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**ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN SCHOOLS: PERSPECTIVES OF
TOWNSHIP SCHOOL MANAGERS**

by

NDOYISILE MOSES MAJOLA

(BA., SED., B. Ed. Hons., P.G.D.E.)

Dissertation

in

fulfilment of the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

in the

Faculty of Education

School of Education Studies

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

BLOEMFONTEIN

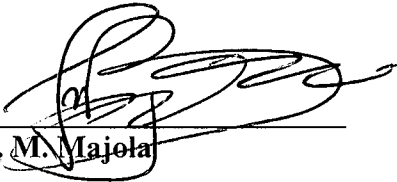
**SUPERVISOR: Dr. N. BAGARETTE
CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof. J. VAN STADEN**

April 2012

DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation “Academic achievement in schools: perspectives of township secondary school managers” is my own work. It is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Magister Educationis Degree at the Bloemfontein Campus of the University of the Free State. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.

The opinions that are expressed in this study and the conclusions that are reached are those of the researcher and should be ascribed to the School of Education of the Faculty of Education at Bloemfontein Campus of the University of the Free State.



N. M. Majola

April 2012

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to:

- ❖ My late parents, Petrus Khethekile and Julia Nomzwakhe Majola, (may your souls rest in peace) for your endless efforts of ensuring that I receive the best education despite your poor socio-economic status. You will always remain in my mind.

- ❖ My wife, Thelma Nonkululeko whose support, trust and confidence in me never wavered and our two sons Thembinkosi Loyiso and Lonwabo Shimphiwe who had to endure long hours of my absence from home and silence.

- ❖ My uncles, My Jeremiah Mayongo, Abraham Bonakele Majola, Isaac Siphon Majola and my aunts Nondamza Nkonxeni no Sis Chasiwe.

- ❖ My parents-in-law, Mr. Elias Fuku and Suzan Fuku, for their incessant encouragement and support during my period of study.

- ❖ My brothers, Zandile, Simanga and sisters, Nombulelo, Nontozanele and Nomathamsaqa.

- ❖ My sisters-in-law, Noma and Bulelwa and brothers-in-law Mongezi and Monwabisi as well as my nephew Andile Fuku.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to the following people who have immensely contributed towards the successful completion of this study:

- ❖ Dr. N. Bagarette, my supervisor, who provided me with expertise, encouragement, assistance and support. I am greatly indebted to him for his excellent advice and guidance.
- ❖ Professor J. G. van Staden, my co-supervisor, for his valuable inputs, skilful guidance, support and encouragement.
- ❖ Mrs. H. C. Lombard for editing the language in this study.
- ❖ Mrs. Bagarette, who warmly welcomed me in their home as we had unending discussions about this research study.
- ❖ My wife, who constantly inspired and motivated me when I felt down, frustrated and discouraged when things did not go accordingly during the period of this study. Her assistance with the initial typing of this dissertation is highly appreciated.
- ❖ Principals and deputy principals who sacrificed their time to take part in the focus group interviews.
- ❖ My colleagues at Unity Primary school, especially Mr. Marvin Tshepo Mothusi who provided me with essential typing lessons, which enabled me to complete the typing of this dissertation. The assistance he provided me with the recording of focus group interviews and transferring the interview discussions on a Compact Disk is greatly appreciated.
- ❖ My principal, Ms. Olga Molema, who encouraged me to further my studies and provided me with the necessary materials to complete this study. I will never forget your words of encouragement and wisdom.
- ❖ Mr. Motlolometsi, the principal of Tsoseletso Secondary school, for his assistance with the Free State Grade 12 results of the previous five years and his words of encouragement.
- ❖ Above all, to God Almighty who saw me through those sleepless nights and gave me the strength and wisdom to complete this dissertation.

ABSTRACT

Apparently, most schools which are situated in townships in South Africa still show the legacy of apartheid and a struggle for freedom and equality and thus poor academic performance. However, it is profoundly imperative to indicate that some township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area consistently performed remarkably well over the last five year period (2007-2011) despite these political challenges.

School academic results are in the forefront of many South Africans and education officials' minds since every parent wants his or her child to attend a well performing school. Furthermore, the education officials have to ensure that all schools perform well and concomitantly with the money allocated to education by the government. This is why the whole issue of academic performance is such a critical issue.

The effectiveness or performance of schools is defined in terms of academic performance of the learners in the Grade 12 examinations. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to explore the perspectives of township secondary school managers with regard to academic performance in their schools. This was done by considering the Grade 12 results in the Bloemfontein area in the five year period from 2007 to 2011. Moreover, this research investigated how management and leadership practices contribute towards excellent academic performance. In pursuance of this investigation, the researcher consequently formulated the objectives of this study.

A literature study of education leadership and management, the management tasks and the role school managers have to play in ensuring that academic achievement is attained was conducted. The purpose of this study was to establish how these factors contribute to academic success. School managers are entrusted with an important responsibility of ensuring that schools operate effectively and thus enhance academic achievement. Therefore, school managers should become leaders who inspire creativity and higher levels of achievement. School managers should regularly motivate and develop educators by creating opportunities in order for them to grow and to learn from each other.

The research study was approached from an interpretivist perspective to establish how the participants perceive academic achievement in their schools. In the process of data gathering, the qualitative investigation was undertaken using focus group interviews. The sample comprised of township secondary school managers in the Bloemfontein area. Emergent themes and categories were discussed in the data report on the findings of the qualitative investigation. Participants indicated various factors which are important for school managers to display and perform in their effort to lead their schools to effectiveness. It was also evident from the participants that school managers

efficiently utilised both management and leadership skills in their daily school management tasks. Nevertheless, participants highlighted that school managers were not adequately empowered in terms of management and leadership skills and the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS).

On the basis of the qualitative results and the literature review, the main findings were interpreted and compared. Based on these findings, guidelines were proposed. In the light of the suggested guidelines, school managers need to be aware of the crucial role they play in ensuring that effective management and leadership are implemented in order to improve academic performance. Possible areas for further research were identified. It is hoped that the Free State Department of Education, as well as other provincial education departments in South Africa will be able to use the proposed guidelines in developing a training programme for school managers in the education fraternity.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACE:	Advance Certificate in Education.
BCEA:	Basic Conditions of Employment Act.
CAPS:	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
CD:	Compact Disk.
CEO:	Chief Executive Officer.
DA:	Developmental Appraisal.
DoE:	Department of Education.
EEA:	Employment Equity Act.
EEA:	Employment of Educators Act.
ELRC:	Education Labour Relations Council.
FGI:	Focus Group Interviews.
FSDoE:	Free State Department of Education.
HOD:	Head of Department.
IE:	Inclusive Education.
IQMS:	Integrated Quality Management System.
LRA:	Labour Relations Act.
NCS:	National Curriculum Statement.
OBE:	Outcomes Based Education.
OSD:	Occupational Specific Dispensation.
PAM:	Personnel Administration Measures.
PDoE:	Provincial Department of Education.
PM:	Performance Management.
RNCS:	Revised National Curriculum Statement.
RSA:	Republic of South Africa.
SACE:	South African Council of Educators.
SAPS:	South African Police Services.
SASA:	South African Schools Act.
SASP:	South African Standards for Principalship.
SBM:	School Based Management.
SGB:	School Governing Body.
SMT:	School Management Team.
UFS:	University of the Free State.
WSE:	Whole School Evaluation.

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CHAPTER 1:- ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In view of the research topic, it becomes important to indicate that some township secondary schools in Bloemfontein consistently performed remarkably well between 2007 and 2011. The academic achievement of these schools exceeded the provincial target of 75% as their pass rate has been consistently between 75% and 85% (Ebersohn, 2010: 2; Free State Department of Education, (FSDoE) 2010: 18; Makgoe, 2011: 7; Makgoe, 2012: 11). In line with this, it is essential to explore the perspectives of school managers of township secondary schools in relation to the promotion of academic success in their schools. According to Majolo (2007: 35 & 43), school managers consist of principals, deputy principals, heads of department (HODs), and master educators. Majolo (2007: 35 & 43) describes the post of master educator as a newly created post in the management structure of the school, with the responsibility of ensuring the effective management of the school, in order to achieve academic success.

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 75) posit that school managers have to ensure that their schools implement management tasks, such as planning, organising, leading and controlling in order to achieve academic success. Law and Glover (2000: 146) lend weight to this statement when they indicate that an effective school adds extra value to its learners' outcomes in comparison with other schools serving a similar intake. Firm and purposeful professional leadership with a participative approach by school managers, is descriptive of an effective school (Thurlow, Bush & Coleman, 2003: 119). Davies and West-Burnham (2003: 519) confirm that regular monitoring of the school performance can be regarded as an important tool for effectiveness.

Sadly, many South African schools are situated in areas that still show the legacy of apartheid and the struggle for freedom and equality. Calitz, Fuglestad and Lillejord (2002: 16) demonstrate that in many schools, decades of resistance to apartheid undermined the conventional education practices such as punctuality, lesson preparation and individual attention, whereas some school managers were discredited as being "part of the system". Nongxa, a City Press journalist, (July 2009: 23) reports that while suburban schools do exceptionally well in terms of providing academic performance, most township secondary schools perform poorly. Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge and Ngcobo (2008: 2) conclude that although there was some intervention to redress the apartheid legacies, South African schools vary enormously in terms of resources and with regard to quality teaching and learning.

Nevertheless, there are township secondary schools whose school managers consistently strive to ensure that their management and leadership practices promote academic achievement. The next paragraphs discuss the theoretical framework.

1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

School managers are entrusted with the unique responsibility to oversee the entire school operations to ensure that academic success is not compromised. The former Minister of Education, Mrs. Naledi Pandor (2004) highlighted that school managers play a critical role towards academic success. Mestry and Singh (2007: 478) state that the South African Council of Educators' (SACE) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Brijraj conceded that the factors which could be responsible for poor matriculation results included a breakdown in management. They further quoted from the article "*Top principals make top schools*" by Matseke (in Mestry & Singh, 2007: 478), that the crucial role of school managers is in the teaching and learning process and that persons in leadership positions have to think about what they should do to improve academic success in their schools.

Botha (2010: 609) state that school improvement by school managers leads to academic effectiveness. This author further argues that schools that are continually improving their academic performance gain confidence and are self-critical and understand how people learn (Botha, 2010: 609). In support of this statement, Prew (2007: 459) highlights that successful school managers, are managers who are open, confident and effective at working with the community which they serve to ensure that their schools achieve academic success. School managers play a central role in all the programmes of the school and have an impact on the development of a tone and ethos that are conducive to quality education. They are also crucial to the process of effective and efficient schooling which is responsive to quality teaching and learning (De Venter & Kruger, 2003: 3).

Therefore, the literature study in this research served as a theoretical framework on the role of school managers in relation to academic achievements in township secondary schools. Bush (2007: 396) and Harris, Day, Hopkins, Hadfield, Hagreaves and Chapman (2003: 9) emphasise the importance of leadership and management for the successful operation of schools and the growing recognition of differences between leadership and management. Moreover, the understanding that school managers have to be expedient managers and the pressure exerted upon the schools to raise the learners' achievement in order to promote academic success are also emphasised by these authors. Therefore, the literature study focused on the contemporary views of education management and leadership, the management tasks and the role which school managers have to play in ensuring academic success in their schools. The next paragraphs is devoted to the research problem and research questions.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

While academic achievement is a broad concept, and one that has been researched from many different perspectives (Botha, 2010; Leatham, 2005; Leedy and Ormrod, 2001; Mertens, 2010), posit that the Grade 12 results are one of the yardsticks used to measure the success of South African secondary schools. Smith and Mngoma (in Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 39) assert that learners' examination results have become an accepted indicator of school performance to an extent that a school with high examination results is regarded as a well performing school. The problem identified thus concerns the extent to which few township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area achieve high examination results, while the majority of these schools perform poorly.

Thurlow *et al.* (2003: 118) postulate that examination results are globally utilised to provide valuable information about the effectiveness of the schools and to address the strategic goals and objectives set by the schools. Angie Motshekga, the current Minister of Basic Education, concurred with the statements above when she propagated that the Grade 12 results are an important indicator of the academic achievement of a school (Motshekga, 2011: 2). Although many factors can contribute to such results, Jones, George and Hill (2000: 5) demonstrate that management and leadership definitely play a contributing role in the school's academic achievement.

In view of the above, the question could well be asked: **How do school managers at well performing township secondary schools, perceive their role in ensuring academic success at their schools?**

The researcher based the study on the following assumptions:

- ❖ While good results in the Grade 12 examinations are not the only indicator of academic success, it can be used as one such indicator.
- ❖ Although generic knowledge of management tasks exists, the specific context of township secondary schools needs to be acknowledged and explored.
- ❖ Knowledge about education and success in education is socially constructed and there are multiple interpretations of it. In order to gain insight into the practices of school managers at successful township secondary schools, one has to explore the meaning that they construct about it.

In view of the aforementioned research question, and in line with the assumptions that underlie this study, the following secondary questions are posed:

- ❖ How do sound management and leadership practices contribute to academic success in well performing township secondary schools?
- ❖ What are the challenges that school managers face regarding their roles in academic achievement at their schools?
- ❖ How can the data collected from school managers be juxtaposed against the background of the theoretical study?
- ❖ Which guidelines can be formulated to assist township school managers in ensuring academic success?

1.4 AIM OF RESEARCH

In an effort to answer the problem questions above, the aim of this research is **to explore the perspectives of township secondary school managers with regard to academic achievement in their schools.**

From this aim the following objectives will be pursued:

- ❖ To investigate how management and leadership practices contribute to academic success.
- ❖ To determine the challenges faced by the school managers with regard to their role in ensuring academic success at their schools.
- ❖ To compare and interpret data collected by means of focus group interviews against the background of the theoretical study.
- ❖ To formulate guidelines, that will equip school managers with the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure academic success in their schools.

The research methodology is elaborated in the paragraph below.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher approached this study from an interpretivist perspective to establish how the participants perceive academic achievement in their schools (Nieuwenhuis in Maree, 2007: 99). Creswell (2007: 20 & 21) explains that interpretivists seek to understand and interpret the complex views of individuals and the subjective meanings that they make of their experiences. This approach enabled the researcher to understand school managers' perspectives, such as planning, organising and controlling and to appreciate their situations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 153). The researcher was able to obtain rich data regarding their subjective experiences and on how they construct their social world, focusing on their roles in promoting academic

success in township secondary schools (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004: 33). The next paragraph is devoted to the research plan.

1.5.1 Research plan

A qualitative research paradigm was used in this study in order to explore the perspectives of school managers in township secondary schools in Bloemfontein. Furthermore, the researcher strove to synthesise guidelines for township school managers to manage and lead their schools towards academic success.

In an attempt to synthesise guidelines for township school managers, the researcher juxtaposed the theoretical perspective on school management and leadership, gained through the literature study, with insights gained through the focus group interview.

The following diagram provides an overview regarding the research plan:

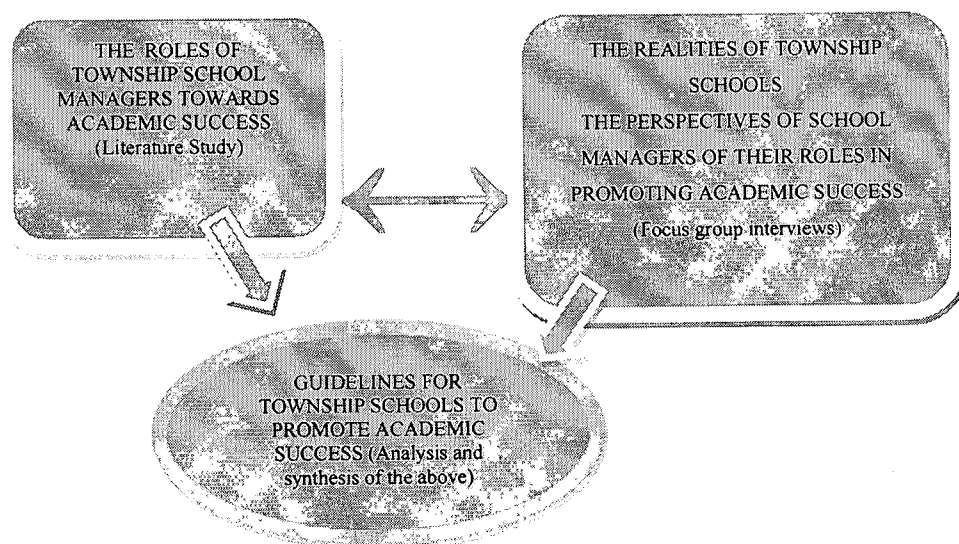


Figure 1: Research plan

1.5.2 Focus group interviews

Neuman (2003: 396) describes a focus group interview as a special research method in which people are informally interviewed in a group setting. Seale, Gobo, Gubrium, and Silverman (2004: 67) add that a focus group interview takes place in a context of several layers of argument, where people have conflicting beliefs and where social researchers present various interpretations of those beliefs. The researcher conducted focus group interviews in order to obtain comprehensive data regarding the perspectives of the participants. Selection of participants is deliberated in the paragraphs below.

1.5.3 Selection of participants

In this study, the researcher invited participants in a purposive manner because they have experienced the central and common phenomenon. The participants are principals and deputy principals of township secondary schools which obtained good results in the Grade 12 examinations during the period 2006 to 2010. Five practising principals and five practising deputy principals, males and females, were selected for this study. However, it was decided that, if during the analysis of the data, the researcher found that there were still some areas that were unexplored, the researcher would follow this up with a second round of interviews with more school managers. In the next paragraphs data collection is discussed.

1.5.4 Data collection

A focus group interview, as an instrument to collect data from a group of participants, was used. Kitzinger and Barbour (in Ferreira, 2007: 8) describe a focus group interview as a vigorous method for the collection of quality data. Leatham (2005: 35) indicates that participants tend to feel more comfortable when talking in a group than alone. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985: 201), during a focus group interview, the researcher will pose the questions in order to facilitate informative discussions. In support of this statement, Morgan (1997: 8) acknowledged that a focus group interview provides an opportunity to observe extensive discussions on the topic under investigation.

In this study focus group interview is used as instrument which facilitates extensive discussions on the topic, namely academic achievement in township secondary schools in Bloemfontein. A focus group interview ensures that the interaction among participants is informative and spontaneous. School managers were requested to identify a central venue which was accessible to all the participants. This ensured that there was maximum participation during the focus group interview.

Participants were encouraged to be free, frank and honest when responding to the interview questions. The discussions were tape-recorded, with the permission of the participants, in order to preserve information for analysis. A voice recorder was used to capture the discussions which occurred during the focus group interviews. These discussions were later transferred to a Compact disk (CD) by means of a computer. In the following paragraph data analysis is explored.

1.5.5 Data analysis

The researcher transcribed the participants' direct words during the interview (Groenewald, 2004: 48). Common themes shared by the participants were identified and implications that underlie the realities of meaning were captured. Nieuwenhuis (in Maree, 2007: 105) and Strauss and Corbin (1990:

205) identify two coding procedures, namely, open coding and axial coding which can be used during data analysis.

During the open coding method each participant was allocated an identifying pseudonym. After carefully listening and making notes from their responses codes were allocated to the themes that emerged. The researcher then categorised the themes according to their properties and incidents. In the application of the axial coding method, relationships between the themes were identified (Strauss & Corbin, 1990: 205).

1.5.6 Trustworthiness

For an investigation to be certified as trustworthy, it should have a high degree of validity, both internal and external (Maree, 2007: 151). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000: 135) denote internal validity as an accuracy of data. During internal validity, discussions took place in a natural setting i.e. at the school identified by the participants. The researcher requested the participants to participate in the discussions in English.

Obviously, after each question asked during the interview, the participants were requested to discuss the question and provide their own responses regarding the questions posed. The responses which they provided, served as a reflection of the perspectives of school managers with regard to academic success. In ensuring external validity, the researcher ensured that interview questions illustrated the real life situation of school managers. These questions were related to the participants' experiences, perspectives, situations and roles in their endeavours to promote academic success in their schools. Ethical considerations are discussed in the preceding paragraph.

1. 6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher explained the purpose and the voluntary nature of the research to the participants. He clearly elaborated the purpose and the voluntary nature of the research study and also sought verbal confirmation from the participants who would take part on a voluntary basis. A letter was written to the FSDoE requesting permission to conduct the research study which involved school managers.

To ensure privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, the researcher assured all the participants that their identities would be kept private and confidential. The names of their schools would also not be identified in the research study. Permission was also requested and obtained from the participants to audio-tape the focus group interview. In protecting the participants from harm, the researcher endeavoured to remain honest, respectful and sympathetic to all the participants. In the following paragraph the value of the research is elaborated.

1.7 VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

A few township secondary school managers have remarkably good performances by learners in their Grade 12 examinations. This study, therefore, intends to provide policy-makers, education authorities and school managers of township secondary schools with insight into the real experiences and perspectives of effective school managers in the Bloemfontein area. Furthermore, these stakeholders will be equipped with appropriate skills which will enable them to effectively implement management and leadership requirements. They will also be inspired and motivated to make a meaningful contribution towards the promotion of academic success by using efficient management tasks in the daily school activities. The next paragraph is devoted to the outlay of research.

1.8 OUTLAY OF RESEARCH

The outlay of the research will be as follows:

After this introductory Chapter 1, CHAPTER 2 consists of a review of the literature pertaining to the exploration of the realities that township schools face in their endeavours towards academic achievement.

CHAPTER 3 focuses on the role that school managers in township secondary schools play to promote academic achievement in their schools. Data towards this, gained through the focus group interviews, are analysed and interpreted.

The data collected by means of focus group interviews against the background of the theoretical study will be compared and interpreted in CHAPTER 4.

CHAPTER 5 consists of formulated guidelines, which will equip school managers with the necessary knowledge and skills for academic success in their schools. This chapter also reports on the limitations in the study, and makes recommendations for further research.

1.9 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 provided background information on factors that resulted from this research. It further established the aim of the research and elaborated on the research methods utilised to achieve the stated objectives. It then presented the demarcation of the field of study as well the outlay of the research.

The next chapter focuses on the literature study in which the concepts education management and leadership will be discussed. The management tasks for effective school management and leadership and the role of school

managers in ensuring the promotion of academic success in township secondary schools in Bloemfontein are also explored.

CHAPTER 2:- LITERATURE STUDY ON MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As noted in Chapter 1 some schools in the Bloemfontein area are characterised by effective school management practices, which promote a quality teaching and the learning environment and thus promote academic success. According to the South African Schools Act (SASA) (RSA, 1996(b): s.10), school managers and the School Management Teams (SMTs) are responsible for the effective management and provisioning of quality teaching and learning in the schools.

As a result, school managers must provide leadership and direction as far as school management and quality schooling are concerned. According to Percival and Tranter (2004: 2), schools and school leadership are about establishing a set of values within which young people can learn to become productive and mature members of the community and of society at large. Van der Westhuizen (2007: 305) lends weight to this statement in mentioning that school leadership and management involve assisting the educators to provide an effective teaching task and of learning by objective methods to determine who needs to receive individual assistance.

In this chapter the role of school managers in ensuring that effective management and leadership are exercised in order to promote academic success are brought to the fore. The management tasks which school managers have to utilise in schools for the enhancement of school management as well as the role school managers have to play in ensuring academic success are also discussed.

The emergence of the democratic processes in South Africa has resulted in the democratisation of the education system. This led to a completely different way in which schools are managed. Mosoge and Van der Westhuizen (1998: 73) posit that, as previously held, a school is no longer the state machinery through which the government would propagate its divide and rule agenda. They are presently using a concept of school-based management (SBM), which generally refers to a decentralised form of management in the education system. The SASA (RSA, 1996(b): s.7) encourages the promotion of parental involvement in the running of the schools. Through their participation in school governing bodies, the parents are provided with the responsibilities and powers of ensuring that the education of their children is enhanced.

It is therefore important to define the concept SBM. The paragraphs below provide a description of a SBM school.

Malan (in Townsend, 1997: 39) describes SBM as follows:

SBM can be viewed conceptually as a formal alteration of governance structures. It is a form of decentralisation that identifies the individual school as the primary unit of improvement and relies on the distribution of decision-making authority as the primary means through which improvement might be stimulated and sustained.

In a traditional bureaucratic system of government, authority and decision-making are vested in the hands of the officials at head office. Mosoge and Van der Westhuizen (1998: 74) explain that SBM represents a departure from this type of a system whereby the decision-making process is moved from the central office to the school. Under normal circumstances, the person to lead this kind of process at an institution must be someone who is competent and knowledgeable about the challenges dealt with in this institution.

This chapter focuses on the management and leadership of the SBM institutions under the tutelage of school managers. School managers are individual educators who must possess qualities and qualifications relevant to this type of organisational structure. School managers, whether at primary or secondary schools, are the most important persons to ensure the school's success. Successful schools must have strong leaders. School managers are without doubt the individuals who must provide this leadership (Sharp & Walter, 2003: 1). The definition and discussion of the concepts education management and leadership are elaborated in the next section.

2.2 DEFINITION AND DISCUSSION OF THE CONCEPTS EDUCATION LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

2.2.1 Education management

A number of writers worldwide have been involved in the process of developing a universally acceptable definition of the concept *management*. According to Tranter (2006: 187), management ceases to be a definition of status and becomes an activity. Therefore, management can be defined and associated with skills taught, learnt and developed. Coleman and Early (2005: 256) demonstrate that management relates to those activities that are undertaken to assist the organisation to achieve their goals and may include planning, organising, resourcing, controlling and leading. Management can also be defined as a decision-making process because a manager must be able to make rational decisions by choosing the correct action for different alternatives.

Management involves activities such as planning, organising, staffing, resourcing, monitoring and controlling, liaising and negotiating (Fidler, 2002: 32 & 33). The nuts and bolts of ensuring that the right people are at the right

place at the right time with the right resources and know what to do constitute the essence of management. Sterling and Davidoff (2000: 13) add that management involves conducting personnel meetings, co-ordinating the duty roster and administering textbooks by school managers as heads of the schools as well as delegating these tasks to other school members in the school.

Management is a discipline required to ensure that the manager does the things right at the school and ensures that the school functions well (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002: 36). The word manager implies anyone in a school, be it a school principal, deputy principal, an educator or a learner, who is trying to carry out a duty, which contributes to the educative aims of the school. Glatter (in Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 5) refers to management as the internal operations of an institution. This implies that management involves dealing with systems, structures and the culture of a school for the effective and smooth day-to-day operations.

Schreuder and Landey (2001: 6) assert that good school management is related to the ability to fit in with the prescribed policy without making mistakes. Presently, school managers are exposed more and more to a continuous change in almost every area of South African life. Thurlow *et al.* (2003: ix) postulate that the extent to which effective learning is achieved, becomes the criterion against which the quality of management is to be measured. School managers are essentially responsible for managing numerous activities that direct the route the school is taking (Paine, 1997: 11 & 12).

The core purpose of management which facilitates effective learning through effective teaching is presently globally acknowledged in the literature on education management. This trend is also emerging in South Africa. According to Thurlow *et al.* (2003: 34), the process of management is essentially concerned with the transformation of schools so that effective teaching and learning can ultimately take place.

In line with the definitions enlisted above and for the purpose of this study, education management can be explained as a process of co-ordination and co-operation of school activities such as finance, facilities, public relations, personnel, legislation, discipline, safety, instruction and governance with the purpose of ensuring that the school is managed effectively. The task of management at all levels in the education service is ultimately the creation and support of conditions under which educators and their learners are able to achieve effective teaching and learning.

The effective running of the school does not only depend on the understanding of educational management alone, but it also depends on the educational leadership in the school, and is explored in the next section.

2.2.2 Leadership in education

De Gaulle (in Theron & Bothma, 1990:12) defines a leader as follows:

Whatever orders the leader may give they must be endowed with brilliant dignity. The leader must aim high, show that he or she has vision and can act on a vast scale and in so doing establishes his or her authority over mankind who is splashing about in shallow water. The leader should be a realist, a doer but also a dreamer.

Langley and Jacobs (2006: 3) concur with De Gaulle by saying that any situation in which a person must make a decision which affects others, defines that person as a leader. Leadership is described as a process of influence leading to the achievement of a desired purpose which involves inspiring and supporting others towards achieving the vision of the school (Davies & West-Burnham, 2005: 7 & 8). Leadership involves activities such as strategic planning, vision building, liaison with the community and parents as well as developing personnel (Sterling & Davidoff, 2000: 13).

Marzano, Walters and McNulty (2005: 16) use the term servant leadership in their work about leadership literature believing that effective leadership emerges from the desire to help others. Bisschoff, Du Plessis and Smith (2004: 139) concur with these authors when they state that leadership is a way of serving others with one's own talents and potential. Leadership is not a function of the position a person holds, but it basically emerges from the individual's desire to improve the circumstances of any situation as a service to others.

Leadership is recognised by the presence of followers. If people are not willing and confidently following, then there is no leadership. Leadership provides meaning for those within an institution by defining and espousing the values of the organisation (Fidler, 2002: 32). In collaboration with the foregoing, Coleman and Early (2005: 7) point out that leadership is frequently seen as an aspect of management with real leaders often characterised as charismatic individuals with visionary flair and the ability to motivate and enthuse others. The fundamental characteristics of leadership are to bring people to work together effectively as a team, to inspire their loyalty towards the group and to make a meaningful contribution to the achievement of the team's objectives. Leadership is a process whereby the leader influences a group of people in such a manner that they will subsequently strive to achieve the objectives he or she presents them with.

Bush and Bell (2002: 73) indicate that leadership has interrelated elements, as mentioned below.

- ❖ Collaboration and participation: the ability to empower others, to collaborate and share power is a necessary part of contemporary leadership.
- ❖ Motivation: inspiring efforts and commitment among followers through motivation is a core leadership function.
- ❖ Planning: visioning and strategic planning are central leadership roles.
- ❖ Interpersonal communication: communication as a key leadership function is vital in enabling understanding and sharing of knowledge and information.

Schreuder and Landey (2001: 7) distinguish between two types of leadership. These are listed in the paragraphs below.

2.2.2.1 Transactional leadership

Schreuder and Landey (2001: 7) allege that transactional leadership is approached as a barter transaction. The leader provides services or products, which satisfy the needs of the followers and vice versa. Transactional leadership has more to do with domination than leadership. Leadership is viewed as a process in which the responsibilities of the educators are based on an exchange for some valued resources (Miller & Miller in Bush, 2007: 389). Interestingly, Marzano *et al.* (2005: 14) lend weight to this definition of transactional leadership, describing it as trading one thing for another (*quid pro quo*). Transactional leadership involves the discharge of basic managerial functions, which are necessary for the effective functioning organisation (Mosoge & Van der Westhuizen, 1998: 80).

