is it not happening?	

17	a	How do you see the level of communication between the DOE and you / the principal and you?	
	b	Please describe any problems	
18		Do you have adequate administrative assistance and resources to perform the duties of the SGB?	
19		Do you have available meeting venues?	
20		What are the challenges facing the SGB? Are there any factors hindering the functioning of the SGB?	
21		What experience do you have that helps you perform your tasks in the SGB?	
22		What is your highest level of education?	
23		Training	
	a	Has the SGB along with the principal ever identified/discussed what training would benefit your SGB?	
	b	Has the SGB received any form of training? Please expand	
	c	How good was this training? How valuable was it?	
	d	Was the training offered relevant to the SGB?	
	e	Was it tailored to the needs of the SGB?	
	f	Are the training sessions held at a time and venue that is suitable to you?	
	g	Do you think your training needs are being met?	
	h	What other training do you need?	
24	a	What other (if any) interventions have there been from the WCED?	
	b	How effective has it been?	
25	a	Are you aware of the NSLA interventions?	
	b	If yes, how effective has it been?	
26		Which national intervention programmes (NSLA) were offered to the school to specifically address the low outcomes at the school? List the interventions.	
27		How was this information communicated to the school?	
28		Did these interventions make a difference? Was it useful? Did it improve results in any way?	
29		Were the interventions correctly targeted?	
30		Which WCED intervention programmes were offered to the school in 2010 to specifically address low outcomes at the school? List these interventions	
31		How was this information communicated to the school?	
32		Did these interventions make a difference? Was it useful? Did it improve results in any way?	
33		Were the interventions correctly targeted?	
34		Which other interventions are necessary but have not been introduced.	

35		What are the main concerns that you have as a school management team and have interventions been introduced to address these concerns?	
36		What are the typical learning problems learners have at this school?	
37		What intervention and support programmes have you initiated to assist these learners?	
38	a	What are the Roles and Responsibilities of the SGB?	
	b	What do you understand about the terms governance vs. management	
	c	In terms of this, what is the SGB responsible for?	
39	a	Are the policies sent through from the WCED easy to understand?	
	b	Are they in your home language?	
40	c	Are they clear enough?	
41		How familiar are you with the principles of financial management? What is the role of the SGB?	
		What are the literacy levels of the SGB?	
42	a	What is the level of support you receive from the principal/WCED	
	b	Please explain	
43	a	Is there a high level of trust between principal and SGB?	
	b	Explain	
44		Is there any interference in the operations of the SGB? Explain	
45		Is there ever any conflict with the principal regarding the respective roles -Governance vs. Management? Explain	
46		Is there ever any conflict with the principal/SMT regarding finances and budgeting? Explain	
47		Is there ever any conflict with the principal/SMT /teachers regarding the appointment of teachers? Explain	
48		Do you find it difficult balancing your work schedule with the demands of the SGB?	
49		Do you think the fact that it is an unpaid job affects the commitment of members?	
50		Why are you involved in the SGB?	
51		39. What do you think are factors influencing the performance of the school?	
52		40. What would you suggest could be done to improve the performance of school?	

QUESTIONNAIRE					
CATEGORY ONE : EDUCATIONAL FACTORS /		1-Excellent	2-Good	3-Average	4 - Poor
SISIQENDU SOKUQALA: IZIZATHU ZEMFUNDO		Iyabalasela	Kuyancomeka	Akuncumisi	Akuphuhlanga
1	How would you rate the attendance of educators at school? Ungathi abefundisi ntsapho (ootitshala) basihambanjani iskolo (ukuza emsebenzini)?	1	2	3	4
2	How would you rate the performance of educators at the school? Ungathi abefundisi ntsapho (ootitshala) baqhuba njani ekufundiseni abantwana besikolo?	1	2	3	4
3	How would you rate the attendance of learners at the school? Abantwana ungathi basihambanjani isikolo?	1	2	3	4
4	How would you rate the performance of learners at the school? Ungathi abantwana baqhuba njani ezifundweni zabo?	1	2	3	4
5	How would you rate the literacy level of learners at the school? Ungaba ulwazi lwabantwana ekufundeni iincwadi zabo (izifundo zoncwadi) lunjani na?	1	2	3	4
6	How would you rate the numeracy level of learners at the school? Ungaba ulwazi lwabantwana kwezezibalo lunjani na?	1	2	3	4
7	How would you rate the availability of textbooks? Ngokokubona kwakho ingaba abantwana banazo na iincwadi zokufunda?	1	2	3	4
8	How would you rate the intervention system aimed at addressing learning barriers? Ungathi lunjani uncedo olusuka ngaphandle (kuRhulumente nakubanye) ekuncediseni kwimfundo yesisikolo?	1	2	3	4
9	How would you rate parental involvement in the learning of their children? Ingathi linjani uncedo nokuzibandakanya kwabazali kwimfundo yabantwana babo?	1	2	3	4