Smith and Piele (1996: 59) maintain that the most obvious advantage of transactional leadership is its ability to motivate and inspire followers. This ability may be especially important in schools, because educators are orientated to intrinsic rewards. An exchange process is vital. Though school managers possess authority as the leaders of the schools, they however, require the cooperation of the educators in order to secure effective management of the schools. The engagement of the personnel therefore, does not go beyond the immediate gains realised from transactional leadership (Bisschoff *et al.*, 2004: 398 & 399). Gunter (2001: 69) views transactional leadership as an engagement between leaders and followers.

Summing up, transactional leadership can be described as leadership redefined as a skill in bargaining and exchange (O'Brien, Murphy & Draper, 2003: 20). Transactional leadership is focused on providing leadership to the followers

and the followers are expected to perform in such a manner which is satisfactory to the leader. It is like instructing the followers or subordinates to carry out certain instructions and be promised some form of a reward in return. Another type of leadership is transformational leadership and is discussed below.

2.2.2.2 Transformational leadership

The second type of leadership is the one in which leadership is approached within a framework of shared core values and personal development. O'Brien *et al.* (2003: 20) discover that transformational leadership involves getting behind the action. The central focus of transformational leadership is based on the commitment and capacities of the members of an organisation. Higher levels of personal commitment to organisational goals and the greater capacities for accomplishment of these goals are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity (Bush, 2007: 396).

In congruence with the above authors, Starratt (1991: 187) endorses transformational leadership as actions in building a unified common interest in which motivation is underpinned by attempts to elevate members' self centred attitudes, values and beliefs. According to Harris *et al.* (2003: 10), effective leaders exercise an indirect but powerful influence on the effectiveness of the school and on the achievement of learners. A transformational leader is someone who builds a school's vision and mission and provides intellectual stimulation to his or her colleagues. The leader provides individualised support, symbolises professional practice and values, demonstrates high performance expectations and creates structures, which promote participation in the school decisions (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999: 132).

Mosoge and Van der Weshuizen (1998: 79) demonstrate that moral leadership provides an anchor for transformational leadership. Marzano *et al.* (2005: 14) assert that transformational leadership is focused more on change. Leadership is an instrument that weighs the leaders' success through learners' success. Leadership is the mobilisation of people to adapt to the school's practice and beliefs so that every learner's learning and growth are optimised. Leadership is not about how an educator makes learners learn, but about how the leader can help cultivate relationships among talented and well-intentioned educators and parents so that it is ensured that every learner learns (Donaldson, 2006: 3).

Schreuder and Landey (2001: 5) argue that transformational leadership means having the ability and the skill to influence people to carry out certain tasks. Effective leadership results in members of a team working together harmoniously and with a feeling of solidarity. Education leadership ensures that the educational tasks of the school, as well as the needs of the stakeholders in the school and the community, are dealt with in the day-to-day activities of the school. Transformational leadership provides a normative approach to school leadership. It focuses primarily on the process through

which leaders seek to influence the outcomes rather than the nature and direction of those outcomes (Bush, 2007: 396).

Transformational leadership in education identifies the following four necessary skills (the so-called four I's):

- ❖ Individual consideration: school managers must attend to the needs and provide personal attention to individual personnel members, particularly those who seem left out.
- ❖ Intellectual stimulation: effective school managers must help personnel members to think of old problems in new ways.
- ❖ Inspirational motivation: through a powerful and dynamic presence, effective school managers must communicate high expectations for educators and learners alike.
- ❖ Idealised influence: through personal accomplishments and demonstrated character, effective school managers must provide a model for the behaviour of educators (Gunter, 2001: 69 & 70; Marzano *et al.*, 2005: 15).

Matezynski and Benz (in Mosoge & Van der Westhuizen, 1998: 79) suggest the use of values and value judgement in the selection, extension and day-to-day practices of educational leaders. As a result, a moral leader is consistently cognisant of the central purpose of schooling. Effective school managers exercise both professional and political leadership and are able to draw on their experiences to respond to new situations. Townsend (1997: 74) resonates that there is a need to stress the role of school managers as the facilitators of interaction among a range of school partners as the bridge or as the conduit in a devolved structure.

Schreuder and Landey (2001: 4) elucidate that the importance of education leadership lies in the following matters:

- ❖ There is a direct relationship between effective education leadership, successful functioning of a school and effective learning.
- ❖ The South African community is in a process of transformation. This has an effect on the education and calls for education leaders to take the initiative and manage change.
- ❖ One aspect of transformation in education is an attempt to bring about greater participation for the entire school community by applying a SBM approach.

- ❖ The participative approach to school management means that education leaders are exposed and often have to come up with quick answers.

Transformational leadership provides motivation to the followers. These leaders boost the morale of the subordinates, create team building and develop the vision and mission of the organisation. Transformational leaders provide the direction the organisation has to take and believe in the abilities and potential of the followers and ensure that these potentials are nurtured and unleashed. They are not a dominant figure in the organisation, but they are part of the team which is involved in the realisation of the purposeful and common objectives of the organisation.

The connection between education leadership and management is given attention in the next section.

2.2.3 Connection between education leadership and management

School managers are expected to provide solutions to problems they encounter in executing their daily tasks. Some of these challenges are related to providing effective school management and leadership in order to promote quality schooling. Better understanding and knowledge of education management and leadership therefore, becomes important for school managers.

Morrison (1998: 205) explains that educational management and leadership are both similar and different. Educational management and leadership are complimentary terms that must both be present in a school to ensure the creation of an environment in which meaningful teaching and learning can take place (Schreuder & Landey, 2001: 16 & 17).

According to Law and Glover (2000: 3), the distinction between management and leadership is not clearly observable. High profile educational leaders are increasingly pressurised to use both human and material resources creatively. These leaders are equally pressurised to integrate the management tasks of leading, managing, organising, controlling and even administering policy making functions in order to ensure that the goals and objectives of the organisation are realised.

Mosoge and Van der Westhuizen (1998: 78) emphasise that to manage the school effectively, school managers need to be both managers and leaders. Merely executing the tasks of planning and organising does not transform a manager to be a leader. The school-based management assumes that all leaders in the school will take on new roles. This, however, does not mean that school managers are no longer accountable for effective management or that the stakeholders may now make their own decisions in a disorganised

way. A school manager's role still remains that of providing effective and efficient management and leadership (Schreuder & Landey, 2001: 23).

The challenge is to develop a system in which all stakeholders receive the opportunity to become involved in the decision-making process and implementing those decisions. Leadership and management act like the higher intelligence of the different elements of a school. They are like the heart and mind of the whole organisation. Leadership and management hold the big picture; they maintain an overview of the whole organisation (Sterling & Davidoff, 2000: 54).

Academics often distinguish between leadership and management. Leadership is creating a vision, dealing with those outside the organisation, such as parents, business sectors and employing departments as well as inspiring others, whilst management is executing the vision, dealing with employees and maintaining standards (Hoerr, 2005: 7 & 8). Morrison (1998: 205) concurs with Hoerr in describing leadership as concerned with vision, strategy, creating direction and transformation of the organisation, whereas managing is concerned with effective implementation of the vision and ways of ensuring that the vision is realised.

Storey (2004: 13) explains that leaders think about goals and are active rather than reactive. They shape ideas rather than responding to them. Conversely, managers aim at shifting the balances of power towards acceptable solutions. Managers act to limit the choices, whilst leaders develop fresh approaches. It is clear that leadership and management cannot be completely separated, but can jointly be used to achieve the aims and the objectives of the schools.

Harris and Day (2003: 167) believe that the realisation of the school's vision, mission, goals and good utilisation of the physical and human resources depend on the effective intertwined use of education management and leadership. Leadership is essentially the process of building and maintaining a sense of vision, culture and interpersonal relationships, whereas management is the co-ordination, support and monitoring of organisational activities. To enact both roles successfully, it requires a careful balancing act on the part of school managers.

Law and Glover (2000: 1) write that leadership is about vision, mission, and strategic direction, while management involves developing and implementing policies to achieve these ends. Leadership has to do with the way in which a vision is reached and the way in which stakeholders are influenced to involve themselves in helping the vision to be realised. In contrast, management relates to the actions taken to ensure the smooth and organised running of the school, which will in turn help in attaining this vision (Schreuder & Landey, 2001: 18). Cuban (1988: 65) states that leadership is linked to change, while management is viewed as maintenance of the changed activities.

In reality, management and leadership work manifest itself in the actions of an educator in a leadership position. The educator in a leadership position cannot be an effective leader if he or she is an incompetent manager. It is impossible for a leader to guide the personnel team towards realising a long term vision if the day-to-day management functions are not there to give structure and support. Similarly, the managerial work of someone who co-ordinates the day-to-day school functioning is undermined if there is no holistic view of the school's long term development (Sterling & Davidoff, 2000: 13).

Law and Glover (2000: 13) insist that leadership is frequently observed as an aspect of management, with real leaders often characterised as charismatic individuals with visionary flair and ability to motivate others, even if they lack managerial or administrative skills to plan and organise effectively or control resources. All managers are by definition leaders in that they can only do what they have to do with the support of their team. In support of the statement above, Clarke (2007: 1) posits that strong leadership and good management are both essential for the success of a school and a good school manager is skilled at both leadership and management. School managers also understand that circumstances determine whether a given situation requires more leadership or better management.

On the one hand, leadership is essentially about moving forward and having a sense of direction. It is about ensuring that the school does not get stuck in a rut or becomes stale and reactive. Leadership is associated with movement, direction and purpose. On the other hand, management is about holding the school, establishing certainty, confidence and security for the organisation and allowing rest and reflection. It ensures that things are operating smoothly and that structures are in place to support forward movement and that the school is operating efficiently. Clearly, leadership and management are about balance and equilibrium. They are about holding the centre, having the picture of the whole, attending to the parts, moving forward when it is time to move forward. Finally, leadership and management are about staying put when it is time to reflect, understand and consolidate (Davidoff & Sue, 2002: 168 & 169).

In summary, it is clear that there is an essential connection between education leadership and education management. School managers have to take this connection into account if they intend to manage schools effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, school managers have to realise that the success of their schools depends on both effective leadership and competent management.

The vital task of school managers is to guarantee quality teaching and learning in their schools, which will consequently result in the achievement of academic success. By simultaneously exercising both their leadership competency as well as their management capability, school managers will be able to fulfil this profoundly important task.

The tables below represent the connection between education leadership and education management (Shreuder & Landey, 2001: 17).

Table 2.1: Connection between education leadership and management

Education leadership	Education management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Developing a clear vision of what the education leader wishes to achieve along with the group. ◆ Ability to communicate the vision to the people concerned. ◆ Composing a team which will be able to achieve the vision. ◆ Identifying and applying suitable management values. ◆ Developing of a strategy to realise the vision. ◆ Empowering all stakeholders for participation. ◆ Identifying and attaining successful objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Planning ◆ Organising ◆ Guidance ◆ Control of the following management areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Education programme (Curriculum) -Human resources -Financial resources -Physical resources -Information resources -Matters relating to learners - School community.

The two columns reflect the relationship between education leadership and management. In education leadership school managers are expected to develop a clear vision and be able to communicate this vision to all the stakeholders. They must also establish teams which will play a role in achieving the school's goals. Furthermore, school managers must identify applicable management systems that they can use and develop the strategies to realise this vision. They must also empower the stakeholders so that they can assist in the school attaining its objectives.

In terms of education management, school managers must effectively utilise management tasks in areas such as the curriculum, human resources, financial resources, physical resources, information resources, issues related to learners and the school community.

The table below represents the significant differences between leading and managing (West-Burnham in O'Brien *et al.*, 2003: 32).

Table 2.2: Differences between leading and managing

Leading is associated with	Managing is associated with
Vision	Implementation
Strategic issues	Operational issues
Transformation	Transaction
Ends	Means
People	Systems
Doing the right thing	Doing things right

Differences associated with leading and managing are presented in the tables above. These differences do not hinder the successful attainment of the school's objectives of ensuring academic achievement. These differences serve as effective means of arriving at the predetermined objectives of the school.

School managers must be conversant with both management and leadership concepts. Similarly, the school's management effectiveness and efficiency will be enhanced if school managers can provide effective management and leadership in their daily school tasks which will ultimately result in the achievement of academic success.

2.2.4 Summary

Management and leadership are two notions that can never be divorced from one another as discussed above. Leadership and management must be given equal prominence if schools are to function effectively and achieve their objectives (Bush, 2007: 392). Effective school managers are expected to consciously utilise both management and leadership as the approaches that will enhance academic success. Morrison (1998: 206) indicates that the roles of the leader include the roles of the manager and vice versa and this is also applicable to school managers.

The SASA (RSA, 1996(b): s.7) encourages schools to be self-managing and places the school governance under the control of the school governing body (SGB). On the other hand, the professional management of the school becomes the responsibility of school managers. It therefore becomes necessary for school managers to have a thorough understanding of the management tasks which they can use to provide effective management thereby promoting academic success in their schools. In the next sections the management tasks are discussed.

2.3. MANAGEMENT TASKS

According to Marx (in Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 45); Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 75); Du Toit, Erasmus and Strydom (2007: 130 & 131) and Cronje, Du Toit, Marais and Motlatla (2003: 123), school managers have to acquaint themselves with the four basic management tasks, namely planning, organising, leading and controlling with regard to the people, outcomes and resources available at a specific school in order to fulfil the academic needs of the school.

Furthermore, Du Toit *et al.* (2007: 129) propose that it would be insensible to perform these management tasks in any other sequence, as school managers cannot decide to do something unless they know what should be done. They cannot order a task to be done until they have decided how it should be done, and they cannot check results before the instructions have been given. Planning as the first management task is elaborated in the paragraphs below.

2.3.1 Planning

All managerial activities start with planning, which entails who is to do what and by when (Nhlapo, 2009: 6). Planning is the management function that determines the organisation's mission and goals. It identifies ways of reaching the goals and finding the resources needed for the task. It entails determining the future position of the organisation and the strategies required to reach that position (Smit & Cronje, 2002: 10). Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 3) define planning as the determination of what you want and how to attain it. Davidoff and Sue (2002: 79 & 80) view planning as a rational process of goal-setting and planning that is pursued in most organisations. It is primarily a move from a broad view to very specific goals the organisation is attempting to accomplish.

Van der Westhuizen (1991: 138) describes planning as an intellectual activity which involves thought processes by means of which future activities are pre-enacted to achieve certain objectives, while according to Hoyle and Wallace (2005: 148), planning involves the development of medium and long term plans to operationalise the school's shared vision and increasing the element of organisational certainty about the direction for internal improvement efforts. Planning is a fundamental element of management that determines what the organisation proposes to accomplish and how it intends to realise its goals. It also involves those management activities that determine the mission and the goals of the organisation, the ways in which these have to be accomplished and the deployment of necessary resources to realise these goals (Cronje *et al.*, 2003: 140).

Everard, Morris and Wilson (2004: 276) describe planning as a process which clarifies the organisational goals and strategies to achieve those organisational goals. Planning determines the mission and goals of the organisation,

including the ways in which the goals are to be reached in the long term and the resources needed for the task.

The individuals who carry the primary responsibility of planning at the schools are school managers, who must also ensure that there is effective planning which can result in effective school management and the promotion of academic achievement. For the purpose of this study, planning is seen as an intellectual activity which is exercised by school managers in their endeavours to establish effective and efficient school management in order to achieve academic success.

From the above mentioned definitions of planning, the following deductions can be made:

- ❖ Planning is a cognitive as well as an operational process.
- ❖ Planning is future orientated.
- ❖ Planning forms the basis of all the management functions.
- ❖ Planning is an intellectual process in which decision-making plays a central role.
- ❖ Planning is the physical compilation of the action plan.
- ❖ Goals and objectives are defined and formulated during the planning process.

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 48) identify the following subtasks of planning as a management task:

- ❖ Aims and outcomes.
- ❖ Objectives.
- ❖ Values and mission.
- ❖ Policy-making.
- ❖ Decision-making.
- ❖ Problem solving.

These subtasks are briefly discussed in the paragraphs below.

2.3.1.1 Aims and outcomes

Aims are based on the identified needs, which are broad statements of intent. They indicate the intention of school managers with regard to the school. They also serve as an action plan which provides a specific course of action to ensure that things are done to achieve the aims and outcomes. Outcomes are short term results which are derived from the aims (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003: 80 & 81). Aims and outcomes provide direction for everyone in the organisation. They can assist everyone to understand where the organisation is going (Cronje *et al.*, 2003: 144).

2.3.1.2 Objectives

The objectives should be formulated with reference to the mission. There must be long term and short term management objectives. In formulating the objectives the following questions may be asked: What should we achieve? Have we clearly described that which we want to achieve? (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 144).

2.3.1.3 Values and mission

According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 82), a mission statement indicates what the SMT, SGB and the personnel want in order to achieve the long term goals and eventually promote academic achievement. The mission statement should include the values and the core beliefs of the school.

2.3.1.4 Policy-making

Policy is that source by means of which goals are interpreted and certain guidelines are laid down to serve as the basis for decision-making. This process also serves as general statements or guidelines for decision-making to guide those who are involved in the implementation of planning (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 150).

2.3.1.5 Decision-making

Decision-making involves a choice between two or more alternatives. It is a thought process directed at the achievement of the school's aims (Van Deventer and Kruger, 2003: 96).

2.3.1.6 Problem solving

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 96) postulate problem solving as a process of making and carrying out a decision that will overcome an obstacle that stands in the way of achieving an outcome. The importance of planning is explained in the paragraphs below.

2.3.1.7 Importance of planning

Du Toit *et al.* (2007: 150) and Cronje, *et al.* (2003: 141 & 142) highlight the following important aspects with regard of planning:

- ❖ **Planning gives direction:** It gives direction to the organisation in the form of goals, on the one hand, in the form of plans indicating how to set about achieving them, on the other.
- ❖ **Planning promotes coordination between various departments and the people in the organisation:** Once plans have being clearly formulated and developed, tasks and resources can be allocated so that everybody involved is able to contribute effectively to the realisation of goals.
- ❖ **Planning compels managers to look to the future:** It eliminates crisis management by obliging future oriented management to anticipate threats in the environment, and to take steps in time to avert them.
- ❖ **Planning ensures that management keeps abreast of the modern technology:** The influence of modern technology on contemporary organisations makes heavy demands on planning.
- ❖ **Planning promotes stability:** Planning encourages proactive management, that is, management plays an active part in the future of the organisation.

The second managerial task is organising and is discussed hereunder.

2.3.2 Organising

According to Nhlapo (2009: 10), organising is a managerial task that flows from the planning process. Smit and Cronje (2002: 191) denote organising as the process of creating a structure for the organisation that will enable its people to work effectively towards its vision, mission and goals. Organising is the management task which is performed to initiate planning and to establish connections with the various parts so that goals may be realised and attained effectively (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 162). Du Toit *et al.* (2007: 130) resonate that organising includes developing a framework or organisational structure to indicate how people, equipment and materials should be employed to reach the predetermined goals.

Deventer and Kruger (2003: 75) view organising as the establishment of an organisational structure, delegating and co-ordinating. Organising creates an organisational structure which serves as a framework to indicate each person's place and task within an organisation (Kruger & Van Schalkwyk, 1993: 9).

Organising means that management has to develop mechanisms in order to implement the strategy or plan. Arrangements have to be made to determine what activities will have to be made, what resources will be employed, and who will perform the various activities. This process involves the distribution of tasks among the employees, the allocation of resources to individuals and departments and giving the necessary authority to certain people to ensure that the tasks are carried out (Cronje *et al.*, 2003: 158).

In line with the definitions above, organising can be defined as a systematic process whereby a structure is created to make sure that there is cooperation in a school as an organisation, by dividing tasks and duties among various personnel to ensure that the goals and objectives are realised and furthermore to ensure that academic success is promoted. Organising at the school may be referred to the subdivision of various tasks, responsibilities and authority and allocating them to specific educators to ensure the promotion of quality teaching and learning.

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 75) identify the following subtasks of organising as a management task:

- ❖ Organisational structure.
- ❖ Conflict management.
- ❖ Corrective action.
- ❖ Supervision.
- ❖ Disciplinary measures.

The next section focuses on the importance of organising.

2.3.2.1 Importance of organising

School managers have to be aware of the following important aspects of organising which will assist them in achieving academic success in their schools (Du Toit *et al.*, 2007: 167; Cronje *et al.*, 2003: 159).

- ❖ **Organising entails a detailed analysis of work to be done and resources to be used to accomplish the aims of the organisation:** It is through organising that tasks and resources, and methods or procedures can be systematised.
- ❖ **Organising divides the total workload into activities that can comfortably be performed by an individual or a group:** Tasks are allocated according to the abilities or qualifications of individuals, thus

ensuring that nobody in the school has either too much or too little to do.

- ❖ **Organising promotes the productive deployment and utilisation of resources:** Related activities and tasks of individuals are grouped together rationally in specialised departments.
- ❖ **The development of an organisational structure results in a mechanism that co-ordinates the activities of the whole school into complete, uniform and harmonious units.**

Fundamentals of organising play a vital role in the achievement of academic success. These fundamentals are elaborated in the paragraph below.

2.3.2.2. Fundamentals of organising

According to Du Toit *et al.* (2007: 169), building an organisational structure revolves around the building blocks or the fundamentals of organising, which the school managers have to ensure. These are explored hereunder:

- ❖ Designing jobs for employees.
- ❖ Grouping employees into teams or departments based on commonalities.
- ❖ Assigning authority.
- ❖ Establishing command structure.
- ❖ Establishing coordinating mechanisms.

After people have being organised into units of job specialisations the school managers must lead and direct people as explained in the next section.

2.3.3 Leading

Leadership is an art. It is a way of being in the world which is flowing and caring, harmonising and warming, opening and challenging. Good leadership inspires and touches, holds and cherishes, is humble and certain, pushes and directs, waits and listens, notices and moves, contains, breaks through, senses the moment and rests (Davidoff & Sue, 2002: 166). This implies that school managers must display and possess effective leadership qualities in order to productively lead the schools. Cronje *et al.* (2003: 179) define leading as an element of management that sets activities in motion and keep the activities moving until the goals have been accomplished. It deals with relationships between leaders and followers and the behaviour of followers. It also gives direction to the organisation's activities so that resources are deployed as

effectively as possible. Coleman and Early (2005: 255) maintain that leading is process of influencing the activities of a group in an effort towards its goals.

Smit and Cronje (2002: 276 & 277) discern leading as a complex phenomenon involving the leader, the followers and the organisation. It is a management function that that activates people to do things willingly. This means that leaders must know how to motivate their followers. Van der Westhuizen (1991: 41) describes leading as an activity or a task which influences people in such a way that they will willingly and enthusiastically perform and strive towards achieving the goals of the organisation. In support of these writers, Du Toit, *et al.* (2007: 10) concluded that leading entails directing the human resources of the organisation and motivating them. Leaders align the actions of the subordinates with predetermined goals and plans.

Leading as a management task should ensure that planning and organising which have been done are effectively implemented to guarantee that the school objectives are attained. It is therefore imperative that school managers clearly understand what is expected of them (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 189).

To be effective leaders, school managers must be in possession of the techniques and skills necessary for the realisation of the needs required for academic success in their schools. School managers have to use leadership styles which will ensure that they provide academic achievement in their schools. In the next paragraph the components of leadership, which school managers should understand, are discussed.

2.3.3.1 Components of leadership

Cronje *et al.* (2003: 177) and Du Toit *et al.* (2007: 187) highlight the following components of leadership which school managers should utilise in their pursuance of academic achievement:

- ❖ **Authority:** This refers to the right the leaders have to give commands to, and demand action from subordinates.
- ❖ **Power:** It denotes the ability of a leader to influence the behaviour of others without necessarily using authority.
- ❖ **Influence:** It deals with the ability to use authority and power to move subordinates to action.
- ❖ **Delegation:** It occurs when a leader transfers authority to subordinates.
- ❖ **Responsibility:** It rests on the leaders carrying out a given task and in accordance with instructions.

- ❖ **Accountability:** It is the evaluation of how well individuals meet their responsibilities. School managers are accountable for all that happens in their sections or departments.

School managers have many leadership styles to choose from. The next section is devoted to some of those leadership styles.

2.3.3.2 Leadership styles

According to Van der Westhuizen (1991: 190), Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 143 & 145) and Fox (2006: 70), school managers can use any of the following leadership styles:

2.3.3.2.1 Laissez-faire or free rein leadership style

This leadership style is demonstrated by the following characteristics:

- ❖ The person is uninvolved, passive and makes no effort to make his or her presence felt.
- ❖ He or she hesitates to make decisions, extending decision-making to others.
- ❖ He or she shows little or no interest in planning, organising, leading or controlling.
- ❖ Little attention is paid to policy-making, which results in poor discipline.
- ❖ Tasks, discipline and authority are delegated without the leaders accepting any responsibility.
- ❖ This style is predominantly people orientated with the result that performance in their schools is very poor.
- ❖ There is little or no control by the manager.
- ❖ Communication is horizontal and not vertical.
- ❖ School managers delegate indiscriminately without applying their mind.

The disadvantages of this kind of leadership style for school managers are listed below:

- ❖ The school's performance is generally poor.

- ❖ Clear aims and outcomes are not set.
- ❖ There is general frustration, aimlessness, and indecision.
- ❖ Educators work haphazardly and as a result become demotivated and experience little job satisfaction.

The only advantage is that a situation is created in which the individuals have to make their own decisions which could stimulate individual development. The next section discusses the autocratic leadership style.

2.3.3.2 Autocratic leadership style

According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 14), Van der Westhuizen (1991: 190) and Fox (2006: 70), the autocratic leadership style is characterised by the following features:

- ❖ There is little teamwork as the leader wants to have his or her own way and determines the policy alone.
- ❖ The leader makes all the decisions without obtaining the opinions of others.
- ❖ All the authority for planning, organising, leading and controlling is vested in the leader.
- ❖ There is only one-way communication which takes place between the leader and the subordinates, which is top-down.
- ❖ The leader operates as the ruler as well as the commander.
- ❖ This kind of a leader does not permit participative decision-making.
- ❖ Policy is rigidly applied and there is a strong disciplinary character.
- ❖ Good human relations are of less importance.
- ❖ There is too much focus on task accomplishment.
- ❖ A predominantly task oriented management style is followed.

The disadvantages of this kind of leadership style for the school managers are indicated below.

- ❖ Personnel and learners are motivated by fear.
- ❖ A tense atmosphere with little job satisfaction prevails.

- ❖ Dissatisfaction with the school management is common.
- ❖ Human relations at the school are not good.
- ❖ There is little or no personal development.
- ❖ Personnel turnover is unusually high.

The advantage of this leadership style is based on the fact that performance is usually good. This characterises an educational manager whose leadership in a school is successful, but is ineffective in motivating the subordinates and creating harmonious and co-operative human relationships as well as job satisfaction. The democratic leadership style is elaborated in the paragraph hereunder.

2.3.3.2.3 Democratic leadership style

The important characteristics of this leadership style are highlighted in the paragraphs below, (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003: 144 & 145; Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 190; Fox, 2006: 70):

- ❖ This leadership style involves the personnel, learners and parents through mutual consultation in decision-making processes.
- ❖ Decisions are made by means of voluntary and spontaneous communication and the leader plays an important role in this process.
- ❖ There is an emphasis of teamwork in the organisation.
- ❖ There is decentralisation of planning, organising, leading and controlling.
- ❖ This leadership style offers opportunities for original and creative contributions by personnel members.
- ❖ There is emphasis on policy matters rather than disciplinary action.
- ❖ There is an existence of sound and good human relations among personnel members.
- ❖ Communication is two-way.
- ❖ There is effective delegation of responsibilities and concomitant authority.
- ❖ A healthy balance between people oriented and a task oriented management style is observable.

- ❖ Control with a view to corrective behaviour and development is applied.

The democratic leadership style has the following benefits for school managers:

- ❖ Personnel, parents and learners are motivated to work hard in order to achieve the school's aims and objectives.
- ❖ Personnel, to a great extent, experience job satisfaction.
- ❖ There is a simultaneous two-way movement of information and ideas.
- ❖ Human relations are excellent.
- ❖ An atmosphere in which personnel and learners can develop to their utmost potentiality is created.
- ❖ Personnel turnover is low.

When quick decisions have to be taken, a great deal of time can be lost as a result of a huge number of people who have to be consulted, for example, setting dates in the school's annual plan which can lead to long discussions because there are personnel members who do not agree with a particular date. This can have negative consequences for school managers who prefer this kind of a leadership style. The next leadership style, which is discussed in the paragraphs below, is the bureaucratic or situational leadership style.

2.3.3.2.4 Bureaucratic or situational leadership style

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 145) and Van der Westhuizen (1991: 191) define a bureaucratic or situational leadership style as a combination of the democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles. A leader who can integrate, mix, balance and adapt the elements of his or her style of leadership in harmony with the situation, the personnel and his or her own humanity, will determine his or her success as the leader of a school. According to Werner (2007: 293), this style of leadership assumes that each situation calls for unique behaviour on the part of school managers. This style also assumes that effective leadership hinges on a fit between the leader, followers and situations.

The same authors highlight the following features of bureaucratic or situational leadership:

- ❖ This leadership style is effective and specialised.

- ❖ This leadership style is predictable because there are written rules and regulations.
- ❖ It is impersonal because the letter of the law is the order of the day and the people involved are not taken into account.
- ❖ Bureaucratic leadership style is quick because rules are uniform and only need to be applied to problem cases.

The disadvantage of the bureaucratic or situational leadership style is basically that educators are considered as employees, who operate in a type of head-subordinate relationship in which authority comes from the top and personnel merely has to obey. The subtasks of leading, as a management task, are explained below.

2.3.3.3 Subtasks of leading as a management task

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 156) introduce the following subtasks of leading as a management task:

- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Motivation
- ❖ Conflict management

These subtasks are discussed in the paragraphs below.

2.3.3.3.1 Communication

According to Cunningham (in Nhlapo, 2009: 13), no organisation can operate effectively without communication, whilst Law and Glover (2000: 80) contend that communication is essential for effective management. Communication is the message conveyed by a sender to a recipient, either verbally or non-verbally, with regard to the activities, management tasks and relationships among personnel, staff, parents, learners and the school.

This is the initial method by which school managers can influence the personnel, and individuals and convince them to do their best for the school (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003: 156). Clearly, a considerable proportion of school managers' time is devoted to communication, for without it, management process cannot be exercised (Cronje *et al.*, 2003: 189). Good communication is conducive to good relations between school managers and their subordinates, groups, teams and ultimately the organisation and its environment (Do Toit *et al.*, 2007: 198).

2.3.3.3.2 Motivation

Marx (in Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 296) views motivation as the inclusion of all the efforts of a leader to incite his or her colleagues to voluntarily perform to the best of their abilities. Motivation is a spark which leads to action and determines the direction and the success of human activity. Motivation is the inner desire to satisfy an unsatisfied need. It is an intrinsic process and school managers therefore cannot motivate their employees. However, they can create a working environment where their employees will be motivated to achieve the organisational goals (Du Toit *et al.*, 2007: 198).

Bagram (in Nhlapo, 2009: 14) identifies motivation as a force that arouses, directs and sustains the actions of the people. Motivation can be used to influence the behaviour and performance of subordinates (Cronje *et al.*, 2003: 184).

2.3.3.3.3 Conflict management

Conflict management consists of those activities which are involved in resolving conflict that is dysfunctional. It also applies to techniques that are utilised when functional conflict which stimulates creativity and innovation are implemented (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003: 33). In the next section attention is focused on control as a management task.

2.3.4 Controlling

Smit and Cronje (2002: 390) define controlling as the process whereby management ensures that the actual activities fit in with the predetermined goals and planned activities. Control is the final step in the management process and is a vital link in the management process. Nhlapo (2009: 19) describes control as the work done by school managers to assess and regulate work that is in progress or completed. Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (1993: 10) denote control as the observation and measurement of performance.

Control as a management task ensures that all the efforts school managers put into planning, organising and leading have been worthwhile and valuable (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003: 127). In lending weight to these statements, Du Toit *et al.* (2007: 257) and Cronje *et al.* (2003: 262) illustrate control as the narrowing of the gap between what was planned and the actual performance of the management and ensuring that all the activities are carried out as they should be. Furthermore, Van der Westhuizen (1991: 217) regards the purpose of control as the realisation of planning, evaluation of planning and the implementation of the necessary adjustments.

From the definitions above, it is profoundly important to note that control, as a management task, plays a significant role in the realisation of the school's goals and objectives which will guarantee the achievement of academic

success. Control provides assistance to school managers in checking whether the activities performed during the planning, organising and leading stages are effectively accomplished and if not, to provide remediation. The process of control, which school managers have to effectively utilise to achieve academic success, is deliberated in the section hereunder.

2.3.4.1 Process of control

According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 128 & 130), Cronje *et al.* (2003: 264 & 266) and Du Toit *et al.* (2007: 277 & 279), control involves four processes, namely:

- ❖ Establishing standards and methods for ensuring performance.
- ❖ Measuring performance.
- ❖ Evaluating performance.
- ❖ Taking corrective action

These processes of control will be discussed in the paragraphs below:

2.3.4.1.1 Establishing standards and methods for ensuring performance

School managers must primarily establish standards and methods for measuring performance at strategic points. The control system should be a mirror image of planning, as the plans indicate the goals and the setting of standards or norms necessary for control (Cronje *et al.*, 2003: 294; Du Toit *et al.*, 2007: 277). The type of standards which school managers can consider may include the following:

- ❖ How efficient has the work of teaching and learning been done?
- ❖ Are the clients, for example, learners, parents and society, satisfied?
- ❖ How much time is required to finish the curriculum?
- ❖ What are the financial inputs?

2.3.4.1.2 Measuring performance

A continuous collection of information and reports on actual performance i.e. the practical measurement of the performance have to be carried out. For control to be effective, reports have to be reliable and timeously done in order to discover deviations as early as possible. Furthermore, as in the case of performance standards, it is also imperative for the activities to be quantifiable before any valid comparison can be made (Du Toit *et al.*, 2007: 278).

2.3.4.1.3 Evaluating performance

According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 129), this step involves evaluating disparities between actual performance and the standards set. School managers must establish why the standard has only been matched and not exceeded or why the performance has been much better than the standard which has been set. School managers must also establish the causes of disparities between actual performance and the standards set. In support of the foregoing, Cronje *et al.* (2003: 279) indicate that it is necessary for school managers to ensure that the disparities are genuine and that both performance standards and actual performance have been objectively measured.

2.3.4.1.4 Taking corrective action

School managers must ensure that corrective action is taken to achieve the performance standards or to improve on them and to ascertain that deviations do not recur. If the actual performance does not match the set standards, school managers can make use of the following activities in order to provide corrective action (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003: 130; Cronje *et al.*, 2003: 279):

- ❖ Improving the actual performance in order to reach the standards set.
- ❖ Revising strategies to ensure that the standards set are realised.
- ❖ Lowering or raising the performance of standards to make them more realistic in view of the prevailing conditions.

School managers are expected to control, among other things, reports that are submitted, work of educators and learners, records of learner assessments, tests and exams and administrative duties of all the personnel in the teams and departments. This management task will ensure that quality teaching and learning is provided as planned in order to achieve academic success. School managers have to appreciate the importance of control, as discussed in the paragraph hereunder.

2.3.4.2. Importance of control

Du Toit *et al.* (2007: 276) and Cronje *et al.* (2003: 262) identify the following important aspects of control as a management tasks.

- ❖ **The nature of the management process itself and, in practice, the task of planning:** Control is intimately linked with planning, organising and leading. Planning without control is useless. Similarly, control without planning is impossible.

- ❖ **The constantly increasing size of a school as an organisation:** As the schools grow, more educators are employed. Without an effective system of control it would be extremely difficult to spot weak points in a highly complicated school and rectify them timeously.
- ❖ **The delegation of tasks to a subordinate does not mean that the job of management is completed:** School managers always have to check whether subordinates are doing their job properly.
- ❖ **Managers and subordinates are capable of making poor decisions and committing errors:** An effective control system should be able to detect such errors before they become critical.
- ❖ **Control enables management to cope with change and uncertainty:** If the school as an organisation is to reach its goals according to plan, control is necessary.
- ❖ **Control is applied to ensure that the school's resources are deployed in such a manner that it reaches its goals:** If there is no control, the school's resources will be wasted or misapplied.
- ❖ **Control usually results in better quality.**

The next section focuses on the role school managers have to play in ensuring that the school achieves academic success.

2.4 THE ROLE OF SCHOOL MANAGERS IN ENSURING ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The achievement of academic success in the schools in the Bloemfontein area will only be realised if there is an effective management structure which is led by school managers. Mokitlane (2008: 2) argues that:

Since 1996, the national Department of Education (DoE) has tried to bring people together, to provide quality education for all in the coherent, integrated education system. Over the past 16 years, the FSDoE has built a new framework for education, with a curriculum designed to prepare all learners for the 21st century, in a democratic, just and caring society, based on the values of the South African democratic constitution.

School managers are responsible for ensuring that this task of providing quality education to the learners is effectively executed. The DoE introduced the document called *The South African Standards for Principalship* (SASP), which provides a clear role description for school managers and serves as a guideline against which professional management and leadership development needs may be addressed (Van der Westhuizen & Van Vuuren, 2007: 349).

As a result, school managers must ensure that quality education is provided in schools. In South Africa quality education is measured by considering the performances of the Grade 12 learners' outcomes. Excellent school results imply effective and quality schooling. Creese and Early (1999: 5) indicate that the school can make a difference in learners' performances. The more effective the school is, the greater the existence of opportunities for the learners to perform excellently. The implication is that the schools which offer quality teaching and learning will consequently produce learners who perform excellently in their examinations.

It is, therefore, necessary for all the schools to provide quality education to their learners. Different people have different views of what constitutes quality in education. According to Law and Glover (2000: 202), quality in education is defined by its ability to provide teaching and challenging educational situations, which are fit for the learners' needs, interests and expectations. Teu (in Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 30) holds the opinion that quality is seen as fitness for purpose, indicating an exceptional product of service, perfection or "zero-defect."

Quality is related to both improvement and accountability (Thurlow *et al.*, 2003: 137). Naidu *et al.* (2008: 38) contend that quality in education can be ascribed to the ability to fulfil the educational aspirations of a particular community. Arcaco (1995: 16) concludes that quality education can be regarded as a movement away from the "information factory" where the

educator pours information into passive heads of the learners and expects the reproduction of the same facts on tests and examinations.

Thus, it is important to note that simply providing teaching to learners and expecting them to reproduce that which they were taught cannot be described as quality teaching. Quality teaching must be informed by purposeful and achievable goals and objectives. Learners must be encouraged and motivated to become part and parcel of the learning process. They must be encouraged to identify and solve problems using independent, creative and critical thinking.

To be able to move forward and for the enrichment of this study, the SASP, an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) module on the standards school managers are expected to acquire in order to become effective school managers, is used in this study. This module links and explores the South African and international literature on the development of effective leadership and management. Bush, Kiggundu and Moorosi (2011: 31) concede that there is increasing recognition that effective leadership and management are important if schools are to be successful in providing good learning opportunities for learners.

The core responsibilities of school managers are discussed in the following section.

2.4.1 Core responsibilities of school managers

Mestry and Singh (2007: 477) indicate that the task of being a school manager is demanding, requiring energy and drive. These authors maintain that the expectations of school managers have moved from the demands of management and control to the demands for an educational leader who can foster personnel development, parent involvement, community support, learner growth and who can succeed with major changes and expectations. Therefore, school managers have to ensure that management in education is able to draw on the professional competencies of educators, is able to build a sense of unity of purpose and to reinforce the educators' belief that they can make a difference (Department of Education, 1999: 3c-9).

School leadership and management in the changing South Africa requires school managers to take cognisance of their core responsibilities and ensuring that these responsibilities are effectively carried out. Naidu *et al.* (2008: 6 & 7) support this statement when they explain that the practice of school leadership and management in the changing South African context calls for an awareness of core responsibilities. According to the DoE (2008: 108), these core responsibilities, which are listed below, are very important for the pursuance of quality education which would promote academic success.

- ❖ Leading and managing the learning school.

- ❖ Shaping the direction and development of the school.
- ❖ Assuring quality and securing accountability.
- ❖ Developing and empowering self and others.
- ❖ Working with and for the community.

The processes of leading and managing the learning school, as a core responsibility of school managers, is discussed in the next section.

2.4.1.1 School managers' leading and managing of the learning school

School managers as the leaders of the schools have the responsibility of ensuring that the schools function effectively. Hoerr (2005: 7) explains that good leaders change organisations, great leaders change people. People are at the heart of any organisation, particularly a school. It is only through changing and nurturing his or her personnel, by helping them to grow and develop and by creating a culture in which they can all learn that the school, as organisation, can flourish.

O'Brien *et al.* (2003: 11) compare schools, as part of the public education service, with branch outlets of a national system where school managers operate as chief executive officers. This accentuates the important role school managers have to play in creating a positive learning environment. According to Clarke (2009: 4), school managers have to ensure that the school environment is conducive to teaching and learning, which is:

- ❖ Safe and secure.
- ❖ Stress free.
- ❖ Ordered.
- ❖ Supportive.
- ❖ Clean.
- ❖ Well resourced.
- ❖ Ensuring high expectations.

The DoE (2008: 108) states that school managers are expected to acquire knowledge about the following matters, which will enable them to ensure that quality teaching and learning takes place:

- ❖ The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and the values and goals which shape it.
- ❖ Strategies and approaches for the development of learning culture and for raising the achievement levels.
- ❖ Strategies for the effective monitoring and evaluation of performance in relation to the NCS.
- ❖ Access and utilisation of resources to support teaching and learning.
- ❖ Approaches to ensure equity in learner access to high quality teaching and learning.

The aspects highlighted above, are discussed in the following paragraphs.

2.4.1.1.1 NCS and the values and goals which shape it

The South African Constitution (RSA, 1996(a)) makes provision for curriculum transformation and the development of South Africa. Some of the pertinent aims of the constitution are:

- ❖ To heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.
- ❖ To improve the quality of life of all the citizens and to unleash the potential of each person.
- ❖ To protect and promote the fundamental rights of every person.
- ❖ To redress the inequalities in the provision of education.
- ❖ To encourage an attitude of a life-long learning.
- ❖ To promote investigation, research and knowledge (DoE, 1999: 1-3 & 1-4).

The NCS, which is an essential component of the curriculum in South Africa, strives to enable the learners to develop their educational needs to their maximum ability (DoE, 2002: 1).

The NCS is also value driven. Begley (in Haydon, 2007: 8) describes values in education as follows:

Values are conceptions, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristics of a group, of the desirable which

influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action.

Rokeach (in Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 9) defines values as enduring beliefs that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode or end-state of existence. Core values are not something that should change without serious thought. They should be guiding principles upon which all the decisions at the school are made (Byrnes & Baxter, 2006: 47). In line with the foregoing, Nieuwenhuis (2007: 66) posits that values are present in everything the school does or aspires to be and is a natural part of what education is all about.

The DoE (2002: 1) projects the goals of the NCS as being the development of learners so that they can be better human beings. The critical outcomes of the NCS envisage learners who are in a position to:

- ❖ Identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking.
- ❖ Work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community.
- ❖ Organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively.
- ❖ Collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information.
- ❖ Communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various models.

The task of school managers in achieving the goals of the NCS is very complex. Therefore, it becomes critically important that school managers must devise strategies and approaches, which will develop a learning culture in the school in order to enhance the learners' achievement.

2.4.1.1.2 Strategies and approaches for the development of a learning culture and for raising the achievement levels

Masitsa (2008: 86 & 87) explains that every school has an established culture which gives either a positive or negative meaning to its educational programme. If such a culture gives a positive meaning to the school's educational programme, it is called a learning culture since it ensures that teaching and learning takes place in an environment which is safe, good and free. According to Masitsa (2008: 102), one of the most important challenges facing South Africa today is the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning, because the majority of schools continue to reflect the characteristics of a poorly developed culture of teaching and learning. Mathibe (2007: 534)

argues strongly that effective teaching by educators will nurture the extension of the school's culture. Educators are expected to plan lessons which will ensure that learning becomes interesting to the learners.

Curriculum must afford the learners an opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills and to participate productively in the teaching and learning practice (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992: 11). Bush and Bell (2002: 316 & 317) acknowledge that a quality lesson is one which the learners understand rather than one which educators feel meets their criteria. The schools are established to serve learners. The success of a school depends on what its learners learn. Learner achievement is the goal of instruction (Cangelosi, 1991: 11 & 12). Bush and Bell (2002: 285 & 286) propagate that educators need to be able to project a vision that excites learners and inspires their enthusiasm for a topic or activity. They must also carefully plan the learning opportunities that learners are to experience in each class. Learners must be viewed as the creators and constructors of learning, rather than just the imbibers or consumers of it.

McEwan (2003: 33) and Clarke (2009: 99 & 100) provide the following strategies, which school managers can use to ensure that learners' achievement is raised:

- ❖ There is a need to be focused and give up on lesser priorities.
- ❖ Disregard the highly detailed improvement plans as they serve as obstacles.
- ❖ Create an enabling environment which will make learners learn comfortably.
- ❖ Encourage working togetherness in order to achieve whole school agreement on strategies to be used.
- ❖ School managers must encourage educators to undergo continuous professional development programmes in the teaching of their Learning Areas, as this will motivate learners to learn better.
- ❖ Make learner performance the only thing by making sure that learners read, solve problems and write all the time and continually collect evidence of their growth and success.
- ❖ Ensuring that educators are spending more time in the preparation of lessons because this will make learners perform better in their studies.

Morgan and Morris (in Harris & Day, 2003: 161) conclude that quality teaching for the learners is about activity, not passivity, about negotiation and close relationships not distance and difference. A positive learning culture has to be restored in order to ensure that the learners achieve maximum excellent performance. Effective monitoring and evaluation is given consideration in the next paragraphs.

2.4.1.1.3 Strategies for the effective monitoring and evaluation of performance in relation to the NCS

Bush and Bell (2002: 157 & 285) indicate that monitoring is concerned with ensuring that plans are being put into practice. Successful teaching necessitates educators to effectively monitor the learner's performances as well as their own practices. When assessing how best they can help learners to develop further, it is important for curriculum leaders to establish routine monitoring as a shared and collaborative activity contributing to personnel and school development, rather than something that is externally imposed on educators. This monitoring can be carried out by observing and coaching learners during times when they are undertaking individual or group work during a lesson.

Monitoring is a process of collecting and presenting information in relation to specific objectives on a systematic basis (Rogers & Badham, 1992: 3). Wilson (1998: 35) is of the opinion that the aim of monitoring is to provide information on what learners know, and can do, at selected stages. Monitoring also aims to provide comparison of standards of performance over time and to investigate ways in which the findings can be used nationally by education authorities, by curriculum developers and by educators to evaluate and develop educational policy and to improve teaching and learning.

Learners and educators' work is supposed to be regularly monitored as this will assist them in identifying problems and correcting them in time. Educators have to ensure that learning takes place through assignments, formal examinations, tests, case studies, projects and classroom questioning (Clarke, 2009: 3).

To ensure that monitoring is effectively implemented, and will consequently lead to the promotion of academic success, school managers must use the following strategies:

- ❖ Informal strategies to monitor teaching and progress of the learners by educators.
- ❖ Utilisation of information obtained through the monitoring process to identify weaknesses and provision of support.

- ❖ Formal assessment tasks to provide learners and their parents with diagnostic reports on learners' performance (Clarke, 2009: 3).

It is vitally important to monitor the learners' work as this will be helpful in identifying the challenges which delay the learners' progress. With continuous and effective monitoring, educators are able to detect learners' scholastic problems in time and are able to attend and solve these challenges in time.

School managers are further required to appropriately access and utilise all available resources to promote academic achievement.

2.4.1.1.4 Accessing and utilising resources to support teaching and learning

Resource management plays a significant role in ensuring that effective and efficient teaching and learning occurs. According to McGowan (in Hessel & Holloway, 2002: 69), it is imperative for leaders to preserve precious resources and to make every effort to utilise them to support teaching and learning. Resources may include, among others, finances, books, furniture such as desks and chairs, equipment and consumable items such as paper, art materials and chemicals that are valuable items and therefore school assets.

The abovementioned resources play an important role in providing effective teaching and learning (Bush and Bell, 2002: 208; Clarke, 2009:160). As a result, it is very important for the school governing body of a public school to take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the department in order to promote quality education provided by the school to all the learners in the school (RSA, 1996(b): s.36).

Admittedly, of these resources, finance is particularly significant because it provides the money to secure the other resources required to deliver high quality teaching and learning (Anderson *et al.*, in Anderson & Lumby, 2005: 8). South Africa, like any other country, faces the challenge of limited resources and bigger classrooms. Naidu *et al.* (2008: 164) explain that the prime concern is how to share limited financial resources between human and physical resources in order to achieve educational goals more effectively.

It is necessary to distinguish between financial and "real" resources. The former refers to finances available to acquire "real" resources. Real resources are human resources (educators, support personnel, etc.) and material resources (building, furniture, equipment, etc.) which are required to deliver operational and support services in schools (Anderson & Lumby, 2005: 8). These resources play a significant role in providing quality teaching and learning.

The DoE is responsible for making finances from the public revenue available to the schools on an equitable basis in order to ensure that learners are

afforded their right to education (RSA, 1996(b): s. 34). The provincial departments are required to rank schools into five quintiles ranging from the poorest 20 % to the wealthiest 20%. These quintiles are indicated on the table below.

Table 2.3: National Norms and Standards for School Funding for 2012.

School quintile number	School quintile from poorest to least poor	Expenditure allocation	Cumulative percentage of schools	Cumulative percentage of non-personnel and non-capital recurrent expenditure	Per learner expenditure indexed to average of 100
1	Poorest 20 %	35% of the resources	20 %	35 %	R960
2	Next 20 %	25% of the resources	40 %	60 %	R880
3	Next 20 %	20% of the resources	60 %	80 %	R880
4	Next 20 %	15% of the resources	80 %	95 %	R480
5	Least poor 20 %	5% of the resources	100 %	100 %	R240

Sharp and Walter (2003: 22) propose that a set of written guidelines that outlines rules and regulations for handling funds has to be adopted by all the schools. This will help the schools in managing their funds correctly. Funding in schools is done in terms of section 21 and non-section 21 schools. Section 21 schools are those schools, which have demonstrated the required ability of handling finances. The government funding allocation is made directly to the school's bank account (DoE, 1999: 2B-48).

This enables the schools to be in a position to purchase learner support materials, educational materials and equipment and to cater for all the other needs of the school. Contrary, in the non-section 21 schools, the state funding is not paid directly into the school's bank account, but is transferred by means of a "paper budget". This means that the department is responsible for the purchases of the learner support materials, educational materials and equipment on behalf of the school (Anderson & Lumby, 2005: 10 & 11).

The SASA (RSA, 1996(b):s.36) empowers the SGBs to apply for section 21 status if they are convinced that they can responsibly handle their school finances. This status ensures that the school governing body is able to purchase everything that the school needs without having to wait for the districts to provide the resources. It would be advantageous to all schools if they can operate on this level. The non-section 21 schools' governing bodies

have to be capacitated in terms of dealing with public finances as this will assist them to be able to run their school finances accordingly.

It is important to note that the funding provided to the schools is not always sufficient to cover all the school's educational requirements. The SASA, (RSA, 1996(b): s.36) also encourages the SGBs to augment the funds received by the school from the provincial department in order to provide quality education. The SGBs can undertake fundraising projects such as organising trips with parents, asking sponsorships from businesses, tending the garden and selling the vegetables to the community, leasing the school hall to the community for community meetings, weddings and funerals.

In this way the SGBs will be creating a sense of ownership of the school by the community, as parents will feel that they are the co-owners of the school and will be prepared to provide their services to the school voluntarily. This will also help to protect the school against vandals and criminals because parents will also be acting as care-takers of the school.

Approaches to ensure equity in learner access to high quality teaching and learning are discussed in the next paragraphs.

2.4.1.1.5 Approaches to ensure equity in learner access to high quality teaching and learning

It would be equitable for all children of similar abilities to achieve the same educational standards or qualifications, regardless of gender, ethnicity or social class (Bush & Bell, 2002: 196). Jacobs, Gawe and Vakalisa (1996: 82) concur that it is not enough to know the gender of learners, but it is also important to note whether there is gender sensitivity. Nieuwenhuis (2007: 183) proposes that the curriculum should be free of gender bias. A situation in which boys are given an opportunity to enroll for subjects such as Mathematics and Physical Science, which will afford them potential power and status and denying this to girls will give boys an advantage over girls and entrench traditional sex-role stereotyping, should not be practised at school.

It is necessary for school managers to ensure that learners with barriers to learning are not excluded and marginalised from receiving quality teaching and learning. The South Africa Constitution (1996) stipulates that equity in any educational institution is desirable, as it is a corner-stone of the Republic of South Africa. According to Nkoane (2006: 46 & 47), the barriers to access to high quality teaching and learning must be removed and the curriculum has to present challenges so that learners can be motivated and progress educationally regardless of their level of abilities. In support of this statement, Tanyane (2004: 28) endorses that all learners must have access to a core curriculum that is rich in content and is based on individual learning styles. Individualised approaches to learning must be developed for each learner because learners learn differently and at a different pace.

Inclusive Education (IE) ensures access and promotes equity, enhances the environment for learning and focuses on teaching and learning that is more inclusive in nature (Nkoane, 2006:10). It is imperative that school managers ensure equity in learner access to quality schooling by introducing inclusive education in their schools and by motivating their educators to register for the IE course at the universities.

Fleisch (2006: 370) notes a significant improvement in terms of access in funding and equity in the South African schooling system. However, there is still a general concern regarding the adequacy of resources available to poor learners in certain areas, the inequalities in school infrastructure as well as the financial challenges experienced by some parents.

According to the DoE (2008: 109), the following core responsibilities are expected from school managers in order to manage and lead the schools efficiently:

- ❖ Demonstrate and model a personal commitment to learning and in the maintenance of high standards.
- ❖ Promote strategies to encourage high expectations and to set challenging targets for achievement.
- ❖ Challenge underperformance, ensuring appropriate corrective action and follow up.
- ❖ Facilitate the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the classroom practice.
- ❖ Encourage ongoing debate among personnel on the development of teaching and learning in the school and about effective improvements.
- ❖ Share and transmit ideas and stimulate discussion on pedagogic and welfare issues with all personnel.
- ❖ Continuously strive to build and develop the school as a learning organisation.
- ❖ Ensure that teaching and learning are at the heart of the school's strategic planning and management of all resources.
- ❖ Ensure that educators have a full understanding of the NCS and possess skills related to teaching, monitoring and evaluation.
- ❖ Keep up to date with the current debates through reading professional books, journals and publications.

Leading and managing the learning school, as outlined above, is an important responsibility of school managers. The effectiveness of school management and provision of quality schooling depends on strict execution of these responsibilities. The next section discusses the shaping of the direction and development of the school by school managers.

2.4.1.2 Shaping the direction and development of the school

School managers have the responsibility of creating a shared vision, mission and strategic plan to inspire and motivate all the workers in the school. They have to provide direction for the school's ongoing development (DoE, 2008: 110). The development and implementation of plans, policies and procedures which aim at ensuring that the vision and the mission are transformed into realisable actions, have to be carried out by school managers (Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 56 & 57). In order to achieve the afore-mentioned effectively, school managers must also be knowledgeable of the issues discussed below.

2.4.1.2.1. South African educational legislation and policy

Bray (2008a: 36) indicates that education takes place within a legal system in South Africa and, as a result, does not exist in a vacuum or outside the ambit of the law. These laws deal with the provision, control and management of education at all levels, the composition, powers and functioning of decision-making bodies as well as other matters relevant to education. Bray (2008b: 1) stipulates that the protection of fundamental human rights is crucial if South African citizens aspire towards democratic, open and accountable government and that there is no doubt that education holds a key to the achievement of these goals. School managers have a key role in fostering a human rights culture and their personal conduct and example are as important as their teaching.

It is clear that every school manager has to be familiar with, and respectful of, these laws, rules and regulations that govern every situation in a school. The South African Constitution (RSA 1996(a)), the SASA (RSA 1996(b)) and a number of labour laws are examples of legal imperatives governing relationships in schools. School managers are expected to have an understanding of these laws in order to enhance teaching and learning. Some of these laws are noted in the paragraphs below:

❖ Access to information

The Access to information Act, section 32 of the 1996 Constitution, places a duty on school managers as heads of public schools to make information available for inspection by any person insofar as such information is required for the exercise and protection of another person's right (Bray, 2008b: 62).

❖ **The Right to Privacy**

The Right to Privacy Act, section 14 of the 1996 Constitution, gives school managers the right to search learners for example, for possession of drugs and has to be done in such a manner that the learners' right to privacy is not violated. School managers should act with circumspection and integrity, always keeping in mind the privacy of the learners, their educational responsibilities and the best interests of everybody involved (Bray, 2008b: 65).

❖ **Children's Rights**

According to Bray (2008b: 70), the Children's Right Act, section 28 of the 1996 Constitution, requires school managers to ensure that all the learners are protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation.

❖ **Corporal punishment**

School managers have to be aware that corporal punishment is unconstitutional and therefore outlawed in all schools in South Africa (RSA 1996(b): s. 36).

❖ **Education Rights**

According to the Education Rights Act, section 29 of the 1996 Constitution, everyone has a right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in the public educational institutions where that education is practically reasonable. School managers have to make sure that this right is respected (Bray, 2008b: 83).

❖ **Freedom of expression**

Education is about expressing, conveying and receiving information and ideas. The school managers should ensure that no learner is prohibited from expressing their views and from receiving information, unless it is harmful or can disrupt or otherwise detrimentally affect the education process (Bray, 2008b: 59). Labour law and its application in the school context are discussed in the paragraph below.

2.4.1.2.2 Labour Law and its application in the school context

Squelch (2005: 6) stipulates that labour legislation is a vast, complex and dynamic field. Consequently, this research will only concentrate on those legislations which are very important to school managers in the execution of their daily tasks. These legislations, which school managers must acquaint them with, will be discussed in the next paragraphs.

❖ **Labour Relations Act, 66 of 1995 (LRA)**

The purpose of this Act is the advancement of economic development, social justice, labour peace and democratisation of the workplace by giving effect to the fundamental right to fair labour practices and the obligations that are incurred by the country as a member of the International Labour Organisation. The Act also aims to provide a framework within which the employer and employee organisations can operate (Squelch, 2005: 6).

❖ **Employment of Educators Act, 76 of 1998 (EEA)**

Squelch (2005: 6) views the purpose of this Act as being the provision of guidelines for employment of educators by the State on issues such as conditions of service, discipline of educators, retirement and discharge of educators. This Act applies to the employment of educators in public schools, further education and training, education departments and adult basic education and training centres. It does not apply to private schools and universities.

❖ **Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998 (EEA)**

The purpose of this Act is to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting equal opportunity, eliminating unfair discrimination and implementing affirmative action measures (Squelch, 2005: 7).

❖ **Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75 of 1997 (BCEA)**

According to Squelch (2005: 7), this Act ensures fair labour practices by establishing, enforcing and regulating variations in basic conditions of employment, including prescribed hours of work, different types of leave entitlements, remuneration, employee discipline and termination of employment. This Act also provides for minimum standards of employment only and is applicable to educators employed by a school.

❖ **Personnel Administration Measures of 1998 (PAM)**

Squelch (2005: 7) asserts that the terms and conditions of employment for educators employed by the State are set out in detail in the Personnel Administration Measures (PAM), which must be read in conjunction with the EEA. The PAM is applicable to the school educators and stipulates that each post level has different duties and distribution of the workload between various post levels and within a post level.

Education legislation is one of the important factors school managers have to understand and respect. The knowledge of education law will assist school managers in making sure that they do not make regrettable decisions which

will result in them losing their position as school managers or paying hefty legal fines or even going to jail.

The next paragraphs focus on strategic planning and implementation of goals by school managers.

2.4.1.2.3. Strategic planning and implementation of goals

According to Naidu *et al.* (2008: 59), strategic planning is an essential organisational action which involves a process of conscious decision-making and constant review. It is a systematic, analytical approach to reviewing an organisation as a whole in relation to its environment. Clarke (2009: 250) regards strategic planning as a process of setting goals and of developing a plan to ensure that the goals that have been set are achieved. Strategic planning involves laying out how the organisational or school goals will be accomplished. It includes specifying objectives or specific results for each strategic goal as well as designating responsibilities and specifying timelines for each objective (Bisschoff *et al.*, 2004: 34 & 35).