10	How would you rate the overall academic performance of learners at this school?	1	2	3	4
	Injani inkqubela yabantwana ezifundweni?				
	CATEGORY TWO: SYSTEMIC VARIABLES/FACTORS				
	IZQENDU SESIBINI: IZIZATHU EZIPHANGALELEYO				
11	How would you rate your relationship with the principal?	1	2	3	4
	Ungathi injani intsebenziswano phakathi kwakho nenqununu (principal) yesisikolo?				
12	How would you rate the principal's management of the school in general?	1	2	3	4
	Ungathi inqununu isiphathe njani esisikolo?				
13	How would you rate the administrative assistance you get from the principal?	1	2	3	4
	Ungathi lunjani uncedo olufumana kwinqununu mayelana nencwadi zophatho lwesikolo (imisebenzi iyamelane nokuba ngumabhalana okanye omnye umsebenzi lo uwenzayo)?				
14	How would you rate the relationship you have with the SMT?	1	2	3	4
	Ungathi lunjani unxubelelwano lakho ne SMT?				
15	How would you rate your relationship with the DOE?	1	2	3	4
	Ungathi lunjani unxubelelwano lakho nequmrhu labaphethe ezemfundo kwelaseKapa (DOE)?				
	CATEGORY THREE: NON-EDUCATIONAL/OUT OF SCHOOL FACTORS				
	SISIQENDU SESITHATHU: IMIBA ENGAXAMENANGA NESIKOLO/ IMIBA ENGAPHANDLE KWEYESIKOLO				
16	How would you rate DOE interventions on the performance of the school?	1	2	3	4
	Eliqumrhu liphethe ezemfundo (DOE) ingaba liyasifaka na isandla ekuncediseni isikolo sibalasele ezifundweni?				
17	How would you rate your knowledge of education policies?	1	2	3	4

	Ungalubeka ndawoni ulwazi lwakho ngeenkqubo zezemfundo ngokubhalwe				
	nguRhulumente				
1 8	How would you rate the training you received as SGB members?	1	2	3	4
	Ungathi lunjani uqeqesho (ngenjongo zophuhlisa ulwazi) elinifumanayo				
	njengabazali abamela isikolo (SGB)?				
1 9	How would you rate your involvement in the governance of the school?	1	2	3	4
	Ingaba lingakanani igalelo lakho ekulawulweni nasekuphathweni kwesikolo?				
2 0	How would you rate your impact on the academic performance of the school?	1	2	3	4
	Ungathi lingakanani igalelo lakho ekuncediseni esisikolo siqhube kakuhle				
	ezifundweni?				
	CATEGORY THREE: NON-EDUCATIONAL/OUT OF SCHOOL FACTORS				
	SISIQENDU SESITHATHU: IMIBA				
	ENGANXAMENANGA NESIKOLO/IMIBA				
	ENGAPHANDLE				
	KWEYESIKOLO				
2 1	How would you rate the impact of social problems (like drug & alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy) on the academic performance of learners at this school?	1	2	3	4
	Ungathi zingakanani iziphazamisi zangaphandle ezincedisa ekuqhubeni kakuhle/				
	kakubi kwabantwana esikolweni(iziphazamisi ezinjenge ziyobisi, utywala nokukhulelwa				
	kwabantwana besikolo)?				
2 2	How would you rate the availability of transport to and from the school?	1	2	3	4
	Ingaba isikolo esi sikwindawo efikelelekayo kwizithuthi ukuya naxa abantwana				
	bebuya ezikolweni?				
2 3	How would you rate the availability of electricity at the school?	1	2	3	4
	Umbane kagesi ungathi ufumaneka kanjani apha esikolweni (ukhona,uyahamba				
	rhoqo okanye akekho kwa ubakho??				
2 4	How would you rate the impact of hunger on the educational	1	2	3	4

	performance of learners at this school?				
	Ingaba indlala yesisu incedisa kangakanani na ekuphumeleleni				
	kwabantwana kwizifundo zabo?				
2 5	How would you rate the impact of poor health as having an impact on the	1	2	3	4
	general performance of learners at this school?				
	Ingaba impilo embi ebantwaneni idlala indima engakanani na kwimpumelelo				
	yabo ezifundweni?				
2 6	How would you rate the impact of low income, on academic performance of learners	1	2	3	4
	Ingaba ulwamkelo kwemali encinci ngabazali babntwana ludlala indima				
	engakanani kwimpumelelo yabantwana ezifundweni				
2 7	How would you rate safety on the school grounds?	1	2	3	4
	Ukhuseleko labantwana lungakanani na emabaleni esikolo okudlala				
	ngexesha lokutya nelokudlala?				
2 8	How would you rate the adequacy of physical facilities at this school?	1	2	3	4
	Ungathi isikolo esi sikwimo enjani xa ujonge iindoga zaso kunye nezinto				
	ezingaphakathi?				
2 9	How would you rate the impact of the area in which this school is situated on the	1	2	3	4
	general performance of learners				
	Ingaba isikolo sime kwindawo enjani apha ekuhalaleni (kwindawo				
	enobundlobongela okanye engenabo), lonto leyo ngaba iyabachaphazela				
	na abantwana ngokwendlela abaqhuba ngayo esikolweni?				
3 0	How would you rate the involvement of the community (business/churches/police)	1	2	3	4
	address?				
	Ingaba ingakanani inxaso yabahlali (sibala oosomashinini, iicawa nabomthetho/				
	amapolisa)?				
3 1	How would you rate the effectiveness of the interventions implemented	1	2	3	4
	by the school management (Principal/SMT?				
	Ungathi iyasebenza na imingenelelo eyenziwa				