Most school managers make use of various personnel meetings, informal meetings and personnel dialogues for strategic planning. School managers have to obtain support from the governing body, educators, and most importantly, the parents in formulating and implementing the plan for the school. They must also consider the following elements during strategic planning and implementation:

- ❖ Discussion and agreement on the direction the school should take.
- ❖ The analysis of the school's present situation.
- ❖ Goal setting, prioritising and planning.
- ❖ Implementation i.e. putting goals into practice.
- ❖ Assessing whether direction, goals and priorities have been followed (Clarke, 2009: 225).

It is essential for the school manager to strategically plan and implement the direction the school has to take in its efforts of promoting academic success at the school. The involvement of all the educators, parents and the SGBs in the strategic planning and implementation process will result in effective and successful attainment of quality schooling.

Leading complex and dynamic change processes by school managers to induce quality teaching and learning is discussed in the next paragraphs.

2.4.1.2.4 Leading complex and dynamic change processes

Change is a process of transformation, a flow from one state to another, either initiated by internal factors or external forces, involving individuals, groups or institutions, leading to a realignment of existing values, practices and outcomes (Morrison, 1998: 13). Mabale (in Mathibe, 2007: 532) explains that change is not an event, but rather a process which unfolds as individuals and organisations grow in knowledge and experience.

Naidu *et al.* (2008: 3) state that the changing education environment in the democratic South Africa has brought to the fore the need for management and leadership development in directing the complex new policy environment and realising transformational goals. Transformation, equity and redress of the past inequalities have been a major aim of education. Clase, Kok and Van der Merwe (2007: 244) indicate that a former minister of education, Prof. Kader Asmal, cautioned that change would not be without problems and that those groups in education affected by these changes should negotiate change in a responsible manner even if change influences the most sensitive traditions in the schools.

To achieve change in schools, school managers, in their leadership capacity, have to arouse the sense of hope in schools and motivate the educators, learners and parents to positively embrace change. Grady (2004: 77) indicate that when a personnel is not involved in planning for change, resistance to the change can be predicted. Educators are entitled to participate in the change process, since they too are professionals.

According to Grady (2004: 76), school managers can use the following guidelines to effectively manage the change process.

- ❖ The goals of change must not be about bringing new ideas only, but can also be about improving on the existing ideas.
- ❖ It is not sufficient to focus on the best ideas only, but working through all the ideas brought forward by the personnel members will provide fruitful results.
- ❖ It is imperative to appreciate early difficulties of trying something new.

Building, communicating and implementing a shared vision is discussed in the paragraphs below.

2.4.1.2.5 Approaches to building, communicating and implementing a shared vision

Naidu *et al.* (2008: 60) assert that when a shared vision is appropriately communicated, the community is going to be encouraged to promote the school's efficiency and effectiveness. It will also bring coherence and common purpose in the face of diversity and foster commitment to the school's development.

Before implementing a vision, school managers need to ensure that the vision is shared with all relevant stakeholders in the school. The dissemination of the vision in a written form, preparing audio-visual shows outlining and explaining the vision, and presenting an explanation of the vision in meetings and workshops are means of communicating and implementing this shared vision.

The effectiveness of the school depends on the appropriate shaping of the direction and development of the school. Assuring quality and securing accountability, as a core responsibility of school managers, is explored in the following section.

2.4.1.3 Assuring quality and securing accountability

Quality assurance in schools rests with school managers, and the provincial and national departments of education (Clarke, 2009: 11). According to Arcaro (1995: 16), quality refers to means of expecting the best from every learner, which implies not just from the top-level learners only. Quality means recognising that the educator is the sustaining force for quality in the classroom.

West-Burnham (in Thurlow *et al.*, 2003: 139) state that it is essential for school managers to ensure that there is quality control and quality assurance in the school. Quality control indicates whether the product or service is wrong or not, whereas quality assurance prevents the product or service from getting faulty. Quality control is an attempt to create quality by identifying and eliminating those products, which do not conform to specification or requirements. Quality assurance refers to a system of continuous assessment of a product or service during production with the purpose of ensuring that the product conforms to the standards required by the consumer (Morrison, 1998: 84).

Quality assurance is an attempt to build in quality and to prevent failure (Morrison, 1998: 85 & 86). Murgatroyd and Morgan (1992: 45) relate quality assurance to the determined set of standards, appropriate methods and quality requirements by an expert body. The implication is that school managers need to ensure that quality teaching and learning is taking place and that measures

are put into place to prevent quality teaching and learning from failing as this will negatively affect the achievement of academic success.

The DoE (2008: 111) illustrates that school managers have an overall responsibility for the promotion of quality assurance and are accountable to a wide range of stakeholders for all aspect of the schools' performance and its continuing improvement. Raywid (2002: 71) suggests that schools should satisfy certain requirements for quality education, such as being welcoming and user friendly, and having committed educators who perform their teaching tasks with enthusiasm.

A variety of authors provide different definitions of accountability. Johnson and Bonaiuto (2008/2009: 26) describe accountability as the catalyst that drives educational progress. Gunter (2001: 142) defines accountability as a two-way process whereby government agencies need not just to be attentive towards, but also to listen to and respect those who are expected to make education work better. Van der Westhuizen (in Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 40) denotes accountability as calling upon an individual or group to answer for needs or omissions. It means giving an account to designated people about one's actions concerning mandated duties.

It is imperative that school managers ensure that they promote quality assurance, and are ultimately accountable to a wide range of stakeholders for all aspects of the school's performance. It is, therefore, important for school managers to understand the processes and systems which underpin accountability, responsiveness and responsibility.

2.4.1.3.1 Processes and systems underpinning accountability, responsiveness and responsibility

According to Smit and Cronje (2002: 192), accountability implies that the responsible employees will be expected to account for outcomes, positive or negative, for that portion of the work directly under their control. It connects results directly to the actions of an individual, section, department or business unit. Accountability is related to the democratic control because it hinders the use of arbitrary power by the officials and the institutions. Accountability strategies focus on the behaviour, performance or capacity of an individual who has being provided with powers and appropriate means through which as an accountable agent will be able to carry out his or her responsibilities (Davies & West-Burnham, 2003: 674). In support of the above authors, Coleman and Early (2005: 254) define accountability as a requirement for those with decision-making power to be open to scrutiny and sanction. It is a responsibility for them to account for their decisions.

In relation to the school environment, Deventer and Kruger (2005: 119) view accountability as an educator's obligation to give account of having performed the work delegated to him or her by the principal or HOD in accordance with

the set criteria and predetermined standards. In turn, the principal is accountable to the SGB and the District Director in the school district of a province. Heim (in Marais, 2009: 73) describes accountability as the responsibility that goes with authority to do something. The person's duty of giving an account of having executed his or her work in terms of a set of criteria and determined standards and whether the work has been satisfactorily completed or not is known as accountability (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 173). The school has a specific duty allocated to it by society, namely to educate the young people of the community. In carrying out this task, the school is answerable to the community that it has indeed performed this task as expected (Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 40).

Mestry and Bisschoff (2009:73 & 74) describe accountability as the process of reporting on the control and utilisation of resources by those accountable for their control and utilisation, to those to whom they are accountable. In an educational context, accountability involves confirming that the school resources actually exist, that they have been used for legitimate and legal processes and that assets and resources have been accounted for in a proper way. In support of this statement, Marais (2009: 74) demonstrates that accountability implies that the person, who is assigned the position of accountable officer, such as in the case of the school manager, should be answerable for all the actions taken or omitted in the school. Without the detailed awareness of what he or she is doing in the classroom it would be impossible for him or her to do his or her duty efficiently. When an educator is aware that he or she is accountable, he or she would be encouraged to enhance his or her effectiveness in the provision of teaching and learning.

Accountability is the evaluation of how well school managers meet their responsibility. School managers are accountable for everything that happens in their departments or schools. They can furthermore delegate their responsibility and authority but not their accountability (Smit & Cronje, 2002: 196). School managers must be able to respond to social challenges experienced by the learners, such as helping orphans to obtain state grants. This will ensure that these learners participate in the education process without unnecessary disruption.

According to Smit and Cronje (2002: 196), responsibility is the obligation to achieve goals by performing required activities. When strategic, tactical and operational goals are set, the managers responsible for achieving these goals should be clearly identified. Van der Westhuizen (1991: 72) describes responsibility as the duties a person carries out in terms of his or her post and the work allocated to him or her. However, the work need not necessarily be done by the person him- or herself, but may be delegated to another person occupying a senior position. Responsibility is a process whereby public servants, including educators, understand the duties of their office, freely accept them, assume and acknowledge full responsibility for communicating the idea of full responsibility for those learners who will become adult

individuals and responsible citizens (Inglis & Aers, 2008: 163). Steiss and Daneke (1980:35) view responsibility as strictly following rules and procedures. Mestry and Bisschoff (2009: 73) maintain that responsibility is the duty which rests upon a person to carry out his or her appointed task to the best of his or her ability.

A high level of accountability will be achieved when school managers have a clear definition of their obligation and attain direct control over results and have adequate resources to carry out the tasks. Moreover, school managers must be provided with a high level of discretion in selecting between various courses of action (Davies & West-Burnham, 2003: 674).

If the school does not perform well, both the educators and school managers carry the blame. However, producing quality academic results is not only the responsibility of school managers and educators, but that of the Ministry of Education as well. The community expects the state to be accountable and responsible for the failures and successes of the schools.

The next paragraphs are devoted to the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and Whole School Evaluation (WSE) as systems of ensuring quality assurance.

2.4.1.3.2 IQMS and WSE as systems of ensuring quality assurance

There are two systems which are designed by the NDoE to ensure that quality assurance is promoted. These systems are called the IQMS and the WSE. The IQMS is designed to assess educators' performance, whereas the WSE is meant to assess and evaluate the performance of individual schools (Clarke, 2009: 11).

According to the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) (2003: 3), IQMS is a form of monitoring and evaluation of educators and schools and its main objective is to ensure quality public education for all and to constantly improve the quality of teaching and learning. Successful education outcomes also depend upon empowering, motivating and training educators.

IQMS consists of three programmes, which are intended to enhance and monitor the performance of the education system. These programmes are called the Development Appraisal (DA) programme, Performance Management (PM) programme and WSE. The DA and the PM programmes are carried out by school managers at the school, whereas the WSE is conducted by the officials from the DoE and Provincial Department of Education (PDoE).

However, according to Grobler and Mestry (2009: 114 & 115), the challenge with regard to the performance measurement of educators is that it was designed outside the school and had to be implemented by people who had

little or no say in its design. These authors maintain that performance measurement systems are designed in “heaven” but have to be implemented “on earth”. This implies that the systems established to assess educators’ and the schools’ performances have been designed by experts who are outside the classroom and school environment to assess school managers, educators and the school. As a result, the individuals who must implement these programmes are unable to do that, because they were not initially involved in the whole process.

For efficient and effective quality assurance and securing of accountability, the DoE (2008: 111 & 112) proposes that school managers must be able to carry out the following core responsibilities:

- ❖ Encourage the development and maintenance of an ethos of collective responsibility for assuring quality and ensuring accountability within the school’s community.
- ❖ Ensure that regulated performance management systems are understood and administered efficiently and effectively.
- ❖ Ensure that all members of the school’s community have clear and agreed understandings of their individual responsibilities and their accountabilities.
- ❖ Work with the SGB to assist it to meet its statutory obligation.
- ❖ Set in place and maintain effective mechanisms and procedures for an ongoing systematic review and self-evaluation on all the aspects of the school.
- ❖ Use the combined outcomes of ongoing school self-evaluation and external evaluation for the continuing development of the school.
- ❖ To fulfil the school’s legislative and statutory accountability obligations to the DoE and the SGB.

Public education is a service provided by the State and is financed from the taxes paid by the public. It is of paramount importance that the public seeks the right to its improvement and to determine whether this improvement is of the required quality standard and to also assessing its outcomes. Regular monitoring of quality and ensuring that the DoE and school managers are accountable for the successes or failures of the schools is an essential element of the provision of quality education.

The professional development of school managers and their personnel is explored in the next section.

2.4.1.4 Development and empowering self and others

It is imperative for school managers to develop themselves and their educators in order to be able to provide effective school management and quality teaching and learning. Naidu (in Mestry & Singh, 2007: 478) notes the serious need to train and develop the existing and newly appointed school managers to effectively manage schools in order to bring about improvements in quality teaching and learning. Just as it is important for school managers to have requisite qualifications, it is equally important to have systematic professional development programmes for practising school managers (Mathibe, 2007: 252). Mestry and Singh (2007: 478) argue that the lack of stringent criteria and the absence of a qualification for the appointment of school managers have resulted in many school managers under-performing in their leadership and management roles.

Highly effective school managers do not expect educators to “go it alone”. They understand the critical importance of providing training and coaching to their educators (McEwan, 2003: 31). Bisschoff *et al.* (2004: 139) believe that if school managers improve their performance further and then ensure that other educators improve theirs, they will be regarded as the best school managers. School managers, as resource managers, must put in place measures for nurturing and unfolding of educators’ potential in order to strengthen teaching and learning. The development and enhancement of educators’ potential should mostly relate to the work they are doing (Mathibe, 2007: 523).

By capacitating and empowering others school managers empower themselves. This will in turn lead to the establishment of an effective school which would produce outstanding learner outcomes.

The DoE (2008: 112) suggests that for school managers to be able to provide professional development to their personnel, they are expected to have knowledge of the factors discussed below:

2.4.1.4.1 Approaches to promoting continuing professional development

Professional development is described as an ongoing development programme which focuses on a wide range of knowledge, skills and attitude required to educate learners effectively (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2002: 250). Mathibe (2007: 532) indicates that the empowerment of educators will result in a more responsive, flexible and effective school. O’Brien *et al.* (2003: 76) hold the view that in the process of promoting professional development, the development of strategic relationship between employers, professional bodies and universities is essential in order to establish empowerment programmes.

These authors believe that professional associations and universities provide the international and practice-based understanding of the current issues. For

instance, the universities in South Africa have introduced the ACE course in education management to address professional development challenges faced by school managers (Mestry & Singh, 2007: 479). It would be valuable if school managers in the Bloemfontein area can register and participate in this programme at the University of the Free State (UFS), as this will assist them in empowering themselves.

Steyn and Van Niekerk (2002: 250 & 266) propose that school managers must use the following techniques to promote the professional development of their educators in their schools, which will in turn assist them in providing quality education:

- ❖ Training: This refers to the training of educators to acquire knowledge or a particular skill i.e. conducting workshops to increase the knowledge of the educator about a particular Learning Area or subject.
- ❖ Coaching: This focuses on the provision of support and guidance to personnel in ensuring the acquisition of skills and knowledge.
- ❖ Job rotation: This has to do with moving personnel members into new jobs for a certain period of time to enable them to acquire more skills.
- ❖ Demonstration: By showing novice personnel members how tasks are performed by experienced personnel members, for example, an experienced educator showing personnel members how to compile a timetable.

According to Ferriter (2009: 37), educators may use blogs (internet) in order to grow professionally. Blogs have become a forum for public articulation which is essential for educators who are interested in refining and revising their thinking about teaching and learning. School managers must take the lead in creating a positive climate for a professional development as this will help in the promotion of quality education.

2.4.1.4.2 Ways in which team building and effective teamwork may be encouraged, promoted and implemented

The creation of teams in which tasks are divided is very important. A team is a group of people with a common objective, whose members possess different areas of expertise, skills, personalities and abilities that complement one another, and who are committed to working together co-operatively on a commonly shared task and purpose (Morrison, 1998:182 & 183).

DuFour and Marzano (2009: 66) argue that the initial steps the school can take to help the learners to learn is to ensure that those who are called to teach them can answer the question, "What is it we want our learners to learn?" with consistent voice. This implies that school managers will support the

establishment of collaborative teams. These teams must engage in collective enquiry and build shared knowledge regarding the learning. School managers should encourage and create a climate and a culture of co-operation and success in schools and between all the teams in order to increase opportunities for self-expression, creativity, communication, motivation, and collective actions (Mathibe, 2007: 533).

Mathibe (2007: 535) further demonstrates that effective school managers will empower their teams by delegating as much authority as possible. Communicating with teams directs the educators to work towards sustaining the competitiveness of the school. School manager will need to help teams build shared knowledge by providing relevant information regarding the qualities of effective assessment to them.

When educators work as a team, excellent results are evidenced most of the time. It is clear that school managers must actively propagate the idea of team building among their personnel members as this will promote quality education, which leads to academic success.

2.4.1.4.3 Ways in which motivation, morale and job satisfaction may be enhanced

Motivated educators will ensure that quality teaching and learning takes place. Motivation has to do with complex forces, incentives, needs, tension, and other mechanisms that energise, channel and sustain the human behaviour (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2002: 141). Van der Westhuizen (1991: 387) posits that the important role of school managers involve inspiring the personnel to have a common objective, namely academic success.

Job satisfaction refers to a pleasant emotional state that people experience when they have made a positive value statement of their job or work experience (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2002: 163). Thompson (1995: 883) defines morale as a mental attitude of a person or group especially as regards to confidence and discipline. It is essential that school managers boost their personnel's morale because the personnel who experience a high degree of work satisfaction regard themselves as being part of the school (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 387).

Masitsa (2008: 87 & 101) asserts that when someone carries out a task because he or she enjoys it, he or she is motivated. A decline in educator motivation and morale results in educators being unable to carry out their work effectively and efficiently. As educators find it increasingly difficult to fulfil roles adequately, the school's goals and mission may not be realised, resulting in poor performance.

School managers can promote motivation, morale and job satisfaction by offering rewards and establishing goals in partnership with their personnel.

Rewards may come from the external environment in the form of praise, promotion or financial rewards and from the internal environment in the form of a feeling of achievement or enhanced self esteem as a result of the accomplishment of goals (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2002: 141).

In light of the above, school managers have to vary their motivational techniques. They may provide incentives for some of the personnel intrinsically, while others can contribute to the effective education if they are motivated by the desire to achieve self-determination (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 387). Nevertheless, Steyn and Van Niekerk (2002: 169 & 170) identify the following methods of increasing job satisfaction, motivation and morale which can be used by the school managers to promote the provision of quality teaching and learning and academic success in schools:

- ❖ Compensation plans: these relate to merit awards, bonuses and various modifications in salary structure.
- ❖ Career opportunities: the focus is on professional ladders and promotion possibilities in the teaching profession.
- ❖ Increased professional responsibility: this is concerned with mentoring programmes and other ways of making the work interesting for the personnel by extending their responsibilities.
- ❖ Non-monetary recognition: this refers to the awards such as educator of the month, vouchers, tours, and other means of recognising good work.

Motivated educators are prepared to go the extra mile in ensuring that learners receive quality education. It is the duty of school managers to keep the personnel motivated and increase their morale and job satisfaction in order to attain positive outcomes. This can be done by granting incentives to the personnel who are working hard and who are committed to their work.

2.4.1.4.4 Significance of effective communication and feedback

Information flow or communication relates to systems that provide a link between the different aspects of a school (David & Lazarus in Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 83). Communication assumes a two-way flow of information. This implies that, in a school situation, school managers issue instructions to personnel to carry out certain tasks and receive regular feedback to evaluate the results (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 390). Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn (in Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2002: 31) refer to communication as the transmission of ideas, information, opinions, attitudes and feelings through one or more media that produces some response.

According to Johnson and Bonaiuto (2008/2009: 27), communication is at the heart of a good school system. In a successful school, professionals coordinate services, share information, and support learners. Similarly, communication between home and school is essential because it helps parents to get an insight into what is going on in schools, which enables them to trust the institution and assist in reinforcing their children's learning. Communication is the basis for establishing relationships and for providing motivation. It aims to generate an understanding of the school and its activities by the community (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 391).

School managers, as the communicators, communicate with various people in a number of different ways about situations, problems or issues. It is imperative of school managers to obtain feedback from the stakeholders about the activities at the school. Steyn and Van Niekerk (2002: 40) describe feedback as the receiver's response to the message. It permits the communicator to evaluate the effectiveness of the message. Van der Westhuizen (1991: 391) contends that school managers' communication tasks includes making contacts with the community.

Therefore, school managers must ensure that communication between the school and the community is strengthened. They can do this by informing the parents about the activities at the school in the form of letters and by inviting parents to the parents meetings and parent evenings, where educators can interact with parents to discuss the progress of their children.

Quality education depends on professionally empowered educators. School managers will be able to develop themselves and their educators, only if they are able to perform the following core duties (DoE, 2008: 112 & 113):

- ❖ Embrace the philosophy of Ubuntu, valuing and respecting people and their contributions.
- ❖ Encourage the development of shared leadership, participating in decision-making, teambuilding and teamwork and other positive working relationships.
- ❖ Implement processes to plan, allocate, support and evaluate the work of individuals and teams to guide and ensure improvement and celebrate achievements.
- ❖ Establishes effective communication mechanisms within the school and its community.
- ❖ Provide a range of opportunities for, encourage and support engagement in the continuing professional development of people working in the school.

- ❖ Ensure equity and fairness in the delegation of work and the devolution of responsibility.
- ❖ Engage in an ongoing review of own practices and accept responsibility for personal and professional development.

Effective schools are characterised by the co-operation between the school and the community. School managers need to communicate goals and shared decision-making with all the stakeholders. They must create and articulate the school's vision and mission and support their personnel members. School managers must ensure that communication channels with all the stakeholders are efficient, as this will contribute to the strengthening of quality education and the enhancement of academic success.

Working with the community and for the community is one of the essential tasks of school managers. This matter is discussed in the next section.

2.4.1.5 Working with and for the community

School managers have to ensure that a cordial relationship exists between the school and the wider community. According to Sergiovanni (in Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 129), the concept *community* refers to a collection of individuals who are bonded together by natural will and who are jointly bound to a set of shared ideas and ideals. A school community refers to the social unit consisting of educators, learners, administrative personnel and ground personnel who meet daily at the school for the purpose of teaching and learning.

Furthermore, school managers have a responsibility to establish healthier relationships with the community and to influence the community in the course of executing their tasks (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 391). O'Brien *et al.* (2003: 24) accentuate that the national political strategy has enhanced greater community involvement in the affairs of the school. This strategy encourages ownership of schools by the wider community. Community ownership of schools has positive effects and is essential to the development of a functional school (Prew, 2007: 454).

Mathibe (2007: 531) states that in the current dispensation school managers should be capacitated to understand that schools should have a functioning linkage with their external environment and that they should be in touch with the clientele. In addition, Prew (2007: 450) highlighted that successful schools discovered that they needed to build genuine working relationships with the community and the local education district office in order to sustain success. Co-operation and collaboration between the school and the community becomes one of the cardinal factors, which the principal must espouse.

The DoE (2008: 114) expects school managers to have knowledge of the following matters:

2.4.1.5.1 Socio-economic, political, and cultural characteristics of the wider school community

Jacobs *et al.* (1996: 167 & 168) argue that the lack of education and inadequate life skills are some of the barriers that prevent adults from contributing as productive members of society to the economy of the country and as such there is a need for the development of society's economic entrepreneurial skills.

The same authors believe that the school has to provide the content that will empower the learners to contribute to job creation and economic development. When people have developed a sense of belonging, of ownership and self-worth, they become motivated to work, to keep and preserve what is theirs. School programmes should be structured in such a way that they encourage learners to debate policies and issues of the country.

2.4.1.5.2 Curriculum opportunities, formal and informal, which lie in the wider community

School managers should support school activities initiated by industries and businesses. Industries and businesses provide job opportunities and recruit potential employees from schools. They even offer bursaries and financial assistance to promising young learners to pursue tertiary education. Prew (2007: 455) observes that it is necessary to transform schools into service centres for the whole community. The community can also be involved in decision-making processes as well as creating employment opportunities for them. This involvement can also be utilised in income generating projects, such as granting members licences to run school tuck shops, sell food and other produce and grow vegetable gardens.

Some businesses and industries provide learning opportunities in the form of internships, apprenticeships, learnerships and part-time work for learners. They also provide refreshments during school and parents meetings, grants for school improvement programmes and learner awards. In addition, school managers need to provide constant and specific feedback concerning projects undertaken, completed projects and project progress reports to particular industries or businesses that offer support to their school (Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 139).

2.4.1.5.3 Existence and work of other relevant agencies in the wider community and possibilities of collaboration

According to Naidu *et al.* (2008: 141), school managers need to forge partnerships and formal alliances with government agencies which provide

social, policing and safety services. They need to co-ordinate, harmonise and redirect these services towards commonly agreed upon goals that will serve the school's mission better. These agencies include among others, the following:

- ❖ Department of Health: Nurses from the department visit schools to diagnose health problems among learners on a regular basis and conduct health clinics and immunisation programmes.
- ❖ Department of Social Services: The department provides life skills, self-help and mutual support programmes to learners. Carline (2007: 76) indicate that social services assist where there is helplessness or a break down in a family unit.
- ❖ Department of Safety and Security: This department ensures the existence of school safety and security. The school can develop a good working relationship with the South African Police Services (SAPS) (Clarke, 2009: 221). The SAPS have already forged links with the Department of Education through programmes such as Safe Schools, Tiisa Thuto, Adopt-A-Cop. Carline (2007: 75) adds that the police can contribute towards the formulation of the school's drug policy.
- ❖ Department of Home Affairs: This department augments these collaborations by visiting schools to issue learners with Identity Documents.

School managers should strive towards making the services of the government agencies an integral part of the school's activities and must display support of these agencies and ensure that the relationship with them is sustained.

2.4.1.5.4 Ways in which parents in the community may be encouraged to support children's education and overall well-being

O'Brien *et al.* (2003: 25) acknowledge that SGBs play a major leadership role in some communities, by acting as the local catalyst for political pressure or by acting as a parental voice in relation to a principal who is felt to ignore the wider community. The fact that parents make up the majority of the members of the governing body demonstrates the importance of parental involvement in education and constitutes the principle of partnership and mutual responsibility for a public school (Beckmann & Prinsloo, 2009: 174).

Bush and Bell (2002: 261) point out that parent-school partnership are typified by collaboration. Therefore, it is essential for the parents to play a supportive role in educating children through personal, social and academic development. Parents deliver a valuable service to the school by attending and assisting in school events such as sporting activities, prize-giving functions, field trips and

exhibitions. Davies and Ellison (in Bisschoff *et al.*, 2004:15) demonstrate that when parents perceive that their children are afforded good education at a school, they respond positively and act as ambassadors for the school in their own communities.

School managers, therefore, need to involve parents in the school activities and ensure that they feel welcomed and appreciated. They must also allow parents or various groups in the community to use school buildings for meetings, social activities or courses as this will have a positive effect in establishing partnership with parents.

2.4.1.5.5 Approaches to building and maintaining partnerships between the school and the home, business, the wider community and municipalities and their elected officials

The SASA (RSA, 1996(b):s.7) creates an opportunity for the involvement of the parents in school affairs and gives them legal powers to be purposefully involved in school activities. Van Loggerenberg (in Clase *et al.*, 2007: 246 & 247) acknowledges that parental involvement, despite educational background or social standing of the parents, is an imperative component for successful education and teaching at school level.

Parental involvement in the school activities should not be a one-way traffic. A mutual relationship has to be encouraged between the parents and the school. Successful school managers understand that the key relationship to sustained school community development is the bond between the school and the local community. Consequently, through this dynamic relationship, schools become service centres for the whole community and create employment opportunities for the community (Prew, 2007: 455).

School managers have to motivate the educators to be actively involved in community activities. Naidu *et al.* (2008: 138) provide the following guidelines which will assist school managers in encouraging educator involvement in community activities:

- ❖ Encouraging and causing the educators and learners to support families during bereavement by attending funerals.
- ❖ Donating money to assist the bereaved families and making schools to participate in cleaning campaigns in the community.

During school holidays, the learners could help at service points such as pension payout centres, Home Affairs offices or the Traffic Department offices, by assisting community members with filling in forms. Schools can also devise methods of combating illiteracy and sharpening parental skills. This will result in establishing links with the surrounding communities and the

school becoming the centre of cultural, artistic and educational activities for the community.

Municipalities can forge partnerships with schools by assisting the schools to establish their own libraries. Their involvement in the school business is also visible in the upkeep of school grounds, providing water and electricity and removing refuse from schools. The Traffic Department provides a service to schools by establishing patrols where learners cross roads and providing officers who preside over other public areas (Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 141).

In promoting community involvement, school managers must be able to perform the following core responsibilities (DoE, 2008: 115):

- ❖ Work to develop and maintain an effective partnership between the school and the community.
- ❖ Establish and maintain means of open communication between schools and the parent /carer community.
- ❖ Provide leadership and support to the wider community through the availability of school facilities and expertise.
- ❖ Ensure that teaching and learning in the school is linked into and related to the school's wider community.
- ❖ Build and maintain effective, collaborative relationships and partnerships with other agencies in the community.

Community involvement in the education of the learners is of paramount importance for the attainment of quality education. Community based organisations, businesses and other agencies can serve as essential elements to the schools providing support and services needed by the school. School managers must make sure that there is a cordial and effective collaboration and partnership between the school and the wider community.

2.5 SUMMARY

The responsibility of school managers in ensuring that schools are managed efficiently is very important. Quality education and academic success require the school manager to be alert to how effective his or her management and leadership performances are. Meticulous study of the SASP module will provide essential assistance and expert advice on how the school managers can sharpen their management and leadership skills and expertise and thereby promote academic success in their schools.

Competent school managers should be able to demonstrate an ability to achieve the core responsibilities of school management and leadership by

effectively carrying out the key areas of school leadership, drawing upon appropriate values and applying relevant personal and professional attributes (DoE, 2008: 39). Collaboration and co-operation between the school and state agencies have to be maintained to promote and enhance quality education. Parents' involvement in the education of their children cannot be underestimated.

Further consultation of the literature on the SASP is recommended for those school managers who intend to bring about improvement and effectiveness in their leadership and management expertise and consequently enhancing academic success in their schools.

This section covered management and leadership concepts, the management tasks as well as the important role school managers have to play in ensuring that academic success in the schools is achieved. The next chapter focuses on the role school managers in township secondary schools play in the promotion of academic achievement in their schools. Data towards this, gained through the focus group interviews, are analysed and interpreted.

CHAPTER 3:- THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapter dealt with the concepts education management and leadership, the management tasks and roles played by school managers in the provision of quality teaching and learning to promote academic success in their schools.

This chapter describes the research design and methodology used to investigate what makes some township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area perform remarkably well and thus promote academic success. Furthermore, the focus group interview, as a qualitative research instrument, which was used to collect data, is discussed in this chapter.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study is to investigate the manner in which school managers at well performing township secondary schools perceive their role in achieving academic success by learners in their schools. The research design and methodology are used to provide responses to this investigation. Polit and Beck (2004: 731) define a research design as an all inclusive plan for addressing a research question, including specifications for promoting the study's integrity.

In line with the above authors, Burns and Grove (2005: 211) describe research design as the structural framework or a blueprint that guides the researcher in the planning and implementation of the study, while achieving optimal control over the factors that could influence the study. McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 166) define a research design as a plan of selecting the participants, research sites and data collection methods to respond to the research questions.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher initially selected ten practising school managers as participants, but only eight school managers participated. The participants were all from well performing township secondary schools, that is, those schools which performed between 75% and 100% in the Grade 12 examinations, in Bloemfontein, which constitute the demographics for the research of this study. Finally, the focus group interview was used as a data collection instrument in order to provide data pertaining to the perspectives of school managers towards achieving academic success by the learners.

A qualitative method was followed in this study. Paine (2002: 262) defines the qualitative research method as using open-ended and free response questions

based on informal, loosely structured interviews, observations or diaries for the collection of data. De Vos (2000: 243) views qualitative research as a research method which elicits the participants' account of meaning, experiences or perceptions. It also provides descriptive data of the participants' beliefs and values that underlie the phenomena.

In this study, the researcher followed an interpretivist perspective, also called a constructivist approach, which forms part of the qualitative research method. This approach enables the researcher to obtain rich data regarding the subjective experiences of the participants and also to establish how they construct their social world, focusing on their roles in promoting academic success in township secondary schools (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004: 33).

Creswell (2007: 20 & 21) demonstrates that interpretivists seek to understand and interpret the complex views of individuals and the subjective meanings they assign to their experiences. Furthermore, the criteria used in the interpretivists' approach are founded on the theoretical belief that social reality is mainly based on what people perceive it to be (Neuman, 2003: 72).

This implies that what the researcher and the participants understand is communicated and discussed within the cultures, social settings and relationships with other people (Neuman, 2003: 72). As a result, the participants were interviewed and tape-recorded after their permission was requested and obtained. The interviews were then transcribed. Thereafter, the data was analysed and interpreted with the purpose of exploring the role school managers play in ensuring achieving academic success in their schools.

In reality, the qualitative research method uses instruments such as interviews, observations and focus group interviews to obtain data relevant to the research study (Paine, 2002: 262). For the purpose of this research, the researcher decided to use the focus group interview. According to Seale *et al.* (2004: 65), the focus group interview can provide prompts to encourage discussion and can respond to a plausible audience for that discussion, in other words it is not just the researcher who is doing the talking.

Morgan (1997: 10) states that the focus group interview works best for topics people can discuss with each other in their everyday lives, but do not usually do. It provides direct evidence about similarities and differences in the participants' opinions and experiences, as opposed to reaching such conclusions from the analysis of separate statements from individual interviews.

Consequently, in selecting this approach the researcher was able to obtain a thorough understanding of the practising school managers' perspectives in relation to planning, organising, leading and controlling with regard to academic achievement in their schools and to appreciate their situations

(Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 153). In the following paragraphs the primary objectives of the research are be discussed.

3.3 PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The primary objectives of the research, which the researcher pursued in this study are mentioned below.

- ❖ To investigate how management and leadership practices contribute to academic success.
- ❖ To determine the challenges faced by the school managers with regard to their role in ensuring academic success at their schools.
- ❖ To compare and interpret data collected by means of focus group interviews against the background of the theoretical study.
- ❖ To formulate guidelines, that will equip school managers with the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure academic success in their schools.

The following paragraphs discuss focus group interviews as a qualitative research method.

3.4 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS AS QUALITATIVE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Neuman (2003: 396) describes the focus group interview as a special research method in which people are informally interviewed in a group setting. Focus group interview refers to a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a specific topic determined by the researcher to respond to the research questions (Morgan, 1997: 272). According to Seale *et al.* (2004: 67), the focus group interview takes place in a context of several layers of argument, where people have conflicting beliefs and where social researchers present various interpretations of those beliefs.

Burns and Grove (2005: 205) lend weight to these statements by describing the focus group interview as a purposeful discussion of a specific topic or related topics taking place between six to ten individuals with a similar background and common interest. The group is focused in that it involves some kind of collection activity. As recommended by Polit and Beck (2004: 285), the researcher used the focus group interview for this study in order to elicit information regarding school managers' experiences and perspectives about effective school management for the promotion of academic achievement.

Seale *et al.* (2004: 69) advise that focus group interviews work better with some categories of participants. According to these authors, focus group interviews work best with educated, articulate or opinionated participants. This method works best with participants who have well developed routines for talking to each other. The researcher decided to follow these authors' advice by engaging school managers in the focus group interviews because they are educated, articulate and opinionated participants who have well developed routines of talking to one another.

The literature classifies the focus group interview into three dimensions, namely, moderate versus participant control, convergent versus divergent outcomes and participant speaking for themselves versus speaking as representative of others outside. These dimensions are briefly explained in the paragraphs below (Seale *et al.*, 2004: 69).

❖ **Moderate versus participant control**

This refers to the extent of the researcher's intervention to keep groups on the topic which can diverge the market research, whereby responses are usually tightly controlled to remain comparable among many groups rather than to a loosely moderated academic group.

❖ **Convergent versus divergent outcomes**

In this dimension some groups aim at generating the widest possible range of responses so that no voice is left unheard, leaving it to the analysts to select and summarise.

❖ **Participants speaking for themselves versus speaking as representative of others outside**

Participants can be left as strangers to each other, brought together just for the researcher's purpose or they can be treated as a group that develops its own aims, norms and relations to one another.

For the purpose of this study, the third classification was applied. Patton (2002: 386) advocates that the primary object of this dimension is to obtain high-quality data in a social context where participants can consider their own views in the context of the views of others. According to this classification participants who are strangers to one another, but have the same interest at heart, were brought together to respond to the questions pertaining to the perspectives of township secondary school managers with regard to the promotion of academic achievement.

Furthermore, data collected from the focus group interview sessions was supplemented with observations and field notes taken during the focus group

interviews. The transcripts from the audio-tapes were also used to complement the data. Talbot (1995: 48) defines field notes as the notes that the researcher takes while in the field. In other words, a written account of what the researcher heard, saw, experienced and thought during the process of data collection. There are four categories of field notes, namely observational notes, methodological notes, personal notes and theoretical notes (Talbot, 1995: 48). In this study, observational notes were applied.

According to Strydom (2002: 285), observational notes describe the setting, the people and what they can do from the perspective of the researcher. They sometimes provide information, which cannot be picked up with direct interaction. According to Hancock (2002:15), there are four different techniques for data collection namely written descriptions, video recording, photographs and documents. In this study, written descriptions were largely used.

The following paragraphs discuss the rationale for the choice of the focus group interviews.

3.4.1 Rationale for the choice of focus group interviews

The researcher decided to use focus group interviews because they:

- ❖ provide direct evidence about similarities and differences in the participants' opinions and experiences as opposed to reading such conclusions after the data analysis (Morgan, 1997: 10).
- ❖ are less time consuming since the researcher interviews more people at the same time (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 291).
- ❖ encourage individuals to express that which they regard as common among the group (Burns & Grove, 2005: 201).
- ❖ are flexible. The researcher can explore unanticipated issues as they arise (Burns & Grove, 2005: 201).

The advantages of focus group interviews are elaborated in the paragraphs below.

3.4.2 Advantages of focus group interviews

For this study to be credible and authentic the advantages of focus group interviews were considered. They are listed below (O'Reilly, 2005: 132 & 135):

- ❖ Since focus group interviews are a good way to set people to think broadly about something, a range of attitudes and responses on a subject is generated more quickly and cheaply than a survey would

have provided. They can also generate responses which a survey might not have included and are maybe better in obtaining the interviewee's perspective.

- ❖ There is an emphasis of how people react to something during interaction and on how the meaning is created in groups. In this way focus groups are faithful to the idea that people's feelings, perceptions and attitudes are formed not in isolation but in interaction with others.
- ❖ They generate conflicting ideas, making people change their minds and think again, thereby stimulating creativity. In some ways they are more creative and directive than an individual interview. Ideas emerge and are introduced that the interviewer might not have considered.
- ❖ They can be more naturalistic than individual interviews, reflecting the idea that people make sense of the work of interaction, not as individuals and taking on a life of their own even to the extent that participants can forget the researcher is there.
- ❖ Participants in focus group interviews are selected because of their relation to the topic. They are usually strangers. The level of control of the researcher will depend on the purpose and they are often conducted in series. They are seen to be more natural than an individual interview because people make up their own minds in groups. They are likely to be organised within an institutional setting.
- ❖ They create a social environment in which group members are stimulated by each other's perceptions and ideas, thereby increasing the quality and richness of data beyond what can be achieved with one to one interviewing (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997: 453).
- ❖ People often tend to feel empowered and capacitated, especially in action orientated research project (Neuman, 2003: 396).

Focus group interviews also have disadvantages. These disadvantages are discussed in the paragraphs below.

3.4.3 Disadvantages of focus group interviews

The researcher also considered the disadvantages of focus group interviews. O'Reilly (2005: 135) lists the following disadvantages of focus group interviews:

- ❖ Keeping control of the situation can be very difficult, with people easily wandering off the point and maybe getting angry or upset with each other.

- ❖ They can be difficult to arrange. It is also difficult to encourage people to participate in the focus group interview. A researcher can make decisions such as paying them for coming.
- ❖ Some people tend to be uncomfortable and uneasy about expressing their views in front of a group of people.
- ❖ It sometime becomes difficult for the researcher to reconcile the differences that arise between individuals only and group responses (Neuman, 2003: 396).

In order to overcome these disadvantages the researcher set the ground rules in order to ensure that the focus group interviews progress smoothly and to increase active participation by all the participants.

The paragraphs hereunder explain the ground rules which were set by the researcher before the commencement of the focus group interviews.

3.4.4 Ground rules set during the focus group interviews

At the start of the focus group interviews, the researcher, in ensuring that participants work harmoniously and co-operatively, made sure that the following aspects were strictly adhered to:

- ❖ Explaining the purpose of the focus group interviews, why the participants have been selected and why they are important to the project.
- ❖ That permission to audio-tape the discussion was obtained from the participants.
- ❖ All the participants introduced themselves at the start of the focus group interviews.
- ❖ That there is no order in which participants should speak.
- ❖ Interruptions are not allowed; however, the researcher might interrupt and redirect the discussion.
- ❖ Encouraging participation by everyone.
- ❖ Only one person should speak at a time.
- ❖ Indicating that all ideas are important and equally valid.
- ❖ That there are no wrong or right answers.

- ❖ Viewpoints should be stated without negatively commenting on the opinions and experiences of other group members.
- ❖ That each person's view should be respected and heard.

The participants were further informed that no one wins in the focus group interviews. They were free to respond to, and to disagree with, the ideas or opinions of another group. Disagreement is helpful, but it should be presented with respect or as an alternative viewpoint rather than a way to discredit the ideas of others (Schensul, Le Compte, Nastasi & Borgatti, 1999: 83).

In the paragraphs below, the schedule of the focus group interview questions is presented.

3.4.5 Focus group interview questions

Schensul *et al.* (1999: 88) posit that focus group interviews are often described as qualitative data, because they generate verbal responses to open ended interview questions. The focus group interview is intended to take 90 minutes and therefore eight to ten core questions should be sufficient.

However, in the quest to obtain more data which is relevant to the topic at hand, as well as the broad scope and nature of the study, more questions were posed to the participants. Focus group interviews were conducted with eight school managers during two sessions held on Thursday, 09.06.2011 at 14:30 and on Friday, 10.06.2011 at 13:00. The focus group interviews consisted of the following questions:

1. Do you provide both effective management and leadership in your school activities? Discuss briefly.
2. Do you think there is a need for some of the school managers in township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area who need to undergo more training especially, in management and leadership? Please provide reasons for your answer.
3. Which management tasks do you utilise to promote the achievement of academic success in your school? Please elaborate.
4. How do you ensure that there is a positive learning culture which will ensure that the NCS is effectively implemented in order to promote academic achievement in your schools? Explain briefly.
5. What do you do to ensure that there is team building in your schools which will promote academic success? Please expand.

6. What do you do to ensure that there is communication in your schools which will promote academic success? Please elaborate.
7. What do you do to ensure that there is motivation in your schools which will promote academic success? Please motivate.
8. Assuring quality is important for the schools' academic achievement. How do you ensure that quality is exercised effectively in your school to promote academic achievement?
9. Securing accountability is important for the schools' academic achievement. How do you ensure that accountability is exercised effectively in your school to promote academic achievement?
10. How do you ensure that school resources are effectively utilised in order to enhance academic success?
11. How do you ensure that parental involvement and community participation are promoted in the school and thus, lead to the improvement of the school's academic performance? Please expand.
12. How effective is the implementation of the IQMS in your school for the promotion of academic performance? Please expand.
13. Few township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area obtained between 75 % or more in their Grade 12 results in the previous five years. What do you think are the reasons for this kind of performance?

The questions were aimed at establishing:

- ❖ Which management tasks are utilised by school managers in township secondary schools to achieve academic success.
- ❖ Whether school managers utilise both management and leadership competency and maturity in the execution of their daily school duties which enable them to achieve academic success.
- ❖ Whether school managers promote parental and community participation and involvement which consequently result in the promotion of academic success.
- ❖ Whether school managers use school resources effectively in order to promote academic achievement.
- ❖ Whether school managers can identify the reasons which led to the remarkably well performance in their Grade 12 results in the five year

period from 2007 to 2011 and what can be done to sustain or improve these results.

- ❖ Whether there is a need for township secondary school managers to undergo further training, especially in education management and leadership.

The next paragraphs are devoted to the sampling procedure.

3.5 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

3.5.1 Sample

A sample refers to a selected group of people or elements in a defined population and the element is the most basic unit about which the information can be collected (Polit & Beck, 2004: 291). The sample in this study is made up of practising school managers from township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area whose schools performed remarkably well in the five year period from 2007 to 2011.

3.5.2 Selection of participants

Polit and Beck (2004: 291) describe sampling as a process of selecting a sample from a population in order to obtain information regarding the phenomenon. Sampling can be defined as the individual's participation in the research study from which data is collected to answer the research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001: 169).

In support of the abovementioned statement, Gorard (2001:10) discerns sampling as a useful method that leads to the results that can be as accurate as those of a full census of a population studied. Neuman (2003: 211) indicates that qualitative researchers focus more on the richness of the data and less on the representation of the sample. Therefore, the purpose of sampling in qualitative research is to collect data on specific events, that can clarify and deepen the understanding of the phenomenon and not to generalise the findings to a larger population.

Furthermore, the researcher followed a purposive sampling method by inviting school managers to take part in the focus group interview. Burns and Grove (2005: 532) define purposive sampling as a conscious selection of participants to be included in the study. According to Seale *et al.* (2004: 448), purposive sampling consists of detecting cases within extreme situations of certain characteristics or cases within a wide range of situations in order to maximise variation. In reality, this implies that the researcher has to interrogate all the possible situations.

The purposive sampling method is used because the researcher seeks participants with particular characteristics or knowledge about the phenomenon under the study. This is why, in this study the participants who met the inclusion criteria were selected, for example, school managers whose experiences and perceptions can provide the relevant information of what contributes to academic achievement in township schools in the Bloemfontein area.

Initially, ten participants were randomly selected for participation in the focus group interviews on the basis of their position as school managers. However, during the actual focus group interviews only eight participants participated. Interestingly, these groups consisted of participants of different gender and race, as well as of their current position held at school. The focus group interviews were held over two sessions, as indicated below.

During Session 1 held on Thursday (09.06.2011) at 14:30 at the researcher's school, the following information with regard to the participants was obtained.

Table 3.1: Biographical information of Session 1 participants

Participants	Gender	Race	Position
A	Male	White	Principal
B	Female	Black	Deputy Principal
C	Male	Black	HOD
D	Male	Black	Principal

During Session 2 held on Friday (10.06.2011) at 13:00 at one of the participant's schools the following information with regard to the participants was obtained.

Table 3.2: Biographical information of session 2 participants

Participants	Gender	Race	Position
E	Female	Black	HOD
F	Male	Black	HOD
G	Male	Black	Principal
H	Female	Indian	Master Teacher

For the purpose of this study, the participants included met the following requirements:

- ❖ School managers in township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area.
- ❖ School managers who have more than five years experience in their respective positions.

- ❖ School managers who have been in the teaching fraternity for more than ten years.
- ❖ School managers who understand and can communicate in English.
- ❖ School managers whose schools achieved a Grade 12 pass rate of more than 75% in the previous five year period (2007-2011).

The participants were also requested to provide their personal data before the start of the focus group interviews. This information is presented in tables 3.3 and 3.4 below:

Table 3.3 Focus group interview: Session 1 participants

PARTICIPANTS	BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS				
	Age group	Highest qualification	Teaching experience in years	Experience as school manager in years	Current study
(A) Principal	41-50	Ph D	21	11	No
(B) Deputy Principal	30-40	B Ed (Hons)	12	5	No
(C) HOD	41-50	B Tech	25	9	No
(D) Principal	41-50	PGDE	23	15	No

Table 3.4 Focus group interview: Session 2 participants

PARTICIPANTS	BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS				
	Age group	Highest qualification	Teaching experience in years	Experience as school manager in years	Current study
(E) HOD	41-50	BA (Hons)	18	7	No
(F) HOD	41-50	JSTC	32	5	No
(G) Principal	41-50	ACE- School Leadership & Management	23	10	No
(H) Master Teacher	51-60	MSc	34	6	No

The focus group interviews were conducted at the different venue over two days. The researcher used his school as the first venue and one of the participants offered the use of his school as the second venue. Permission to conduct focus group interviews was requested and obtained from the FSDoE. Lastly, focus group interviews were scheduled at times which would not interrupt tuition or the midyear examinations of the learners as prescribed by the FSDoE.

In the following paragraphs the sample size is discussed.

3.5.3 Sample size

Various researchers believe that the sample size is determined by a number of factors. Burns and Grove (2005: 358) comment that in qualitative research the sample size is often limited because of the richness of the data obtained and the extent to which the phenomenon is explored during the focus group interviews. The pertinent feature which determines the sample size is the saturation of the data which occurs when no new information is discovered as well as the availability of a sufficient number of participants who will ensure that the study provides credible results (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001: 177; Neuman, 2003: 211).

Gorard (2001:14) acknowledges that in social science research, including education, sample sizes are often very small. A group of four to 12 people, who are often strangers to each other, can serve as a sufficient sample size to take part in focus group interviews on a specific topic. The main aim is to generate a range of experiences, views and responses (O'Reilly, 2005: 132). In support of this notion, Polit and Beck (2004: 342) suggest that a group of six to 12 people could be utilised to participate in the focus group interviews under the guidance of the researcher.

In this study, a group of ten school managers were invited to take part in the focus group interviews to discuss the perspectives of township school managers in relation to academic achievement of learners. However, only eight school managers pitched for the interviews.

3.5.4 Ethical considerations

For ethical considerations, the researcher used pseudonyms to identify the participants, for example, participant A, B, or C. Furthermore, the voluntary participation of the participants was acknowledged at all times. Consent and verbal confirmation from the participants who took part on a voluntary basis were requested and obtained. Participants were assured that their identities and school names will be kept confidential. To protect them from harm, the researcher ensured the participants that honesty will be upheld. The following paragraphs deal with the collection of data.

3.6 COLLECTION OF DATA

3.6.1 Data collection

According to Kvale (in Groenewald, 2004: 48), data collection within the qualitative research method, is literally an interview, or an interchange of views between two or more persons discussing a theme of mutual interest with the purpose of unfolding the perception of the participants' experiences. Neuman (2003: 6) views qualitative methodology as those approaches which enable the researcher to learn first hand about the social world they are studying by means of involvement and participation in that world, focusing on what individuals say or do.

The researcher conducted the focus group interviews with school managers in an effort to explore their perspectives with regard to academic achievement in their schools. He presented the questions verbally to the participants and simultaneously observed and took field notes while the group discussed the questions. He asked his colleagues to operate the voice recorder in order to record the discussions. This process of taking field notes by the researcher is known as memoing. Memoing refers to the researcher's field notes recording what he or she hears, sees, experiences and thinks in the course of collecting data and reflecting on the process (Miles & Huberman in Groenewald, 2004: 48).

The questions asked were related to the participants' experiences, feelings, convictions and beliefs about the topic of the research. Data was obtained about how the participants think and feel in the most direct way. The researcher focused on the responses of the participants and probed them to describe their actual experiences in a language as free from the constructs of intellect and the society as possible (Groenewald, 2004: 47).

3.6.2 Data storage and safe keeping

Seale *et al.* (2004: 73) propose that the researcher must record the focus group interviews on an audio-tape instead of using a video tape, because the audio-tape provides more data for analysis. The researcher, therefore, audio-recorded the focus group interviews on a voice recorder. Permission to audio-record the focus group interviews was requested and obtained from the participants. The recordings were later technologically transferred onto compact disks (CDs) by means of a computer and labelled with the assigned interview code and date. Soon after the interviews, the researcher listened to the recordings and made notes. Transcriptions of key words, phrases and statements were made in order to allow the voices of the participants to speak, as prescribed by (Groenewald, 2004: 48).

Furthermore, the researcher had to ensure that the data collected were kept safe until the data analysis had been completed. As a result the following measures were taken:

- ❖ The researcher made use of a high quality digital voice-recorder (VN-8500PC) during the focus group interviews.
- ❖ The recordings were later technologically transferred onto CDs which could be played on a CD deck.
- ❖ The CDs were labelled with the abbreviation of: focus group interview (FGI) and dated, for instance (FGI, 09.06.2011 and FGI, 10.06.2011).
- ❖ Copies of the labelled transcriptions were kept safe in a locked container.
- ❖ Pseudonyms were given to the participants, for instance, participant A, B or C.
- ❖ All transcripts would be destroyed as soon as the results and report had been published.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a process of systematically organising, categorising and summarising data and describing it in meaningful terms to answer the research questions (Brink, Van der Walt & Van Rensburg, 2008: 170). A qualitative data analysis is a non-mathematical analytical procedure that involves examining the meaning of people's words and actions. This method is further used to identify themes and patterns in the qualitative data (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 124).

Polit and Beck (2004: 570) also indicate that qualitative data analysis involves the integration and synthesis of narrative data in order to draw and communicate conclusions without loss of content and richness of data. The same authors further propose that the researcher has to analyse the data at the same time as data collection, whilst Seidman (1991: 86) suggested that the researcher must wait until the interviews are completed before commencing with the data analysis to avoid imposing on the process of the interviews. For the purpose of this study, the researcher decided to take Seidman's suggestion of waiting until the interviews were completed before analysing the data.

The audio-taped interviews were repeatedly listened to and compared with the verbatim transcripts. The transcripts were then read and reread. As mentioned in Chapter 1, two coding procedures, namely, open coding and axial coding were used during data analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990: 205). Open coding can be defined as the naming and categorising of the phenomenon through

close examination of the data and involves comparisons and asking questions (Gray, 2004: 330). Each participant was allocated an identifying pseudonym, for example, participant A. After carefully listening and making notes from the responses of the participants, themes were assigned codes in an attempt to condense the data into categories by categorising the themes according to their properties and incidents (Hardy & Bryman, 2004: 636). In the application of the axial coding method, after the researcher carefully listened to the transcripts, the data was studied as it emerged, making it easier for the researcher to identify the participants' implicit meanings and thereby identifying relationships between the themes (Gray, 2004: 331; Hardy & Bryman, 2004: 636; Strauss & Corbin, 1990: 205).

The researcher meticulously utilised Tesch's method which is cited in Creswell (2003: 192) during the analysis of the transcription of the interviews. This method comprises eight steps which the researcher has to follow in the process of data analysis. These steps are indicated in the paragraphs below.

- ❖ The researcher must get a sense of the whole by carefully reading through the transcriptions and writing down ideas as they come to mind.
- ❖ The researcher must pick the most interesting interview and go through it. He or she must ask himself or herself "what is this about?" He must think more about the underlying meaning and less about the essence of the information. Thoughts must be written in the margin.
- ❖ After the completion of this task, topics must be identified. Similar topics must be grouped together. He or she must then draw columns and categorise these topics into major or unique topics and the surplus.
- ❖ The researcher must then compare the list made with the data and abbreviate the topics as codes. These codes must be written next to the appropriate segment of the text. He or she must attempt this preliminary organising scheme to see whether new categories and codes emerge.
- ❖ The researcher must find the most descriptive wording for the topics and transform them into categories. He or she must consider means of decreasing the total list of categories by clubbing topics that relate to each other and to draw lines between the categories to indicate interrelationships.
- ❖ The researcher must make a final decision on the abbreviation of each code and alphabetise the codes.
- ❖ This step involves assembling of the data material which belongs to each category in one place and performing a preliminary data analysis.

- ❖ If necessary, the researcher can recode the existing data.

Moreover, during the transcription of the focus group interviews the researcher followed the conventions prescribed by Seale *et al.* (2004: 73), namely:

- ❖ All the words were transcribed, using conventional spelling (not using the spelling to indicate the pronunciation in any way).
- ❖ Repeated words, broken-off words and back channel utterances (uh-huh, mm) were ignored.
- ❖ Uncertain or inaudible passages were refined.
- ❖ There were no indication of pauses, overlap, stresses, volume, pace or intonation except in conventional punctuation.

The merits of using these conventions are because they save transcription time and make transcripts readable. The extra features found in some other transcription systems can make the text nearly unreadable and can even influence a reader's sense of the social status of the participants (Seale *et al.*, 2004: 73).

It is important to mention that during the process of data analysis, the following procedures were followed:

- ❖ Focus group interview responses were audio-recorded on a digital voice recorder, observations and field notes were made in writing.
- ❖ The recordings were then transferred onto CDs by means of the computer.
- ❖ The matrix table was compiled and responses were analysed.
- ❖ Similarities and differences between the responses were compared.
- ❖ Themes were identified and coded.

The researcher read through all the transcripts to obtain a good overview of the results and thoughts were written in the margin. Identified themes were also written in the margin. Similar themes were grouped together. Data was then read for the second time, comparing them with the list of identified themes and categories. When the coding was completed, the data belonging to each category was assembled in one place. The data that was found to be irrelevant was discarded (Strauss & Corbin, 1990: 205).

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS

The researcher had to ensure that the trustworthiness of the research is not compromised. Trustworthiness is described as the extent to which findings provide truth-value of data collected (Merriam 1998: 196). Merriam (1998: 198) indicates that trustworthiness of the results depends on the validity and reliability of the study. This requires ethical conduct by the researcher during the inquiry. In qualitative research, generalisation is not the aim, but what is imperative is to encourage the trustworthiness of the study (Mashele, 2003: 4).

The sampled schools participated meaningfully in the focus group interviews which took place in the Bloemfontein area after their permission was sought. Confidentiality and ethical prerequisites as outlined in Chapter 1 were observed. The participants were informed of their rights as well as the importance of participating in the research. The data was collected, analysed, interpreted and synthesised. Findings, outcomes and recommendations were then formulated (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 145). Consequently, the researcher ensured trustworthiness by outlining and working along the objectives and purpose of the study.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

This section presents the results from the focus group interviews as part of the study. There were two focus groups, respectively made up of four school managers respectively. Though the researcher intended to have ten participants, two schools brought only one school manager. However, according to Gorard (2001: 14) eight participants in a focus group interview is sufficient.

The focus group interview questions were collected from the literature study in order to be able to compare the findings from the literature with the real experiences and perspectives of school managers. The findings are presented in the ensuing section below.

3.9.1 Themes identified

The transcription of the focus group interviews held with school managers in Bloemfontein were coded by awarding a symbol to signal words that represented a particular theme. A matrix table, containing various themes and direct words of the respondents, was compiled in order to compare the data and expose the differences and similarities. The data produced the themes and their codes as indicated in Table 3.5, which were then used for reporting purposes:

Table 3.5: Themes and their codes

No	Themes	Codes
1	Effective management and leadership	EML
2	Important management tasks	IMT
3	Creation of a positive leaning culture	PLC
4	Teamwork, motivation and communication	TMC
5	Assurance of quality and accountability	AQA
6	Effective management of resources	EMR
7	Parental and community participation	PCP
8	Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)	IQMS
9	Reasons for excellent academic performance in Grade 12	REAP
10	Training needed by school managers on management and leadership	TNS

3.9.2 Report

The report deals with the themes produced from the transcription of the focus group interviews. During the interviews, the researcher asked one question and requested the participants to discuss the particular question. Through the responses provided by school managers, the researcher was able to work out their perspectives on academic achievement. The coded themes and the responses of the eight participants are discussed in the paragraphs below.

3.9.2.1 Effectiveness of management and leadership (EML)

The participants believe that both management and leadership play an important role in the promotion of academic success in their schools in the Bloemfontein area. This correlates with the statement by Mosoge and Van der Westhuizen (1998:78) who emphasised that effective management of schools requires school managers to be both managers and leaders. The responses of the respondents are indicated below:

He or she must know what is expected from that particular person. That is leadership, it must be visionary and directive (Participant A).

There is management and there is leadership. You can be a good manager, who is able to handle processes, to know legislation. But in terms of leadership, some of these things you cannot read from the books. Leadership is you. You need a particular kind of an attitude for you to be the leader, especially of the school. Leadership comes from within; it's an attitude kind of a thing (Participant G).

Managerial skills are very important if the school has to be successful. Principals need to be good leaders to ensure that schools are managed successfully (Participant H).

Participants B and C on the other hand are of the opinion that leadership ensures that the school has a vision and is moving towards an intended direction and also provides motivation. This is illustrated in the following responses:

The leader must emphasise the school vision and direction. In the school environment we usually depend on the leader. The leader must show the direction. He must lead (Participant B).

Sometimes you as a leader you have to motivate the educators. You have to show the direction. You have to be in the front. Just to show them that you always support them (Participant C).

The participants were explicitly clear about the contribution of both management and leadership in the promotion of academic success. Most of them indicated that leadership is important for achieving academic success. They stressed the point that leadership comes from within and not necessarily from the literature. This concurs with Bisschoff *et al.* (2004: 139) who stated that leadership is not the function of the position a person holds, but it basically emerges from the desire of an individual to improve the circumstances of any situation as a service to others.

Kroon (1990: 353 & 354) believes that leadership is a process whereby the leader influences a group of people in such a manner that they will subsequently strive to achieve the objectives he or she presents to them. Thurlow *et al.* (2003: ix) postulate that the extent to which effective learning is achieved becomes the criterion against which the quality of management is to be measured. The utilisation of both education management and leadership by school managers in their schools will ensure the provision of quality teaching and learning. It is clear that academic achievement will only be attained if school managers utilise both management and leadership in their daily school activities. In the next paragraphs, the importance of the management tasks for the achievement of academic success is discussed.