	ngabaphathi besikolo nenqununu				
	ne SMT ekuphuhliseni isikolo?				
3 2	How would you rate interventions by Department of Education?	1	2	3	4
	Ungathi injani yona imingenelelo ngabaphathi bemfundo kweliphondo ukutsho eRhulumente (DOE)?				
3 3	How would you rate parental involvement to address these non-educational factors?	1	2	3	4
	Abazali ingaba badlala indima engakanani ekulungiseni ezizizathu zingaphandle kwesikolo?				
	TOTAL	1- Excel lent	2- Good	3- Aver age	4- Poor
		Lyaba lasela	Kuyan comek a	Akun cumisi	Akuph uhlang a



Appendix E TABLE ONE EDUCATIONAL FACTORS

QUESTIONS	SCHOOL A				SCHOOL B				SCHOOL C				SCHOOL D				SCHOOL E				EXCELLENT GOOD		AVERAGE POOR	
	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	0/37	0/37	0/37	
1	1	6			2	6			1	4	1		3	3			1	6			6/37	20/37	7/37	
2	1	5	1		8			1	3	2			6				1	5	1		3/37	26/37	6/37	
3		3	4		5	3			3	2			2	4			3	4			0/37	16/37	16/37	
4			7		1	6			1	2			1	1	4			7			2/37	2/37	25/37	
5		1	4		3	2			1	1	2		1	5			1	4			1/37	7/37	17/37	
6		1	4		1	7			1	1	4		2	4			1	4			1/37	6/37	23/37	
7		4	3						1	1	4		2	3	1		4	3			3/37	11/37	11/37	
8	1	3	3			4			2	2			3	2			1	3	3		3/37	10/37	14/37	
9		1	3			8			1	2			1	3			1	3			0/37	4/37	18/37	
10		1	4			4				5			3	3			1	4			0/37	5/37	20/37	

TABLE TWO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

QUESTIONS	SCHOOL A				SCHOOL B				SCHOOL C				SCHOOL D				SCHOOL E			EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR			
	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	0/37	0/37	0/37			
11	4	2				3	3			1	2			1	4	1		4	2			9/37	12/37	6/37	'	
12	5	1			1	4			1	1			1	4	1			5	1			11/37	8/37	6/37	'	
13	5	1			6	2			1	3				5	1			5	1			10/37	14/37	6/37	'	
14	4	3			1				1	2				4	2			4	3			7/37	12/37	4/37	'	
15		2	3			4			1	3			1	2	2				2	3			1/37	6/37	15/37	'
16		1	3			5			2	2				3	2			1	3			0/37	6/37	17/37	'	
17		4	3		1				2	3				4	2			4	3			0/37	11/37	11/37	'	
18	2	4	1		1	7			1	2			1	3	1			2	4	1		4/37	12/37	12/37	'	
19	3	4				4				1			1	5				3	4			6/37	13/37	5/37	'	
20		4	3		4	4			2	2				5				4	3			0/37	18/37	12/37	'	



TABLE THREE NON- EDUCATIONAL FACTORS

QUESTIONS	SCHOOL A				SCHOOL B				SCHOOL C				SCHOOL D				SCHOOL E				EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR
	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	0/37	0/37	0/37	
21			2				4	4			1	1				2						2/37	4/37	11/37
22	1	3	3						3	2	1			1	4		1	3	3			5/37	9/37	10/37
23	3	4				8			3	3			1	4	1		3	4				10/37	22/37	1/37
24			3					1	1	2	2		1	1	4							2/37	3/37	12/37
25		1	4						1	2	2			2	3			1	4			1/37	5/37	13/37
26			4					2		1	2				4				4			1/37	0/37	16/37
27		1	5					3		1	3		1	1	4			1	5			1/37	4/37	19/37
28		2	4								3		1	1	2			2	4			1/37	5/37	12/37
29		2	2			8			2		1		1	1	2			2	2			3/37	13/37	7/37
30		2	3			1	7			1	2			2	2			2	3			0/37	8/37	17/37
31		5	2				4			1	4		1	3	2			5	2			1/37	13/37	14/37
32		1	4				4			1	3			4	2			1	4			0/37	6/37	17/37
33			4				5				3			1	2				4			0/37	1/37	17/37