3.9.2.2 Important management tasks (IMT).

As indicated in Marais (2003:123) and Du Toit *et al.* (2007: 129) school managers have to acquaint themselves with the four basic management tasks of planning, organising, leading and control in order to achieve academic success in their schools. The foregoing is corroborated by the school managers who emphasised the profoundly important role management tasks play in achieving academic success. Respondent G emphasised the importance of planning and monitoring by saying:

In our school we plan collectively. Planning the year prior to the coming year. Towards the end of the year we sit down and identify the activities, we design a programme and then we consolidate it. We believe in strong monitoring

and support to our colleagues. Many meetings are held from time to time. Some are planned; some are abrupt depending on the situation. From the literature there are four main management tasks, namely, planning, co-ordination, organising, control, monitoring and all those, but there are many (Participant G).

Participant (A) supported Participant (G) on the importance of planning and monitoring as effective tools of ensuring that academic success is achieved. He responded as follows:

I think that planning and monitoring are very important. Specific goals must be set. After the goals have been set, there must be proper planning. I strongly believe in monitoring, because without it the goals will never be met and the direction will be lost. You must monitor, evaluate and train your staff. We have a feedback system to motivate and evaluate, but not to break down. We must monitor and evaluate throughout the process. The SMT must monitor teacher progress throughout the year. The monitoring team from the FSDoE must also come to the schools and do monitoring and checking whether the educators have been evaluated as they are supposed to be evaluated. Monitoring must be the business of the day.

In response to the above, participant (B) added:

One of my colleagues has spoken about monitoring as a tool. A tool to make sure that the required product is delivered to the learner. Monitoring should serve as a motivation factor towards the staff and not as a deterrent towards the staff. You know, there are cases where we use monitoring as a tool to police the staff. But in this case I would say monitoring must be used to motivate the staff. We must use monitoring tools that would do a lot for the success of management and the school as a whole.

Moreover, participants (A) and (E) are of the opinion that control and monitoring of the educators' work is vitally important for academic success.

When it comes to monitoring, it has to be the same, from languages to subject content (Participant E).

Control of educators' work and monitoring them from time to time will help the school quite a lot (Participant A).

The literature emphasised the role school managers have to play in terms of the four basic management tasks for the enhancement of academic success in the schools (Du Toit *et al.*, 2007: 129). During the focus group interviews participants expressed a strong opinion on the fact that indeed, management tasks positively contribute to the attainment of academic success in township secondary schools in Bloemfontein.

Serious emphasis was placed on advanced planning. School managers asserted that through personnel meetings they are able to assemble as personnel and plan collectively and to ensure that whatever is planned is put into practice. Collective planning is particularly emphasised by the participants. This view of school managers regarding their description of planning as a process which clarifies the organisational goals and strategies to achieve those organisational goals corresponds with the views of Everard, Morris and Wilson (2004: 276) support

Control is another management task emphasised by the participants. Control of educators and learners' work as well as of the school resources are done on a regular basis. According to Du Toit *et al.* (2007: 257) and Cronje *et al.* (2003: 262), control narrows the gap between what was planned and the actual performance of the management and ensures that all the activities are carried out as they should be. Monitoring is another management tool school managers can use to promote academic success. Bush and Bell (2002: 157 & 285) indicate that monitoring is concerned with ensuring that plans are being put into practice. Successful teaching necessitates educators to effectively monitor the learner's performances as well as their own practices. This statement is to a great extent supported by the participants.

Furthermore, the literature suggests that it would be insensible to perform these management tasks in any other sequence as school managers will find it difficult to provide effective management which will promote academic achievement (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003: 128). It is imperative for school managers to really utilise the management tasks effectively if they seriously intend to improve their schools' academic performance. The next paragraph focuses on the creation of a positive learning culture for the successful implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS).

3.9.2.3 Creation of a positive leaning culture for the successful implementation of the NCS (PLC)

Masitsa (2008: 102) observed that one of the most important challenges facing South Africa today is the restoration of a culture of teaching and learning, because the majority of schools continue to reflect the characteristics of a poorly developed culture of teaching and learning. Mathibe (2007: 534) adds that effective teaching by educators will nurture the extension of the school's culture. A participant supported this view point by saying:

I also believe that the simple things we usually overlook will make the learning environment to be conducive. Simple things like appearance, outward appearance when you enter the gate. If you see filth, I don't think learners will be intrinsically motivated. Filth on the premises and learners smoking, I don't think that would do well for intrinsic motivation. But a clean premise and a beautiful garden are intrinsic motivations. They motivate learners to come to school, and once they are at school, we as educators are

motivated to do our work. As you know there are many factors that we are usually not aware of, which can create a positive environment. Uniform, for example, if all learners are dressed the same, this automatically gives the impression that they can perform better (Participant B).

A positive learning culture cannot be created when people such as, the management, educators, non teaching staff and learners are not motivated. The learning environment, that is, without a positive environment, learners will not enjoy the school, the work or the learning environment. The SGB and the SMT must create an environment in which discipline becomes the order of the day (Participant D).

In addition, the participants emphasised that remedial work and examinations play an important part in the promotion of academic success. The following statements from the responses illustrate this influential part:

It is very important to do remedial work with the learners. Even those who did badly, you go through the memorandum with them. You discuss each question so that even those who did badly understand why they failed and how they should approach the question next time. Constantly, you have to do remedial work. You also have to discuss the rubric with the learners. It should be accessible to them. They should know what meritorious is, what adequate is and why you gave them a "not achieved" rating. You must read the descriptors to them. You must discuss the descriptors with them as this will promote learning (Participant E).

The other important thing is that just before the examinations, you must give the learners the structure of the paper to be written. Not the paper itself. You must tell them to expect certain kinds of questions. This may include questions such as essay type of questions or short questions. In this way the learners will know exactly what to expect when they approach the examinations. It's not like you are going to catch them. No, not at all (Participant F).

The feedback that we give to the learners is very important. When we give them assignments, the next day the first thing we do is to give the memo to them to mark those assignments. In this way we create a culture of learning and of knowing the importance of learning. We have to do this activity continuously (Participant H).

One participant went further to suggest that school managers have to ensure that they create an environment of high expectations from all the stakeholders as well as a family atmosphere. The participant expressed that:

Just to add, the environment in the school plays an important role, because if the environment is not conducive, definitely teaching and learning cannot take place. We create an environment of high expectations from everybody, from Grade 8. During that week before the schools reopen, we give them our

expectations for in the next four to five years. When schools officially reopen, they already know about the expectations of the school. They know what is expected from them to perform and what is not going to be allowed in the school or outside the school. We have all these learners who want to be the best. We have realised that as learners are pushed to that level, they sometimes pull you as an educator to do your part. So it's a challenge, so we are forced to perform and the environment of high expectation serves as a motivation. We create a family atmosphere. We celebrate even small things, even things not happening at school. If a learner has won a karate medal we ask him to bring it to school and we announce it in the assembly. These small things keep the staff together, as a family (Participant G).

Clarke (2009: 3) posits that educators have to ensure that a positive learning environment is created through assignments, formal examinations, tests, projects and classroom questioning. In addition, the curriculum must afford the learners an opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills, values and to participate productively in the teaching and learning practice (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992: 11), whilst Bush and Bell (2002: 316 & 317) emphasise that the schools are established to serve learners and therefore a quality lesson is one which the learners understand rather than one which educators feel meets their criteria.

Similarly, the school managers in the best performing schools ensure that an environment of high expectation and a positive learning culture is created, which results in the achievement of academic success. These participants emphasised the important role played by the school's physical environment such as keeping the school premises clean. They maintain that a tidy environment, with a beautiful garden as well as wearing school uniforms serve as a motivation to both the personnel and the learners.

The other important matter which the interviewees highlighted is the creation of a family atmosphere. This atmosphere also encourages the personnel and the learners to feel part and parcel of the school and induces them to work hard so that the school can be successful. Mathibe (2007: 534) endorses that effective teaching by educators will nurture the extension of the school's culture. Educators are expected to plan lessons which will ensure that learning becomes interesting to the learners. Therefore, a positive learning culture has to be created in order to ensure that the learners achieve maximum excellent performance. In the following paragraph the importance of teamwork, motivation and communication are explored.

3.9.2.4 Importance of teamwork, motivation and communication (TMC)

According to Johnson and Bonaiuto (2009: 27), communication is at the heart of a good school system. In a successful school, professionals co-ordinate services, share information, and support learners. Communication is the basis for establishing relationships and for providing motivation. It aims at

generating an understanding of the school and its activities by the community (Henderson in Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 391). In collaboration with the literature, school managers attributed academic success in their schools to communication. They asserted that:

One of my colleagues has talked about clear roles and responsibilities of each and every educator. There must be communication. You can use delegation to bring about communication with the staff. Delegation is one of the most important tools you can use to bring about communication within the staff members. Once you open channels of communication, educators feel that they are part and parcel of the school. For any school to succeed, educators must be motivated. And for motivation there are two aspects, that is intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. As for intrinsic motivation, they must be motivated from within (Participant A).

Communication is important. We must conduct regular SMT meetings, staff meetings, briefing sessions and so on. Educators must be able to communicate their problems with the management (Participant D).

It is imperative that management opens the channels of communication with personnel members by conducting regular personnel meetings, morning briefings and having informal discussion meetings. This will lead to excellent teaching and learning and consequently enhance academic achievement (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2002: 40). School managers, as communicators, communicate with various people in a number of different ways about situations, problems or issues. It is essential for school managers to obtain feedback from the stakeholders about the activities at the school by informing the parents about the activities at the school. This can be done by means of letters and by inviting parents to the parents meetings and parent evenings. In these meetings educators will interact with parents and discuss the progress of the learners (Naidu *et al.*, 2008: 83).

Furthermore, participants (B) and (E) believe that motivation is critical for the enhancement of academic achievement. They said that:

Tidy school premises motivate learners to come to school, and once they are at school, we are motivated as educators, to do our work. And as indicated before, teamwork is vital for proper school management. I think we also need to work towards the creation of team building. Everybody should know his or her place as an educator. Interrelationships between various educators are important. They are important factors of the team spirit (Participant B).

Sometimes we, as the management, invite experts from outside the school to motivate the staff. We also arrange small get togethers, just little ones to make the educators feel free and to make them feel that they are part of the school. From time to time in our meetings, after the usual business, we keep on hammering on the issues of motivation, trying to make them feel that they are

really needed here. Just to add on, team spirit is also encouraged. (Participant E).

The abovementioned statements are aligned with the literature. Steyn and Van Niekerk (2002: 141) resonate that motivated educators will ensure that quality teaching and learning takes place. Motivation has to do with complex forces, incentives, needs, tension, and other mechanisms that energise, channel and sustain the human behaviour, whereas Van der Westhuizen (1991: 387) endorses that the important role of school managers involve inspiring the personnel to attain a common objective, which is academic success. School managers must also work hard to motivate the educators and learners. The educators and learners have to be motivated intrinsically and extrinsically as this will help the school to achieve success academically. School managers can invite experts, such as motivational speakers, psychologists and priests to visit their schools in order to motivate their colleagues and learners.

Teamwork is another tool school managers can utilise to ensure that quality teaching and learning takes place, resulting in the achievement of academic success. The participants indicated that:

Teamwork is very important. The management must work as a team. The SMT must work as a team, as a whole. Sometimes you as a leader have to motivate the educators to work as a team (Participant C).

Teamwork is very crucial when it comes to teaching and learning. Teamwork is very, very important. This thing of coming together is also very important for the purpose of motivating the staff (Participant F).

In support of the respondents, Mathibe (2007: 533) posits that school managers should encourage and create a climate and a culture of co-operation and success in schools and between all the teams in order to increase opportunities for self-expression, creativity, communication, motivation, and collective actions. Mathibe (2007: 535) further demonstrates that effective school managers will empower their teams by delegating as much authority as possible. Communicating with teams directs the educators to work towards sustaining the competitiveness of the school.

Careful scrutiny of the ways in which team building and effective teamwork may be encouraged reveals that school managers must create teams from a group of people with a common objective, whose members possess different areas of expertise, skills, personalities and abilities that complement one another, and who are committed to working together co-operatively on a common shared task and purpose (Morrison, 1998: 182 & 183). This will surely promote effective teaching and learning.

From the preceding statements by the participants and from the literature study, it is evident that establishing a team spirit is essential for the effective

running of the school. Workshops and personnel meetings can be used to establish team spirit among the staff members. Relationships among all the personnel members have to be strengthened. Good relationships promote the spirit of togetherness. When people work together as a team, success will be achievable. The following paragraphs are devoted to assurance of quality and accountability.

3.9.2.5 Assurance of quality and accountability (AQA).

The literature emphasises the importance of quality assurance and securing accountability (Gunter 2001; Inglis & Aers, 2008; Naidu *et al.*, 2008; Clarke, 2009; Marais, 2009). Evidently, the participants corroborate the above that assuring quality and securing accountability are fundamentally critical for attaining academic success in township secondary schools in Bloemfontein. This view is expressed in the following conversations:

Basically, quality results are what happens in the classroom. As indicated before by one of my colleagues, the analysis of results for quality control is very important. These analyses provide us with the academic direction the school is taking. The results indicate whether the learners are performing good or not. This process in a way ensures that educators are accountable (Participant A).

In our school after each and every quarter, we sit down as the SMT and analyse the result for each and every class. We compare the performances of all the educators in terms of their pass and failure rates in their different subjects. We check, for example, how many level 7s or 6s there are and why other subjects have only level 2s. We then try to find solutions to these problems. I think it is working for us (Participant C).

In our case, in terms of this question, we usually talk about quality question papers during exams. Before we emphasise quality question papers, we must emphasise quality teaching. But immediately when the school reopens we hold a meeting where we analyse results, the performance of the learners and educators. Educators must give reasons why they performed they way they did. That really promotes accountability. The educator must indicate what it is he or she is going to do to improve the current condition. It is not a kind of a catch or witch hunt kind of a situation, because they know that even if the person did not perform well, I own up as principal. For instance, if in Mathematics we did not perform well, as principal, I am part of that. That creates accountability and ownership on the part of the school (Participant G).

Although the abovementioned participants emphasised the importance of quality assurance in terms of regular analysis of results, participants B and D highlight the importance of quality contact and quality teaching as the determinants of quality assurance and accountability. These participants stated that:

In our school we are strict when it comes to control. We are very, very strict with class attendance. Not just class attendance, but quality contact as well. Educators have everything, the means and tools, therefore they must be held accountable. They must know that accountability is part of their responsibility (Participant B).

For the quality of teaching, I think it is important for principals to know what is going on in the classrooms. I am for class visits by principals without being scheduled by the IQMS structure. I think this is an important way of ensuring quality assurance. Quality is not only about academic matters, and the general running of the school, but also about the administrative functions in the office. The environment of the school should encourage the participation of parents, through fundraising and school fund collection projects (Participant D).

Interestingly, participant (F) holds the view that marking and moderation of the learners' examination scripts and giving back these scripts to learners after marking serve as a tool to measure accountability. This participant mentioned that:

The educators' accountability can be determined during the marking of the exam papers which must be accounted for. The learners must be given their exam scripts after they have been marked. The educators must account for every mark given to the learner. It is our policy that when schools reopen, the learners must get their scripts back to compare the marks. In this way it will be established whether the educator did his or her work. The HOD will moderate the papers so there is no possibility that educators will give the so called "false marks" (Participant F).

There seems to be consensus between the literature and the respondents with regard to the assurance of quality and accountability. This is observed by a regular analysis of learners' and educators' performances, which enables school managers to ensure that there is quality teaching and learning as well as accountability in their schools. The foregoing correlates with West-Burnham's views (in Thurlow *et al.*, 2003: 139) that it is essential for school managers to ensure that there is assurance of quality and quality control in their schools.

The assurance of quality encourages a system of continuous assessment of teaching and learning activities with the purpose of ensuring that teaching and learning conform to the standards required by the Department of Education, parents and learners (Morrison, 1998: 84). In addition, the DoE (2008: 111) states that school managers have an overall responsibility for the promotion of quality assurance and that they are accountable to a wide range of stakeholders for all aspect of the schools' performance and its continuing improvement.

Moreover, the critical role played by accountability in the attainment of academic success is accentuated by both the participants and the literature. Naidu *et al.*, (2008: 40) concede that the school has a specific duty allocated to it by society which is to educate the young people of the community. In carrying out this task, the school is answerable to the community that it has indeed performed this task as expected. The above statement supports the statement by Lello (1993: 1 & 2), who indicated that the educators who are responsible for curriculum implementation in the classroom are the people who are expected to provide quality education and to fully understand what it means to be accountable. Without a detailed awareness of what the educators are doing in the classroom, it would be impossible for them to do their duty efficiently. When the educators are aware that they are accountable, they will be encouraged to enhance their effectiveness in teaching and learning.

In reality, school managers and the above cited authors are in agreement that the assurance of quality and accountability play an important role in the achievement of academic success. Effective management of resources, as one of the themes identified, is deliberated in the following paragraphs.

3.9.2.6 Effective management of resources (EMR)

Effective management and maintenance of resources play an essential part in the promotion of academic success. According to the SASA (RSA, 1996(b):s. 34), provincial departments are responsible for ensuring that schools are provided with resources to ensure that effective teaching and learning can take place. However, school managers are of the opinion that schools do not receive sufficient resources, which negatively affect the quality of teaching and learning. This view is expressed by participant (B) who argued that:

We have limited resources which create barriers for us and make it very difficult to provide quality teaching and learning. However, we do manage to at least ensure that learners are receiving proper education. (Participant B).

Despite the limited provision of resources, school managers ensure that these limited resources are utilised responsibly and sparingly. Participants explained that:

With the little that we have, we have to make sure that somebody is in charge of it. We must get somebody who will be held accountable so that it is basically controlled. Having control over resources and monitoring them from time to time, will help the school quite a lot (Participant A).

There must be control of resources. The school must choose somebody to be responsible for the record keeping of all the available school resources (Participant C).

Furthermore, keeping records of the available resources is fundamentally imperative as cited by participants (E), (F) and (H). These participants indicated that:

At our school, we have an asset committee. The committee members get records from the HODs. They keep these records. From time to time, as participant C has indicated, they should be checked and there should be clear traces of what was recorded in January and must still be there in July. Otherwise they grow feet (Participant E).

We do have limited resources, like the shortage of textbooks and photocopy materials. Each subject educator must make it a point that they have list of the learners who are provided with textbooks. The school must keep a book register and it must be in duplicate. The head of department and the educator must have lists, and every now and then they must go through and check whether the learners still have their books. It is difficult sometimes for all learners to have a book. When learners have lost books, they must replace them (Participant F).

Keeping records is very important. All the resources the schools obtain from the DoE should be recorded and there should be a person who is designated to look after these resources, otherwise they will get lost (Participant H).

Even though most participants acknowledged the insufficient provision of resources, participant (G) accentuated the fact that school managers should stop complaining about the lack of resources and utilise the resources that are available maximally. The participant retorted that:

We, township schools, always complain that we do not have resources, but even the ones that we have, we do not use them maximally. We have these computers that we cannot use and they have become white elephants. (Participant G).

In addition, participant (D) encouraged school managers to budget appropriately and to spend school finances on education related needs. The participant advised that:

Stay within the budget and expend the finances on educational needs (Participant D).

The literature corroborates the notion that the management of resources plays a significant role in ensuring that effective teaching and learning occurs. Resources play an important role in providing effective teaching and learning, and it is therefore very important that the SGB of the public school takes all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the FSDoE in order to promote quality education to all the learners in the school (Bush & Bell, 2002: 208); (RSA, 1996(b): s.36).

McGowan (in Hessel & Holloway, 2002: 69) advocate that it is imperative for school managers to preserve precious resources and to make every effort to utilise them to support teaching and learning. Moreover, Naidu *et al.* (2008: 164) concede that what is imperative is how they school managers share limited financial resources between human and physical resources in order to achieve educational goals more effectively.

The importance of resources for effective teaching and learning cannot be underestimated. It is thus essential to put measures in place which will ensure that the school resources are maximally used and kept safe. The involvement of the parents and the community in the school activities is discussed in the next paragraphs.

3.9.2.7 Ensuring parental involvement and community participation (PCP)

The literature consulted emphasises the creation of a cordial relationship between the school, the parents and the wider community (O'Brien *et al.*, 2003; Mathibe, 2007; Prew, 2007; Naidu *et al.*, 2008). The participants all agreed that parental involvement and community participation in school affairs contribute to academic success. This is revealed by the participants as follows:

As I indicated earlier on, that from time to time we open clear communication channels between the school community and parents through the SGB. They are very supportive. They always come to the school and we also involve other stakeholders. Like when we have parent meetings, we do call parents, even though we still struggle with that one, because there is no day that we can say this term we had 100% attendance. But they do come. We meet them. We iron out problems. It is key that parental involvement should always be the order of the day. When the school starts at the beginning of the year, we always start with staff meetings where we invite the SGB and introduce them to the staff. On the reopening day they will meet with learners. The SMT will be in regular contact with the SGB. Parents must know everything that happens in the school. (Participant E).

We adhere to those activities like parents meetings. You know that parents are very, very important. Fortunately our parents do support us. When we have meetings they attend and those who do not attend make arrangements to attend during the week, at least to get information from the horses' mouth. In the first meeting of parents, we encourage them to check the learners' school work and to support their children. They must have the timetables of the learners, sign their books and where they are not satisfied, they must liaise with the school, especially with the subject or class educator. Those parents who do not attend on the set date, would come during the week. They would

meet the educators, who will inform them about the discussions of the meeting (Participant F).

In terms of parental involvement we have a very busy schedule at school. We have a lot of functions which involve parents. For example prize giving, where we give awards for excellent performance. We have a cultural day where we want parents to come and enjoy different cultural activities. Through sporting codes, we encourage parents to support their school. It's a very congested kind of a programme. We sometimes play with parents. Parents play netball with lady educators. We play soccer with the parents. This creates a very jovial kind of mood in the school. We have proven that the more parents are closer to the school, the more learners become happy, because they know that their parents support the school. This is the way of involving parents (Participant G).

Despite the fact that SASA (RSA, 1996(b):s.16) is clear about the roles and functions of the SGBs and the school managers, participant (A) indicated that school managers often isolate the SGBs in the school activities and end up running the schools without the support of the SGBs. This is illustrated in the following statement:

Principals must give the SGB its responsibility. They must allow the chairpersons of the governing body to carry out their responsibilities. Principals have a tendency of pushing the chairpersons away and they end up running their schools without the support of the SGBs. Parents play an important part in ensuring that you are appointed as principal, so you must ensure that parents become involved.

Participant (B) alluded to the fact that learners who have completed their studies, and are currently working, have a duty to their former schools to plough back into these schools as community members. This suggestion of ploughing back to the school, as a social responsibility, is exemplified in the following illustration:

I also like the idea that in terms of community involvement, the very same learners that you teach, learn that the school is their home. They learn that in future when they are parents they should plough back. You can take the example of Grey College. Most parents of Grey College were learners at that school, including the principal. They are very jealous of their school. So the school becomes successful, because those former learners are now the community and are ploughing back (Participant B).

The literature and the participants are in agreement with regard to the importance of parental involvement and community participation in education and the principle of partnership and mutual responsibility for a public school. O'Brien *et al.* (2003: 24) indicate that the national political strategy has enhanced greater community involvement in the affairs of the school. This

strategy encourages the ownership of schools by the wider community. Community ownership of schools has positive effects and is essential to the development of a functional school (Prew, 2007: 454).

This greater parental involvement and community participation are demonstrated by the fact that parents make up the majority of the members of the SGBs (Beckmann & Prinsloo, 2009: 174). Furthermore, Bush and Bell (2002: 261) established that parent-school partnerships are typified by collaboration and that it is essential for the parents to play a supportive role in educating children through personal, social and academic development. In addition, school managers have a responsibility to establish healthier relationships with the community and to influence the community in the course of executing their tasks (Van der Westhuizen, 1991: 391). It is therefore very important for school managers to involve parents in the school activities and to ensure that they feel welcomed and appreciated. School managers must also allow parents or various groups in the community to use school buildings for meetings, social activities or courses as this will have a positive effect in establishing partnerships with parents. The next paragraphs discuss the IQMS.

3.9.2.8 Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

The IQMS was introduced with the sole purpose of improving quality teaching and learning in the public schools (Clarke, 2009: ELRC, 2003; Grobler and Mestry, 2009). Clearly, most school managers are of the view that the IQMS is a good tool, but because it was unsuccessfully implemented, it failed dismally. Their responses are cited below:

It was implemented prematurely, without proper training of educators. It is a good tool which fell into wrong hands, because of poor planning. You will find that one school grossly underperforms, but their IQMS marks are very high. There is absolutely no control of the entire process. Once you read it, it's like everything is so perfect, but put it into practice; it is a total failure (Participant A).

It is not a true reflection of the school and educators' performance. It is not a true reflection. I agree with doctor, it is failing dismally (Participant B).

IQMS according to me misses its point. Basically it is going to be changed to the Occupational Specific Dispensation (OSD) system. The post levels 3 and 4 educators will be evaluated in that way. IQMS is not successful, it misses the point. According to me, it has failed dismally (Participant D).

I totally disagree with the IQMS, because when educators are going to be evaluated they prepare for that day only. For the other days when there is no IQMS evaluation the educators do not prepare. This IQMS evaluation has to be a surprise visit (Participant H).

However, participant (G) believes that the IQMS can be improved by involving the FSDoE and by disassociating it from the monetary implications. This participant pointed out that:

That is one of the most difficult things to implement. It is very difficult, but at least we have improved since late last year and early this year when we involved the departmental officials to assist the IQMS committee. Unfortunately it is not yielding the results it was intended for. It was meant for educator development and the implementation of curriculum, but unfortunately it has been understood in monetary terms, that I need this percentage because I am going to get something. It is not congruent to the performance of the educators. People are given marks willy nilly just for the percentage and it is really not serving its purpose. But I must say it is difficult to implement.

The viewpoints of the respondents are mirrored in the literature. According to Clarke (2009: 11) the IQMS was designed to assess educators' performance. This notion is supported by the Education Labour Relations Council (2003: 3) which identifies the IQMS as a form of monitoring and evaluation of educators and schools and of ensuring quality public education for all. The IQMS aims to constantly improve the quality of teaching and learning. Successful education outcomes also depend on empowering, motivating and training educators.

However, Grobler and Mestry (2009: 114 & 115) announced that the challenge with regard to the performance measurement of educators is that it was designed outside the school and had to be implemented by people who had little or no say in its design. This is confirmed by school managers who indicated that the IQMS has failed dismally as a result of inadequate planning. Its intended purpose of educator development and curriculum mastery has been misunderstood and equated it in financial terms. Moreover, the participants collectively agreed that the IQMS is a good tool which can be used to develop the educators. Unfortunately, due to the lack of proper planning and training the system completely failed. For this system to be effective, the FSDoE has to conduct a series of workshops in order to capacitate school managers on this process. The reasons for excellent academic performance in Grade 12 in the five year period from 2006 to 2010 are explored in the following paragraphs.

3.9.2.9 Reasons for excellent academic performance in Grade 12 in the previous five years (REAP)

The literature and the participants are in agreement that academic success is always achieved in schools where discipline is maintained, (Bush & Bell, 2002; McEwan, 2003; Masitsa, 2008; Clarke, 2009). This is revealed by the participants in the following statements:

In our schools, staff members have respect for principals. There is order and discipline. Relationships among staff members are very good. Staff relations are carefully managed to ensure that schools are functional. Educators have a positive attitude towards their profession (Participant B).

Nevertheless, some participants attribute excellent academic performance to the level of commitment displayed by the educators in their schools. They asserted that:

There are many reasons. One of my colleagues alluded to the level of readiness of the learners from primary schools. The level of commitment of our educators in our schools is quite interesting. The minute the learners are in your camp, you don't have any choice. You have to make sure that the learners pass. Fortunately there is a high level of commitment in many of our schools. However, some of our colleagues' level of commitment is disturbing. They don't do their best in ensuring that learners are taught. Even if you have computers, those computers need committed educators to make sure that they are operational. So the best resources are educators. That is the problem in most of our township schools. The attitude of many of our colleagues is really disturbing. The other reason is about some of the parents who hide behind the notion that they are not educated, their scholastic level is not in line with what is expected at school. In our case we say you don't need to understand Mathematics. So basically besides excuses that we say about resources and so on, attitude plays an important role. I say this with confidence, but if you change the attitude of a learner, you can surprise that learner. That is what makes our school to consistently perform excellently. We display a positive attitude to our profession (Participant G).

Like participant (G) has said, commitment of the educators play a crucial role in the performance of our learners. You got these learners in your classroom. You know their strengths and weaknesses. Sometimes they lose interest towards the end of the year. As a committed educator you have to know that you have got these kinds of learners in class who seriously need your support. These committed educators will sometimes take the learners to their houses to study until the exams are over (Participant F).

This excellent academic achievement is enhanced by a positive attitude showed by the educators, as cited by the following participant:

As participant (F) has rightfully indicated, with a positive attitude of our educators, we can perform miracles with those learners that are needy. We are also products of poverty, but these days it is coming like a volcano. It is becoming worse. We must change our attitude so that we can assist these needy and poverty-stricken learners in order to enable them to escape from this poverty trap (Participant H).

The views of some of the cited school managers that effective discipline attributes to excellent academic performance in some township secondary schools is in line with research findings. Nieuwenhuis (2007: 66) posits that discipline has to be present in everything the school does or aspires to be and should be a natural part of what education is about. Hoerr (2005: 7) endorses that good leaders change organisations, great and disciplined leaders change people and their behaviour. People are at the heart of any organisation, particularly a school. It is only through changing and nurturing their personnel, by helping them to grow and develop and by creating a culture in which they can all learn that the school, as organisation, can flourish and be successful.

Furthermore, Rokeach (in Nieuwenhuis, 2007: 9) believes that good values serve as enduring beliefs that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode or end-state existence. Discipline should be the guiding principle on which all the decisions at the school are made (Byrnes & Baxter, 2006: 47). It is conclusively clear that discipline, a positive attitude and a high level of commitment from personnel members serve as a driving force towards academic achievement in some township secondary schools in Bloemfontein. The following paragraphs are devoted to the need for training on management and leadership by school managers.

3.9.2.10 Training needed by school managers on management and leadership (TNS)

The literature indicates that it is imperative for school managers to develop themselves and their educators in order to be able to provide effective school management and quality teaching and learning (Steyn & Van Niekerk, 2002; McEwan, 2003; Bisschoff *et al.*, 2004; Mestry & Singh, 2007; Mathibe, 2007). School managers support this finding and suggest that the DoE investigates the qualifications of school managers to establish whether they meet the requirements. This suggestion is indicated below:

Let the FSDoE conduct a skills audit and they will be shocked. One can excel in one aspect, but you may fail in the other. You've got to be adequately trained so that you can do your job well. For instance, as principal, you are also the accounting officer. Have you ever been trained in finances? A big no. But when things go wrong you are labelled as incompetent. A skills audit on a continuous basis is necessary. Currently, it will be difficult for the FSDoE to charge you, because they have not trained you. They just promoted you because they saw the potential in you (Participant A).

In concurrence with the literature, the participants further expressed that there is a need to train school managers. The participants argued that:

We are evolving with the system. Development is necessary whether it is in-service training or workshops, we need training in various aspects. You are trained to know what it is you must do as principal (Participant B).

We do need that support. We really need training especially in management. When I started working as an HOD there were workshops that I attended which were quite informative. We really need to attend more workshops so that we move with time. Everybody should be successful, not only me on top becoming successful. My success should pour like rain on other colleagues (Participant E).

Yes of course, we need training from time to time, not only for principals. Training can only help you to become a better manager or a good administrator. It will help you to know how to file all those important documents (Participant G).

Managerial skills are very important. Even principals and deputy principals need regular workshops, because some principals are not experienced. They just became principals so they need a lot of training (Participant H).

Suprisingly, one participant equated the school to a business company and even proposed that school managers should be trained as CEOs. The participant proposed that:

I really think that the school is like a business. You, as the principal, are a CEO of the company, but you are trained as an educator. So I fully agree that there must be a high level of training for the principals on a quarterly or monthly basis. They are doing it overseas, they are not doing it in South Africa. Throughout training and upgrading, is very important because training is a dynamic process and changes all the time (Participant D).

Another participant indicated that there is no training facility for school managers and as a result continuous training must be emphasised. The participant reported that:

Education is forever. People must be developed every day and there is no school of training for principals. Training has to be on a regular basis. There is no school for principals. Training has to be on a continuous basis. Principals must be well versed with the latest management theories and activities. Today it is OBE, tomorrow it is the RNCS, CAPS and so on. Management of these is important. As principals you've got to be a lawyer, social worker, priest et cetera. Therefore, training has to be on a regular basis. One is never saturated with information. So these workshops are crucial. For everything that is new, educators must be brought on board, especially managers of the schools. They must attend more of these workshops, the indaba and all that, it is very important (Participant F).

There seems to be consensus between the literature and school managers that there is a need for training school managers especially in the fields of education management and leadership. Steyn and Van Niekerk, (2002: 250) argue that professional development, as an ongoing development process which focuses on a wide range of aspects such as knowledge, skills and attitude required to educate learners effectively, is necessary for school managers.

Confidently, Mathibe (2007: 532) emphasises that the empowerment of school managers and educators will result in a more responsive, flexible and effective school. At the same time the improvement of academic performance will be strengthened. In the process of promoting professional development, the development of strategic relationships between employers, professional bodies and universities is essential in order to establish empowerment programmes.

Moreover, Bush (in Mestry & Singh, 2007: 478) state that the lack of stringent criteria and the absence of a qualification for the appointment of school managers have resulted in many school managers under-performing in their leadership and management roles. Mathibe (2007: 252) maintains that it is equally important for school managers to have requisite qualifications, just as it is important to have systematic professional development programmes for practising school managers.

Participants indicated that there is no school for principals. The DoE, in partnership with some of the universities in the country, has developed a course for principals in order to empower them in the area of school leadership and management. This course is called the ACE in School Leadership and Management. It is therefore extremely necessary for school managers to receive training which will address the issue of the lack of training facility for school managers to make them effective school managers.

During the focus group interviews some of the pertinent issues raised by the respondents included the following:

- ❖ Networking by township secondary school in Bloemfontein.
- ❖ School vision and mission.
- ❖ Meeting of deadlines by educators.
- ❖ Encouraging learners to take part in sports as well as learner trips.
- ❖ Conducting regular SMT, departmental and personnel meetings.
- ❖ Encouraging learners to wear a school uniform and the importance of assembly.

- ❖ Educator and learner wellness programmes.
- ❖ Involvement of Learning Area facilitators.

3.10 SUMMARY

An empirical investigation into the perspectives of township secondary school managers for the promotion of academic success revealed that these schools ensure that there is both effective management and leadership in their daily tasks. Management tasks, the creation of teamwork, motivation as well as communication are also efficiently utilised. Furthermore, these school managers make sure that quality teaching and learning takes place through rigorous and regular monitoring of the learners and educators' work. The promotion of parental involvement and the community participation has attributed to a major improvement of academic performance in townships secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area.

A further revelation is the dismal failure of the implementation of the IQMS due to a lack of planning and resources. There is also a strong need for training of school managers. It was noted again that a positive attitude and a high level of commitment from school managers and their educators directly contributed to the excellent academic performance in these schools.

The next chapter compares, interprets and integrates the data from the qualitative investigation with the data gained through the literature study.

CHAPTER 4:- COMPARISONS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the role of school managers in township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area in relation to the promotion of academic achievement. Data was collected from school managers by means of the focus group interview method. Eight school managers, made up of three principals, one deputy principal, three HODs and one master teacher (a newly established post explained in Chapter 1 paragraph 1.1) participated in the focus group interviews.

In this chapter, the qualitative data gathered from school managers and the literature studied are compared and interpreted. The researcher attempted to establish whether there is correlation between the experiences of school managers and the literature.

4.2 COMPARISONS AND INTEPRETATIONS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this section, the significant findings from the literature study in Chapter 2 and the qualitative investigation in Chapter 3 are compared and interpreted. Firstly, effectiveness of management and leadership are discussed hereunder.

4.2.1 Effectiveness of management and leadership

Deducing from the literature reviewed and the qualitative investigation, the importance of education management and leadership for the provision of effective school management play a critical role (cf. 2.2.1: 2.2.2 and 3.9.2.1). Education management can be described as a process of co-ordination and co-operation of school activities such as finances, facilities, public relations, personnel, legislation, discipline, safety, instruction and governance with the purpose of ensuring that the school is managed effectively (cf. 2.2.1). Education leadership refers to a process whereby school managers influence educators and non-educators in such a manner that they will subsequently strive to achieve the objectives they are presented with (cf. 2.2.2).

The literature emphasises two types of leadership known as transactional leadership and transformational leadership (cf. 2.2.2.a and 2.2.2.b). School managers have to take note of these leadership styles and use them in their daily management and leadership tasks.

Interestingly, the respondents corroborate the notion that there is a connection between education management and leadership (cf. 2.2.3 and 3.9.2.1). Both the literature which was reviewed and the qualitative investigation seem to acknowledge that education management and leadership play a vitally important part in achieving academic success.

The connectivity between education management and leadership is further accentuated in the literature studied (cf. Tables 2.1). However, it can be indicated that though the literature has noted some differences between leading and managing (cf. Table 2.2), the qualitative investigation has consistently emphasised the existence of a relationship between education management and leadership.

It is therefore advisable for school managers in the Bloemfontein area to effectively use both management and leadership in their daily school management activities. This will assist them in ensuring that their schools achieve academic success. School managers must display leadership qualities by inspiring and motivating their colleagues in the execution of their duties. They must be exemplary and committed to their duty and ensure that the school has a vision and mission. Through collective engagement, school managers must establish the goals and direction the schools have to take.

In complex societies like South Africa, producing and sustaining an effective public school is a tough job. School managers cannot do this job without a dedicated and highly competent teaching force, that is, educators in numbers, working together for the continuous improvement of the school. Moreover, they cannot have educators working like this without leaders at all levels who are guiding and supporting the process. The school manager's role is pivotal in this equation. It is therefore vitally important for school managers to possess both management and leadership skills which will assist them to meet the demands of these complex societies (cf. 2.2.2).

School managers in township secondary schools must understand that they have a moral obligation towards their schools and communities. They must show commitment in making a positive difference in the lives of individual learners and educators. They may demonstrate this through personal attention and concern for individuals. They should appreciate the fact that by helping a few people is not a small contribution, but a great personal contribution to the development of the nation. Motivating the educators to do their work and helping learners to perform well in their studies will ensure that school managers execute their professional and moral obligations expediently. In this way, school managers will be able to promote academic achievement. School managers must appreciate the importance of the management tasks which is deliberated in the paragraphs below.

4.2.2 Important management tasks

The qualitative investigation and the literature reviewed agree that management tasks play an essential role in providing effective and efficient school management. It is thus very important for school managers to acquaint themselves with the four basic management tasks, known as planning, organising, leading and controlling in relation to the people, outcomes and resources available at a specific school in order to achieve the academic needs of the school (cf. 2.3.1: 2.3.2: 2.3.3 and 2.3.4).

In collaboration with the literature, the participants highlighted the importance of strategic planning as a management task. Planning is viewed as the process whereby school managers look into the future and make plans to tackle specific operations and execute them meaningfully. The participants emphasised collective and advanced planning by the whole personnel. Planning should be coupled with strong monitoring of and support to the educators (cf. 2.3.1: 2.4.1.2.c and 3.9.2.2).

Contrary to the literature reviewed which explained the important part played by organising, the participants did not say anything about organising (cf. 2.3.2). Nevertheless, the role played by organising in ensuring that academic success is achieved cannot be underestimated.

Furthermore, there seems to be similarities between the literature studied and the qualitative investigation with regard to the importance of monitoring as a management tasks (cf. 2.4.1.1.c and 3.9.2.2). Monitoring ensures that plans are put into practice to ensure that teaching and learning takes place. Monitoring as a tool is essential in ensuring that the required product is delivered to the learners.

Both the literature reviewed and the focus group interviews point out that leading as an element of management is of paramount importance for the schools to achieve academic success (cf. 2.3.3 and 3.9.2.2). Leading is responsible maintaining good relationships between leaders and followers and the behaviour of the followers. It also gives direction to the organisation's activities so that resources are deployed as effectively as possible.

The literature highlights various types of leadership styles which school managers can use to ensure that quality teaching and learning is enhanced (cf. 2.3.3.1: 2.3.3.2: 2.3.3.3 and 2.3.3.4). School managers who intend to improve their school management and thus promote academic success can effectively make use of some of these leadership styles or use a combination of these leadership styles.

School managers have to control the work done by the educators and the learners, to assess and regulate the work that is in progress or completed. The results of the qualitative investigation support this statement (cf. 2.3.4 and

3.9.2.2). Proper control of the work of the educators and learners is therefore very important.

The literature indicates that it would be insensible to perform these management tasks in any other sequence as school managers cannot decide to do something unless they know what should be done; they cannot instruct a task to be done until they have decided how it should be done, and they cannot check results before the instructions have being given (cf. 2.3).

Both the literature that was reviewed and the qualitative investigation suggest that school managers have to make a considerable effort in equipping themselves with the management tasks. Thorough understanding and the correct implementation of these management tasks will assist school managers in the promotion of academic success. As indicated above, it is of paramount importance for school managers in secondary schools to ensure that they do collective planning with their personnel and appropriately allocate Learning Areas to educators.

Moreover, school managers have to provide effective leadership and regularly control the work of the educators and learners. Regular monitoring of the educators' and learners' work plays an important role in achieving academic success. This monitoring can be done on weekly, fortnightly or on a monthly basis depending on the management policies of the school. After the school managers have controlled the work, the educators and learners must be given feedback on their performances. This will motivate them to up their game and perform excellently. By doing all of what is mentioned above, school managers will be able to create a positive learning environment which will enhance the achievement of academic success.

4.2.3 Creation of a positive learning culture for the successful implementation of the NCS

From the literature reviewed, it was deduced that the creation of a positive learning culture and the successful implementation of the NCS are critical for optimal operation of schools. The participants, during the qualitative investigation, concurred with the theoretical perspective that a positive learning culture cannot be created when the management, educators, non-teaching personnel and learners are not motivated (cf. 2.4.1.1.b and 3.9.2.3). Without a positive learning environment, there will be no effective teaching and learning.

Furthermore, both the participants and the literature studied revealed that an environment of high expectations from all the stakeholders must be created in order to ensure that academic success is attained (cf. 2.4.1.1 and 3.9.2.3). If all the educators understand that there are certain expectations that have to be met, they will work hard to ensure that these expectations are realised. Similarly, learners will put more effort into their school work if they know

that certain expectations are to be met by them. A positive learning environment encourages learners to put more effort into their studies.

The literature studied revealed that effective teaching and learning takes place in an environment which is safe, good and free. This revelation is supported by the qualitative investigation (cf. 2.4.1.1. b and 3.9.2.3). It is therefore imperative for school managers to ensure that the school environment is safe, secure, orderly, clean and well resourced.

It emerged from the qualitative investigation that the successful implementation of the NCS requires the educators to be committed and disciplined as this will promote academic achievement (cf. 3.9.2.3). The theoretical perspective lends weight to this statement when it indicates that values should be present in everything the school does or aspires to be (cf. 2.4.1.1.a).

To be effective secondary school managers have to understand that learner achievement is the goal of instruction, which will only take place in a positive learning environment (cf. 2.4.1.1.b). The success of a school depends on creating an environment in which learners are motivated to learn. School managers have to ensure that the school environment is conducive to teaching and learning.

The literature indicates that an environment has to be created which will ensure that learners with learning barriers and socio-economic challenges are not excluded and marginalised from receiving quality teaching and learning (cf. 2.4.1.1.e). The foregoing is supported by the participants who acknowledged the negative impact of poverty on the education of the learners (cf. 3.9.2.3).

The following were found to be the trends from the qualitative investigation as far as creating and promoting a positive learning environment is concerned: remedial work, rubric, the structure of the examination papers and the reading of the descriptors (cf. 3.9.2.3). The literature is in accord with the qualitative investigation in this regard in which strategies for raising learners' achievement are described and for promoting academic success (cf. 2.4.1.1.b and 2.4.1.1.c). School managers must ensure that educators who are responsible for providing subject content in the class rooms receive support, guidance and proper supervision.

The creation of a positive learning culture for the successful implementation of the NCS is vitally important. Effective school managers create a positive learning environment for teaching and learning to proceed smoothly.

4.2.4 Importance of teamwork, motivation and communication

From the qualitative research, it emerged that academic success in secondary schools will only be achieved if school managers promote and encourage teamwork among their personnel, motivate them and enhance communication between the educators and SMTs (cf. 3.9.2.4). This view is supported by the literature studied (cf. 2.4.1.4). Motivated personnel, teamwork among personnel members and open channels of communication will ensure that teaching and learning is enhanced.

According to the literature studied and the qualitative investigation, it is essential for school managers to ensure that the educators are motivated, because motivated educators will ensure that quality teaching and learning takes place (cf. 2.4.1.4.c and 3.9.2.4). School managers must skilfully provide motivation to their educators and learners in their pursuance of academic success.

The literature reviewed provides ways in which motivation can be enhanced. These include rewards such as praise, promotion or financial rewards (cf. 2.4.1.4.c and 2.3.3.3.b). Similarly, the respondents in the qualitative survey indicated that just a thank you or a pat on the back for the job well done will serve as a motivation to the educators (cf. 3.9.2.4).

Both the literature and qualitative investigation are in agreement that school managers must understand the importance of communication if they intend to promote academic achievement. Effective school managers are able to communicate their feelings and thoughts to others and they should be able to do these both orally and in writing (cf. 2.4.1.4.d and 3.9.2.4).

The literature studied reveals that communication relates to systems that provide a link between the different stakeholders of a school. These stakeholders include educators. Communication assumes a two-way directional flow of information from school managers to the educators (cf. 2.4.1.4.d). The participants believe that once school managers open channels of communication educators feel that they are an important part of the school (cf. 3.9.2.4).

Team building ensures that teaching and learning is promoted which thus results in academic achievement. The literature studied posits that the teams created by school managers engage in collective enquiry and build shared knowledge regarding teaching and learning (cf. 2.4.1.1.b). The participants indicated that teamwork is crucial when it comes to teaching and learning (cf. 3.9.2.4).

There seems to be collaboration between the participants and the literature with regard to the role of team building in order to provide academic success. School managers will need to help teams build shared knowledge by

providing relevant information regarding the qualities of effective assessment (cf. 2.4.1.4. b and 3.9.2.4). Every time educators work as a team, excellent results are mostly evidenced. It is clear that school managers must actively propagate the idea of team building among their personnel members as this will promote quality education, which leads to academic success.

The literature and qualitative investigation emphasise that school managers must ensure that their personnel is highly motivated in order to provide effective teaching and learning. This will contribute towards effective teaching and learning and thus to the enhancement of academic success. Effective school managers understand that educators must be highly motivated and have appropriate training, knowledge and skills that are necessary to perform in any given work situation (cf. 2.4.1.4. b). A variety of motivational strategies can be used to inspire and motivate the educators. Motivation can be promoted by issuing awards, such as educator of the month, promotion possibilities in the teaching profession or by giving an educator a day off for good work performance. School managers will experience excitement and pleasure if they use the strategies of motivation in their attempt to enhance the performances of their personnel.

Communication refers to the establishment of relationships and providing motivation and it aims at generating an understanding of the school and its activities by the community. School managers' communication tasks include making contact with the community. In order to carry out the school management relations efficiently secondary school managers must become skilled in using the tools of communication.

Furthermore, there has to be frequent oiling of the communication wheel so that all personnel members are on board with all decisions taken at the school. Communication can be promoted by conducting regular personnel meetings, briefing sessions, use of communication registers, informal meetings and circular distributions. When school managers communicate effectively with their colleagues, it will ensure that information is shared. In addition, communication will enable school managers to always tell the truth, to admit their mistakes and to give and receive constructive feedback.

The era in which school managers ensured that schools become entirely depended on them has completely ended. School managers are team leaders and have to ensure that teamwork within schools is established. This teamwork may involve contributions by all personnel and may be limited to teamwork at senior management level. School managers must support establishing collaborative teams as this will promote academic performance.

Teamwork can be achieved through establishing various departments, such as language and science departments and committees to tackle certain school projects. A team can be given, for example, a project to raise funds to purchase computers for the school. School managers cannot run all the school

activities alone. It is therefore necessary for school managers to establish collaborative teams which will ensure that school activities are managed effectively. Teams enable the schools to function smoothly and to complete various tasks within a specified time. In this way, educators will be indirectly empowered as they will receive opportunities to handle some major tasks of the school.

Teamwork, motivation and communication are important processes in the school as an organisation, which cannot be underestimated by school managers. It is therefore imperative that school managers encourage teamwork, facilitate communication and motivate their personnel as this will promote academic achievement. Therefore, it is essential for school managers to ensure that quality and accountability are assured in their schools, as explained in the next paragraphs.

4.2.5 Assurance of quality and accountability

The literature studied and the qualitative investigation concur that quality assurance and accountability are necessary if schools have to achieve academic success (cf. 2.4.1.3.a and 3.9.2.5). Quality ensures that the educator is the most important contributor in the classroom. It also means recognising that the educator is the sustaining force for quality in the classroom (cf. 2.4.1.5.a).

In corroboration with the literature, the participants maintained that school managers have to be strict when it comes to control and class attendance. They must ensure that there is quality contact between the educators and the learners (cf. 3.9.2.5).

Moreover, one participant acknowledged the importance of the assurance of quality by means of class visits which are not aligned to the IQMS. This participant further maintained that assurance of quality does not only relate to teaching and learning, but also has to do with the schools' administrative functions. This participant stated that it is important that principals know what is going on in the classrooms in order to ensure quality of teaching. Therefore, class visits by principals without being scheduled by the IQMS structure are necessary. This is an important way of ensuring quality assurance (cf. 3.9.2.5).

The assurance of quality in the school is imperative and rests with school managers, the PDoE and DoE. School managers have an overall responsibility for promoting quality assurance and are accountable to a wide range of stakeholders for all aspect of the schools' performance and its continuing improvement (cf. 2.4.1.5).

Furthermore, school managers need to secure accountability in their schools. The school has a specific duty allocated to it by society to educate the young people of the community. In carrying out this task, the school is answerable to

the community that it has indeed performed this task as expected. Accountability involves reporting to other people voluntarily or compulsory and deals with the individual's conscience or a moral responsibility about what that individual is doing. Accountability is the responsibility that accompanies the authority to do something. The person's duty of giving an account of having executed his or her work in terms of a set of criteria and determined standards and whether the work has been satisfactorily completed or not refers to accountability which must be exercised by school managers (cf. 2.4.1.3.a).

The SMT must conduct a meeting and analyse the results of each and every class. School managers must compare the performances of all the educators in terms of their pass and failure rates in their different subjects. This process is known as accountability and it ensures that the schools achieve academic success (cf. 3.9.2.5).

It is therefore, essential for school managers to ensure that there is quality control and the assurance of quality in the school. Quality relates to meeting and exceeding the needs and wants, such as tuition, assessment and guidance of learners, which have to be satisfied. The school is thus regarded as an institution which is capable of providing excellent and quality services to the learners. The school must have committed educators who perform their teaching tasks with enthusiasm, teach effectively and use appropriate teaching strategies and resources. They should be specialists in their Learning Areas and should prepare thoroughly for their lessons. Finally, they must utilise proper and acceptable management strategies in their classrooms.

In correlation to the above findings, the participants indicated that quality teaching is basically what the educators who are prepared do in the classroom when they present lessons. Quality is regular class attendance. Quality contact with the learners, and quality teaching and learning as well as frequent analysis of the learners' results and educators' performances are vitally important for assuring quality and accountability. It is pertinent for school managers to ensure that quality control and accountability exist in their schools.

Resources play a fundamental role in providing quality teaching and learning. Effective management of resources, which school managers must know, is discussed in the paragraphs hereunder.

4.2.6 Effective management of resources

The literature researched and the qualitative investigation are in accord that the management of resources plays a crucial role in the attainment of quality teaching and learning and thus of academic achievement (cf. 2.4.1.1.d and 3.9.2.6). The SASA stipulates that it is very important for the SGBs of public schools to take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the

resources supplied by the provincial departments in order to promote quality education to all the learners in the school (cf. 2.4.1.1.d).

In terms of the scarcity of the resources, the viewpoints of the participants corroborate the literature findings about the scarcity of resources and the pertinent role played by these resources in providing quality education (cf. 2.4.1.1.d and 3.9.2.6). The participants communicated their dissatisfaction with regard to the limited resources at their schools by stating that the limited resources create barriers and make it very difficult for them to provide quality teaching and learning (cf. 2.4.1.1.d).

In corroboration with the literature, the participants in the qualitative survey are of the view that school managers have to ensure that these limited resources are utilised responsibly and sparingly. Somebody should be assigned the task of ensuring that resources are properly managed and controlled. School managers indicated that with the little that they have, they have to make sure an educator is placed in charge of these resources. This educator must be held accountable so that the resources are basically controlled (cf. 3.9.2.6).

The interviewees held the same viewpoints as found in the literature study since they indicated that the little resources that are available should be utilised effectively to achieve the objectives of teaching and learning. Notwithstanding the fact that record-keeping and proper management of resources are significant, some school managers, according to the participants, are still incapable of using the available resources maximally. The respondents complained that some school managers always complain about the lack of resources, whereas they cannot effectively and efficiently use the available resources (cf. 3.9.2.6).

School managers should acknowledge that resources play a vitally important role in providing effective teaching and learning and achieving academic success. It is very important for effective teaching and learning to have an infrastructure that takes care of the provision of resources in order to enhance academic achievement of learners. The role of school managers is related to providing direction, resources and support to the educators and learners in order to achieve academic excellence (cf. 2.4.1.1.d).

In addition, finance is particularly significant because it provides the money to secure the resources required to deliver high quality teaching and learning. The important role played by the finances in the realisation of effective teaching and learning and the relation between school finance management and achieving academic success are emphasised extensively in the literature. School managers have to decide how to share limited financial resources between the human and physical resources in order to achieve educational goals more effectively (cf. 2.4.1.1.d). The participants share the same views as found in the literature reviewed when they state that educators and learners

must share the books in order to ensure that quality teaching and learning is promoted (cf. 3.9.2.6).

It is profoundly important for school managers to use efficient means of managing resources by using for example, finance committees, asset committees, stock registers or book registers to ensure that school resources are effectively managed. School managers without proper record-keeping skills are at a risk of hampering the success of academic achievement in the school, since organisation and prioritising with the interest of the learners at heart becomes difficult. It is quite clear that all the school's resources, physical and human, have to be marshalled in such a way that school managers and educators undertake a professional commitment of improving the quality of teaching and learning and thus promote academic achievement. The part played by parents and the community in the enhancement of academic success is deliberated below.

4.2.7 Ensuring parental involvement and community participation

From the qualitative investigation, it emerged that parental involvement and community participation in the school activities play a profoundly important part in the education of the learners (cf. 3.9.2.7). Research studies done on parental involvement and community participation in the school affairs support the views of the interviewees. Through the SGBs, parents and the community can make an immeasurable impact being involved in providing quality education and consequently in academic achievement.

Furthermore, school managers have a responsibility to establish healthier relationships with the community and to influence the community in the course of executing their tasks (cf. 2.4.1.5). Both the participants and the literature state that school managers can do this by inviting parents and community structures to take part in cultural and sporting activities as well as attending prize giving ceremonies held at the school, they will be encouraged to be part and parcel of the school community (cf. 2.4.1.5.d and 3.9.2.7).

Regular parental meetings motivate the parents to take a keen interest in the education of the learners and the affairs of the school. The interviewees in the qualitative survey and the literary findings concluded that school managers should open clear communication channels between the school community and parents through the SGB. School managers should convene regular parent meetings to discuss school related matters, including learners' academic progress (cf. 2.4.1.5.d and 3.9.2.7).

Promoting a cordial relationship between the SGBs and school managers is emphasised in both the literature and qualitative investigation. The exclusion and marginalisation of the SGBs from the school affairs has to be prevented (cf. 2.4.1.5.d). This viewpoint is supported by the participants in the qualitative investigation, when they indicated that school managers often

exclude the SGBs in the school affairs and end up managing the schools without the support of the SGBs (cf. 3.9.2.7). It is very important for school managers to give the SGB the responsibility of governing the schools.

There seems to be similar views between the participants and the literature with regard to the support the school will receive in encouraging parental involvement in the school affairs (cf. 2.4.1.5.d and 3.9.2.7). This support is observed through the attendance of parental meetings by the parents as well as participation in the activities organised by the schools.

There is currently a need to empower school managers on how they can establish a working relationship with the external environment as identified through the literature review (cf. 2.4.1.5). School managers should be capacitated to understand that schools should have a functioning linkage with their external environment and that they should be in touch with their clientele.

Both the literature and the qualitative investigation are in accord that school managers need to involve parents and the wider community in the school activities in order to build and maintain partnerships. School managers must ensure that all these stakeholders are welcomed and appreciated at the school. Moreover, they must allow parents and various community structures to use the school buildings for meetings or social activities. They have to make sure that there is a cordial relationship between the school and the wider community (cf. 2.4.1.5.e and 3.9.2.7).

It has emerged from the literature study and qualitative research that the community and the local business must plough back into the school in order to ensure that quality teaching and learning is enhanced (cf. 2.4.1.5.e and 3.9.2.7). School managers have to create an environment in which the local businesses in the community can be utilised to provide learning opportunities to the learners in the form of internships, apprenticeships, leadership and part-time work. These businesses can also be requested to provide refreshments during school time, parent meetings and to provide support for school improvement programmes and learner awards (cf. 2.4.1.5.b).

Furthermore, school managers can approach some agencies in the community to assist the schools with regard to learners who experience health problems and socio-economic hardships as well as those learners who need Identity Documents (cf. 2.4.1.5.c).

The role which the parents and the community can play in achieving academic success is very important and should be enhanced and sustained by school managers. The next paragraphs are devoted to the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS).

4.2.8 Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

The literary perspective views the IQMS as a form of monitoring and evaluation of educators and of the school to ensure the provision of quality public education for all. This viewpoint is supported by the qualitative investigation (cf. 2.4.1.3.b and 3.9.2.8). The IQMS has to constantly improve mastering the curriculum, quality of teaching and learning to thus promote academic achievement.

However, there seems to be challenges with regard to the intended outcomes of the IQMS as identified by both the literature and the qualitative investigation. Some participants in the qualitative survey reported that the IQMS would have been a good tool if resources were available. On the one hand, no proper training of educators was conducted. Poor planning was identified as one of the reasons for this system of evaluation to fail (cf. 3.9.2.8). On the other hand, the IQMS was designed outside the school and is implemented by people who had little or no say in its design. School managers who must implement the IQMS are unable of doing that, because they were initially not involved in the whole process and apparently did not receive training (cf. 2.4.1.3.b). As a result of the matters above, the implementation of the IQMS by the school managers became difficult, hence the system failed.

The participants in the qualitative research revealed that the IQMS did not provide a true reflection of the school and its educators' performances. This could be evidenced from those schools which grossly underperformed but had high IQMS scores. This implies that the system is not adequately controlled (cf. 3.9.2.8).

There seems to be a common ground between the literature reviewed and the participants with regard to the failure of the IQMS. Both the literature and the participants agree that the IQMS is a good tool, but due to the lack of resources and proper planning, premature implementation of the IQMS, the lack of training of school managers and the fact that the system is understood in monetary terms, the system failed. The ball is now back in the court of the DoE to ensure that regular workshops, which would capacitate school managers in the implementation of the IQMS, are conducted. The objective of the IQMS has to be clearly spelled out and that the mindset of educators has to be changed regarding their understanding of the IQMS in monetary terms.

Some township secondary schools performed excellently in their Grade 12 results in the five year period from 2006 to 2010. The reasons for this kind of performance are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

4.2.9 Reasons for excellent academic performance in Grade 12 in the five year period from 2007 to 2011

The views of the participants are in alignment with the findings of the literature in terms of the factors required for effective teaching and learning which would lead to academic success. Discipline and personnel relations were stated as some of the reasons which promoted academic achievement (cf. 2.4.1.1 and 3.9.2.9). It is clear that efficient teaching and learning will only take place in a school which is characterised by order and discipline. Personnel relations have to be carefully managed to ensure that schools are functional.

The literature study propagates that a positive learning culture has to be restored in order to ensure that the learners achieve maximum excellent performance (cf. 2.4.1.1.b). According to the qualitative investigation, the most noticeable feature of a positive learning culture is commitment and discipline on the side of the educators and learners (cf. 3.9.2.2 and 3.9.2.9). Committed and disciplined personnel and learners ensure that academic performance is improved and consequently academic achievement is enhanced.

The literature which was reviewed and the qualitative investigation collectively agree that school managers should promote strategies to encourage high expectations and to set challenging targets for achievement. An environment of high expectations will motivate learners to work hard in order to pass their examinations (cf. 2.4.1.1.e and 3.9.9.2).

The participants in the qualitative survey stated that a positive attitude towards the teaching profession is indicated as one of the reasons some of the schools perform excellently (cf. 3.9.2.9). It is therefore imperative for school managers to ensure that the educators are regularly motivated in order to develop a positive attitude among them.

Some participants in the qualitative investigation attribute good academic performance on the level of readiness of the learners from primary schools. However, other participants believe that this matter is of less significance as they believe that as soon as learners are in the school, school managers have to ensure that these learners have opportunities to perform excellently (cf. 3.9.2.9).

The literature that was reviewed suggests that school managers have to challenge underperformance by ensuring appropriate corrective action and follow-up (cf. 2.3.4.1.d and 2.4.1.1.e). This view is supported by the participants in the qualitative investigation when they indicate that after learners' assignments have been marked, educators have to do the corrections and help the learners to understand they made mistakes (cf. 3.9.2.2.).

Excellent academic achievement is also enhanced by the positive attitude showed by the educators and their consideration of the learners' socio-economic hardships. The participants explained that with a positive attitude the educators are able to perform miracles with those learners that are needy. They argued that they must change the attitudes of their educators so that they can assist these needy and poverty stricken learners to escape from the poverty trap (cf. 3.9.2.9).

School managers should understand that good leaders change organisations, great and disciplined leaders change people. People are at the heart of any organisation, particularly a school. It is only through changing and nurturing their personnel, by helping them to grow and develop and by creating a culture in which they can all learn that the school, as organisation, can flourish and be productive (cf. 2.4.1.1).

Factors such as good discipline on the side of educators, the educators' high level of commitment and their positive attitude towards their work, personnel relations that are well managed and the maximum use of available resources, were articulated by the interviewees. All these factors played an important role in achieving academic success in these township secondary schools. Careful scrutiny of the core responsibilities extensively covered in Chapter 2 and the effective and expedient execution of these core responsibilities by school managers will result in schools achieving academic success.

It is indeed vitally imperative for school managers to ensure that a positive environment is created in their schools as this will promote academic achievement. School managers must make the educators aware of the socio-economic state of the learners in their schools. They should display care, love, sympathy and compassion towards these learners. They must always be willing to provide a helping hand. In doing this, they will have played a mammoth part in eradicating poverty and educating the nation.

Training of township secondary school managers in leadership and management fields is essential. The next paragraphs therefore discuss school managers' training needs in management and leadership fields.

4.2.10 Training needed by school managers on management and leadership

From the literature review, the researcher learned that the training of school managers and educators is critical for the effective and efficient functioning of the school. This viewpoint is supported by the qualitative investigation (cf. 2.4.1.4 and 3.9.2.10). It is imperative for school managers to develop themselves in order to be able to provide effective school management and quality teaching and learning.

Training to enable school managers to be abreast with the latest developments in their field is essential. The participants' perceptions were that since one is never saturated with information and that development is taking place every day, there is a need to attend workshops in order to keep abreast with these developments. The participants are of the opinion that development should not only be provided to school managers, but also to all the educators (cf. 3.9.2.10). This view is supported by the literature that there is a serious need to train and develop the existing and newly appointed school managers to effectively manage schools in order to bring about improvements in quality teaching and learning. Just as it is important for school managers to have requisite qualifications, it is equally important to have systematic professional development programmes for practising school managers (cf. 2.4.1.4).

The participants contend that school managers do need support and training especially in management and leadership. There is a need for school managers to obtain managerial skills as some of these school managers are inexperienced. The participants highlighted the fact that managerial skills are very important. Even principals and deputy principals need regular workshops, because some of the principals are not experienced (cf. 3.9.2.10).

Both the literature that was researched and the participants in the qualitative investigation are in accord that school managers have to continually develop themselves and their colleagues. When school managers improve their performance by engaging in professional development programmes, they will be simultaneously motivating their educators to improve their performances. In doing this, school managers will be regarded as the best and competent school managers. If schools need to be participative and productive communities rather than organisations where there is lack of equity and much rests on the wisdom and the competence of a single person, empowerment of school managers becomes essential (cf. 2.4.1.4).

Due to the fact that education is constantly changing, it becomes necessary for school managers to undergo training in education management and leadership. Since the new democratic government came to power, there have been various changes in the education sector. It is therefore very critical that school managers have a thorough understanding of management and the implementation of the ever changing education system (cf. 3.9.2.10).

Schools, as organisations, need to be learning organisations if they are to be effective. In this process school managers need to lead learners. If they do not go out of their way to learn more, regardless of what the system is doing, they cannot become the motivators for positive academic success. School managers must continually promote professional development of themselves and of their colleagues. This professional development should be a life-long process which focuses on a wide range of aspects such as, knowledge, skills and attitudes required to educate learners effectively (cf. 2.4.1.4). By regularly empowering themselves and their colleagues, school managers will ensure

that their schools are responsive, flexible and effective and perform excellently.

School managers must encourage day-to-day informal interaction with their deputies, HODs and educators to promote the ethos of professionalism and a sense of unity. These informal contacts between school managers and personnel are important since the educators' self-images are shaped by these interactions (Rogus & Wildenhaus in Mashologu, 2003: 66). It is important that opportunities for educator development are created, especially in leadership and management areas, in schools in the Bloemfontein area. School managers should be supported by departmental officials. They should be continuously monitored in the execution of their duties to ensure that they utilise effective management and leadership skills which will assist them in promoting teaching and learning and achieving academics success.

4.3 SUMMARY

The results of this study show that connectivity between the experiences of the participants and the results from the literature review exist. School managers of well performing township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area possess excellent management and leadership abilities and skills which they practice to a great extent. Excellent management and leadership abilities, skills and practices, as indicated in the literature (cf. Chapter 2) attribute and contribute towards the school's excellent academic performance.

It was evident from the results of the qualitative investigation and the literature consulted that school managers have to effectively and efficiently utilised both management and leadership in order to improve school effectiveness and academic success. This can be done through the expedient execution of activities such as strategic planning, creation of a positive learning environment and of higher expectations, continuous monitoring and control of work, regular analysis of learners and educators' performance, effective management of resources, regular motivation of personnel and learners, team building and open and free communication as well as parental involvement. This clearly highlights the relationship which exists between the experiences of school managers and what the literature professes with regard to academic achievement.

Admittedly, the appropriate utilisation of the management tasks of planning, organising, leading and control will provide important assistance to school managers in the pursuance of academic achievement. Regular monitoring of the learners and educators' performances play a pivotal part in the promotion of academic excellence. School managers need to ensure that they collectively plan the direction the school has to take well in advance. This collective planning exercise will help the school achieve its goal of attaining academic success.

Clearly, it is necessary for school managers to have an understanding of their core responsibilities as school managers. These core responsibilities must be carried out diligently, effectively and efficiently. School managers will begin to see progress if they discharge the core responsibilities responsibly. In the next chapter the data obtained through the juxtaposition of the focus group interviews and the theoretical perspectives are synthesised into guidelines for school managers towards promoting academic achievement. It further reports on limitations in the study, and makes recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND GUIDELINES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the qualitative data gathered from school managers and the literature studied. This data was compared and interpreted. The researcher attempted to establish whether there is a correlation between the experiences of school managers and the theoretical perspective.

In this chapter, the findings of the qualitative investigation in Chapter 3 and the literature studied as well as the conclusions of the researcher enabled the researcher to lay down some guidelines and recommendations. These guidelines and recommendations will hopefully assist township secondary school managers in the Bloemfontein area to become effective school managers. As a result, this information was synthesised into guidelines which township secondary school managers can use in their effort to provide quality education and achieve academic success in their schools. Limitations which were discovered in the study are explained. Finally, recommendations for further study are considered.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDY

This study is based on the exploration of the perspectives of well performing township secondary school managers in the Bloemfontein area with regard to academic success in their schools. In Chapter 1 the background to the study was explored by reviewing the literature associated with the study problem. This chapter also revealed that school managers are entrusted with the unique responsibility to oversee the entire school operations to ensure that academic success is achieved. Following this revelation a problem question was posed, namely: How do school managers at well performing township secondary schools perceive their role with regard to academic success in their schools? This problem question resulted in the assumptions on which the researcher based this study.

In view of the aforementioned research question, and in line with the assumptions that underlie this study, the secondary questions were posed. In an attempt to answer these questions, the general aim of the study was indicated as the exploration of the perspectives of township secondary school managers in the Bloemfontein area with regard to academic achievement in their schools. Consequently, the objectives of this study were considered.

The research methodology was briefly explained in Chapter 1 and a detailed exposition of the qualitative research method was given in Chapter 3. The

qualitative research method enabled the researcher to gain deeper insight into the subjective experiences of school managers. It also enabled the researcher to understand how they construct their social world, focusing on their role in promoting academic achievement in their schools. From this research methodology emerged a research plan and a diagram (Figure 1.1) in an effort to recommend guidelines for school managers to manage and lead their schools towards academic success. The researcher conducted focus group interviews in order to obtain comprehensive data regarding the perspectives of the participants. The researcher invited participants in a purposive manner in order to obtain relevant data related to the study. The focus group interview, as an instrument to collect data from a group of participants, was used. For data analysis, the researcher used a voice recorder and transcribed the participants' direct words about their experiences which were recorded during the focus group interviews held over two sessions and in two different venues. The validity of the study was also discussed.

In Chapter 2, the researcher studied literature on education management and leadership. The definition and discussion of the concepts education management and leadership were also done. Concepts such as transactional leadership and transformational leadership were elaborated. The connection between education management and leadership were narrated and this was further explored in Tables 2.1 and 2.2. The vital role played by education management and leadership in the achievement of academic success was emphasised. The management tasks, such as, planning, organising, leading and controlling were clearly and logically described. Evidence suggests that school managers have to acquaint themselves with the four basic management tasks in relation to the people, outcomes and resources available at their respective schools. This will enable them to achieve academic success. The core responsibilities of school managers in ensuring academic success were elaborated. These core responsibilities included the following:

- ❖ Leading and managing the learning school.
- ❖ Shaping the direction and development of the school.
- ❖ Assuring quality and securing accountability.
- ❖ Developing and empowering self and others.
- ❖ Working with and for the community.

In Chapter 3, a qualitative investigation was carried out, using the focus group interview as a data-gathering instrument, to explore the perspectives of township secondary school managers with regard to academic achievement in their schools. The rationale for the choice of the focus group interviews was indicated. The advantages and the disadvantages of the utilisation of the focus group interviews were clearly spelled out. The trustworthiness of the study

was determined and explained. The qualitative investigation was useful because it gave a detailed account of the views and perspectives of the participants and presented a clear picture of the investigation that enhanced the value of the study. The data was subjected to qualitative analysis and organised according to emerging key themes of analysis.

The above investigation culminated in the achievement of various objectives which are discussed below.

5.3 ACHIEVEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES

The researcher conducted this study to accomplish the objectives listed below so that the aim of the study could be achieved. Below is the exposition of the attainment of the objectives.

❖ OBJECTIVE ONE: To investigate how education management and leadership practices contribute to academic success (Chapter 2)

Chapter 2 met the requirements of this objective. The literature that was reviewed indicated that school managers have to utilise both education management and leadership in their task of providing quality teaching and learning. This will ensure that the promotion of academic achievement is realised. School managers have to use the management tasks of planning, organising, leading and controlling in their daily school management duties if they intend to provide effective school management and thus promote academic success. The role which school managers have to play in ensuring the provision of effective management and leadership for quality teaching and learning and consequently the promotion of academic success was extensively discussed. This role, which school managers must play in ensuring expedient management and leadership and academic success, is characterised by the following activities which are observable in a school environment:

- a) The success of the school greatly depends on effective utilisation of both education management and leadership by school managers.
- b) Though management and leadership are perceived to be different concepts, there is a vital connectivity between the two concepts, and these concepts should be used practically in relation to this connectivity.
- c) The four basic management tasks should be used as they will ensure that expedient school management practices are implemented.
- d) The core responsibilities of school managers are appropriately carried out.

❖ **OBJECTIVE TWO: To determine what challenges school managers have with regard to their role in the academic success of their schools (Chapter 3)**

From the results of the qualitative investigation obtained from the focus group interviews, it was categorically clear that school managers in well performing township secondary schools provided effective management and leadership in their schools. This enabled them to attain academic achievement. The respondents believe that the correct use of the four basic management tasks is very important for the success of these schools. They also believe that creating a positive learning environment plays a pivotal role in achieving academic success. The success of school managers in well performing secondary schools is attributed to teamwork, motivated personnel and effective communication. Regular assurance of quality and accountability promoted academic achievement in these schools.

However, there were challenges these school managers felt they had to face, especially with regard to the IQMS and the training of school managers on management and leadership fields. In relation to the resources there were mixed reactions from the respondents. Some felt that resources are a stumbling block towards academic excellence, whereas others believed that available resources can be fruitfully used to increase academic success. Through the focus group interviews, the researcher was able to discover the challenges faced by school managers. He was however, able to establish the experiences of school managers which enabled them to perform as excellent as they did.

School managers also perceived that their colleagues were mostly committed and disciplined in performing their duties. The participants also observed that their colleagues displayed a caring and positive attitude towards the learners and teaching profession. This, therefore, resulted in excellent academic performance in their schools which was noted in the Grade 12 results in the five year period from 2007 to 2011. This performance, apparently, also positively contributed to the provincial and national pass rates of the Grade 12 results.

❖ **OBJECTIVE THREE: To compare and interpret the qualitative data gathered from school managers and the literature studied (Chapter 4).**

The qualitative data gathered from school managers and the literature studied were compared and interpreted. The researcher attempted to establish whether there is a connection between the experiences of school managers and the theoretical perspective. This envisaged connection was discovered from the actual experiences and perspectives of school managers and the literature studied.

- ❖ **OBJECTIVE FOUR: To formulate guidelines which will equip school managers with the necessary knowledge and skills for academic success in their schools (Chapter 5).**

Deducing from the literature study in Chapter 2 and the qualitative investigation as well as the emerging themes in Chapter 3, guidelines for a training and empowerment programme are recommended in Chapter 5, section 5.5. These guidelines can be used to address the needs of those school managers who continually under-perform in their schools in the Bloemfontein area. They can also be used by well performing secondary schools in Bloemfontein in order to sustain or improve their current performances. The next paragraphs discuss the research findings.

5.4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

Perspective of township school managers in relation to academic achievement is the topic under investigation. In this section the researcher outlines the recommendations for the guidelines for township school managers to ensure academic success. On the basis of the findings from the literature reviewed and the qualitative investigation, the researcher grouped these findings according to the themes of the research as a whole, which are as follows:

- ❖ Effectiveness of management and leadership.
- ❖ Important management tasks utilised.
- ❖ Creation of a positive learning culture for the successful implementation of the NCS.
- ❖ The importance of teamwork, motivation and communication.
- ❖ The assurance of quality and accountability.
- ❖ Effective management of resources.
- ❖ Ensuring parental involvement and community participation.
- ❖ The Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS).
- ❖ Reasons for excellent performance in Grade 12 in the five year period from 2006 to 2010.
- ❖ Need for training on management and leadership by school managers.

In each case the researcher has a number of findings, as explained in the proceeding paragraphs. The effectiveness of management and leadership is discussed firstly.

5.4.1 Effectiveness of management and leadership

The importance of education management and leadership for providing effective school management which will result in quality teaching and learning and thus towards the promotion of academic achievement is emphasised in this research study.

In the dynamic and fast changing educational environment of the 21st century, schools, as organisations, need school managers who are strong and effective managers. It is important to note that no development will ever take place without change. The South African society is changing, therefore school management and leadership should also change. Consequently a particular kind of management and leadership style is necessary in this ever changing environment. Leadership styles such as democratic and situational leadership styles have to be used as they will ensure that academic success is attained (cf. 2.3.3.2).

In this study, leadership and management involve the discharge of managerial functions and the ability to inspire followers. School managers should be able to inspire and motivate their educators and non-educators as this will encourage them to perform optimally and thus improve the school's academic performance. Transactional leadership becomes critical in the inspiration and motivation of school managers' subordinates (cf. 2.2.2.a). The literature reviewed emphasises the importance of transformational leadership which focuses on higher levels of personal commitment to the school's goals and objectives as well as to the greater accomplishment of these goals and objectives (cf. 2.2.2 b).

Furthermore, transformational leadership enables school managers to have the skills and abilities to influence their subordinates to carry out tasks which are necessary to accomplish the educational goals and thus achieve academic success. Currently, management and leadership in South Africa are in a process of transformation and have an effect on education and require that school managers to take initiative and manage change successfully in order to attain academic achievement (cf. 2.2.2.b).

Interestingly, the respondents corroborate the notion that effective school management and leadership play a vital part in achieving academic success. From the categories that emerged from the focus group interviews, the respondents indicated that vision and direction, leadership as an attitudinal aspect, motivation, supportive role of leaders and managerial skills play an important part in the promotion of academic success.

It is categorically clear that academic achievement will be realised if school managers exercise both effective leadership and management in their daily school management activities.

The next paragraphs discuss the importance of the management tasks.

5.4.2 Important management tasks

The essential role of management tasks in the provision of effective and efficient school management has been strongly emphasised in the literature studied. The research study discussed the importance of planning, organising, leading and controlling as management tasks, which can be effectively used to promote academic achievement extensively.

The importance of the management tasks as profiled by both the literature studied and the qualitative investigation suggest that school managers have to make a considerable effort in equipping themselves with management skills. Thorough understanding and the correct implementation of the aforementioned management tasks will help these school managers in promoting academic success.

Today's dynamic and ever changing education system needs leaders to inspire followers to achieve academic success. School managers have to know that the success of the school depends on effective planning by all personnel members. Through this planning schools are able to set the direction which has to be followed in order to achieve academic success (cf. 2.3.1 and 3.9.2.2).

In terms of organising, as a management task, school managers have to ensure that tasks are allocated according to the abilities or qualifications of individual educators. This will ensure the effective and efficient performance of tasks and thus the achievement of academic success (cf. 2.3.2).

Leading, as a management task, should ensure that planning and organising which have been done are effectively implemented to guarantee that the school objectives are attained. It is therefore imperative that the school managers clearly understand what is expected of them. Using appropriate leadership styles will assist school managers in ensuring that academic achievement is attained (cf. 2.3.3 and 3.9.2).

Control provides assistance to the school managers in checking whether the activities performed during the planning, organising and leading stages are effectively accomplished and if not, to provide remediation. With regular control of the educators' and learners' work, school managers will be able to identify areas which need intervention or improvement. This will provide an essential contribution to the attainment of academic achievement (cf. 2.3.4). School managers corroborate the findings of the literature studied. They believe that planning in advance can play an important role in the direction the school has to follow. They also believe that school managers in township secondary schools should involve all the educators and the SGBs during the planning process. Furthermore, school managers have to ensure that there is no deviation from this plan as this will negatively affect the direction the school is taking (cf. 3.9.2.2).

During the qualitative investigation some of these management tasks emerged. The school managers observed that strategic and advanced planning, effective leadership, continuous monitoring and control play a pivotal role in achieving academic success. It can be concluded that from the respondents' experiences and the literature reviewed, management tasks are important in achieving academic success.

The next paragraphs are devoted to creating a positive learning culture for the successful implementation of the NCS.

5.4.3 Creation of a positive learning culture for the successful implementation of the NCS

In this study, the essential role for creating a positive learning culture for the successful implementation of the NCS was highlighted. The theoretical perspective demonstrated that, for the school to attain academic success, school managers have the responsibility of ensuring that schools operate effectively. School managers must also change and nurture their personnel by helping them grow and develop by creating a culture in which they can all learn that the school, as an organisation, can flourish and be productive (cf. 2.4.1.1).

In order to enhance teaching and learning in pursuance of academic success, school managers have to ensure that their schools are safe, secure, orderly, supportive, clean and well resourced. Furthermore, school managers have to set higher expectations for their educators and learners (cf. 2.4.1.1.b and 3.9.2.3). The educators and learners' work has to be regularly controlled and evaluated to identify challenges and to provide timeous remediation. This will ensure that poor academic performance is curbed (cf. 2.4.1.1.c).

School managers of township secondary schools should provide instructional support to the educators and make sure that resources necessary for the successful implementation of the curricula are available to help educators to improve their academic performance (cf. 2.4.1.1.d). Moreover, they should avoid discriminating against learners who have learning barriers. They should provide support to these learners by encouraging their educators to provide intensive classroom support, or inclusive education (cf. 2.4.1.1.e).

The respondents, during the qualitative investigation, concurred with the literature that the physical environment, school uniform, committed and disciplined educators, remedial lessons and discussing the examination papers will ensure that a positive learning environment is created. This will further ensure that the implementation of the NCS is realised and the resultant academic achievement is attained (cf. 3.9.2.3).

Thus, it is critical that school managers strive to achieve academic success by frequently and regularly creating a positive learning culture in which teaching and learning progress smoothly. They can do this by creating an environment which is conducive to teaching and learning. This means that school managers have to ensure that thorough preparation of lessons is done, resources are available, discipline is maintained and support is given to the educators and learners.

The importance of teamwork, motivation and communication for academic achievement are discussed in the paragraphs hereunder.

5.4.4 Importance of teamwork, motivation and communication

In the qualitative investigation, the respondents attributed academic success to teamwork, motivation and communication. The participants in the qualitative investigation believe that teamwork plays a crucial role in ensuring that teaching and learning takes place. When educators work as a team, excellent results are evidenced most of the time. It is clear that the school manager must actively propagate the idea of team building among his or her personnel members as this will promote quality education, which leads to academic success (cf. 2.4.1.4.b and 3.9.2.4).

Motivated educators will work hard to ensure that quality teaching and learning are provided. School managers resonated that for any school to succeed people must be motivated. They emphasised intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which school managers can utilise to ensure that academic success is attained (cf. 2.4.1.4.c. and 3.9.2.4).

School managers have to acknowledge the importance of communication in their daily management tasks. They must conduct regular SMT meetings, personnel meetings and briefing sessions. Educators must be encouraged to communicate their problems with the management (cf. 2.4.1.4. d and 3.9.2.4).

These statements are supported by the literature studied. Accordingly, school managers should encourage and create a climate and a culture of co-operation and success in their schools. They should also establish collaborative teams in order to increase opportunities for self-expression, creativity, communication, motivation, and collective actions. It is imperative that school managers ensure the establishment of collaborative teams in their schools. They must ensure that their personnel is highly motivated and that there is frequent oiling of the communication wheel. This will ensure that academic achievement in the schools in the Bloemfontein area is attained.

The importance of assurance of quality and accountability is explained in the following paragraphs.

5.4.5 Assurance of quality and accountability

According to the literature reviewed, quality means recognising that the educator is the sustaining contributor in the classroom. It is therefore, essential for school managers to ensure that there is quality control and the assurance of quality in schools. Schools must have committed educators who perform their teaching tasks with enthusiasm (cf. 2.4.1.3).

In collaboration with the abovementioned findings, the respondents in the qualitative survey indicated that quality results basically from effective teaching and learning which is taking place in the classroom. Quality means regular class attendance. Quality means quality contact with the learners. Quality teaching and learning mean frequent analysis of the learners' results and educators' performances which are vitally important for the assurance of quality and accountability (cf. 3.9.2.5).

Quality assurance refers to a system of continuous assessment of a product during production, with the purpose of ensuring that the product conforms to the standards required by the consumer. It is thus pertinent that school managers ascertain whether there is quality control and accountability in their schools. This can be done through quarterly analysis of learners' results. This can also be done by controlling the educators' performances every term (cf. 2.4.1.3 and 3.9.2.5).

Furthermore, school managers must be aware that they are accountable to society, the FSDoE and the parents. As a result, the school has a specific duty allocated to it by society, namely, to educate the young people of the community. In carrying out this task, the school is answerable to the community that it has indeed performed this task as expected (cf. 2.4.1.3.a).

Interestingly, some respondents reveal that class visits which are not in line with the IQMS structure have to be re-introduced to observe whether there is real quality contact in the classrooms and whether quality teaching is taking place. They even suggested that the observation of educators in classes should be done by a personal visit of the HODs outside the scope of the IQMS (cf. 3.9.2.5).

For academic achievement to be strengthened it is imperative for school managers to regularly ensure that quality teaching and learning takes place. Therefore, school managers have to regularly control the educators' work as well as learners' books. This must be supplemented by the quarterly analysis of the results and providing support to those educators who are underperforming. This will ensure that academic success is promoted.

Effective management of resources plays an important part in the promotion of academic achievement, as discussed in the paragraphs hereunder.

5.4.6 Effective management of resources

The management of resources plays a crucial role in attaining quality teaching and learning and thus academic achievement. In addition, measures should be put in place to regularly monitor and control the available resources and ensuring that these resources are utilised maximally. It is also imperative that school managers preserve precious resources and make every effort to use them to support teaching and learning. Proper record-keeping methods have to be constantly used to ensure that school resources are appropriately managed and controlled (cf. 2.4.1.1).

As schools have limited resources, as reported by the respondents, the SGBs need to take all reasonable measures within their means to supplement the resources supplied by the FSDoE in order to promote quality education (cf. 2.4.1.1. d). This will ensure that quality teaching and learning takes place and academic achievement will be promoted.

The literature distinguishes between financial and real resources. Financial resources refer to finances available to acquire real resources such as human resources and material resources which are required to deliver operational and support services in schools. School managers must manage these finances correctly and responsibly. A set of written guidelines that outlines rules and regulations for handling funds by school managers, will help school managers in appropriately handling school finances. This is important because resources play a significant role in providing quality teaching and learning (cf. 2.4.1.1.d).

The interviewees held the same viewpoints as the literature, since they concluded that the few resources that are available should be utilised effectively to achieve the objectives of teaching and learning. Notwithstanding the fact that record-keeping and proper management of resources are significant, some school managers are still incapable of using the available resources maximally and of keeping accurate records. Furthermore, the interviewees also indicated that township schools complain about the lack of resources, even though they are not using the available resources expediently. The participants and the literature studied suggested that school managers should use efficient means of managing resources such as asset committees, stock registers or book registers to ensure that school resources are effectively managed (cf. 3.9.2.6).

To enhance academic success, school managers should use the available resources productively. Moreover, school managers should appoint some educators to be in control of resources. Committees such as asset or book committees have to be established to be responsible for the school resources.

The part played by the parents and the community in the enhancement of academic success is deliberated below.

5.4.7 Ensuring parental involvement and community participation

In this research study, it was indicated that the SGBs play a major leadership role in some communities by acting as a parental voice in relation to a principal who ignores the wider community. The fact that parents make up the majority of the members of the governing body demonstrates the importance of parental involvement in education and constitutes the principle of partnership and mutual responsibility for a public school (cf. 2.4.1.5.d).

Furthermore, parents deliver a valuable service to the school by attending and assisting in school events such as sporting activities, prize-giving functions, cultural and fun day activities, field trips and exhibitions. When parents perceive that their children receive a good education at a school, they respond positively and act as ambassadors for the school in their own communities. An exciting and jovial atmosphere in the school is thus created and this further strengthens the relationship between the school and the parent community (cf. 2.4.1.5.d and 3.9.2.7).

For the schools to achieve academic success, school managers have to ensure that there is a cordial relationship between the school and the wider community. The concept community refers to a collection of individuals who are bonded together by natural will and who are bound to a set of shared ideas and ideals. A school community refers to the social unit consisting of educators, learners, administrative staff and ground personnel who meets daily at the school for the purpose of teaching and learning (cf. 2.4.1.5). School managers have an important role to play in the promotion of community participation.

School managers have a responsibility to establish healthier relationships with the community and to influence the community in the course of executing their tasks. The South African government has enhanced greater community involvement in the affairs of the school and this strategy encourages the ownership of schools by the wider community. Community ownership of schools has positive effects and is essential to the development of a functional school (cf. 2.4.1.5 and 3.9.2.7).

From the qualitative investigation, it also emerged that parental involvement in the school activities play a profoundly important part in the education of the learners. Through the SMTs, parents can have an immeasurable impact on the school affairs. Parental involvement will enhance quality education and consequently of academic achievement. This can be done by inviting parents to school to attend parents meetings to discuss the progress of the learners (cf. 3.9.2.7).

The SASA creates an opportunity for parents to be involved in school affairs and gives them legal powers to be purposefully involved in school activities. School managers should acknowledge that parental involvement, despite the educational background or social standing of the parents, is an imperative component for successful education and teaching at school level (cf. 2.4.1.5.e).

School managers need to forge partnerships and formal alliances with government agencies such as the Department of Health, Department of Social Services and the Department of Safety and Security which provide social, policing and safety services. These structures can provide essential services to the schools which will ensure that the education of the learners is not hindered (cf. 2.4.1.5.c).

School managers should take note of the important role played by the parents in the school affairs. This role is accentuated by the fact that parents make up the majority of the members of the SGBs. School managers, therefore, need to involve parents in the school activities and ensure that they feel welcome and appreciated. They must also allow parents and various community structures to use the school buildings for meetings or social activities.

Furthermore, school managers have to make sure that there is a cordial relationship between the school and the wider community and to create a sense of ownership of the school by the community. The next paragraphs are devoted to the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS).

5.4.8 Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)

In this study, the IQMS is described as a form of monitoring and evaluation of educators and of the school to ensure quality public education for all and to constantly improve the quality of teaching and learning. As a result successful education outcomes also depend on empowering, motivating and training of the educators (cf. 2.4.1.3.b). The correct implementation of the IQMS will ensure that academic achievement is attained.

The IQMS is carried out at the school by the school manager and his or her SMT. However, the challenge with regard to the performance measurement of educators is that it was designed outside the school and had to be implemented by people who had little or no say in its design. School managers who have to implement the IQMS further complain that inadequate training was provided, which made the implementation of the system ineffective (cf. 2.4.1.3.b and 3.9.2.8). As a result most school managers felt that more training by the FSDoE was necessary in order to implement the IQMS effectively in their schools.

The respondents collectively agree that the IQMS is a good tool which fell into the wrong hands, because of poor planning. One respondent referred to a

situation where one school grossly underperformed, but their IQMS marks were very high. There is absolutely no control of the entire process (cf. 3.9.2.8). It is important that the IQMS is properly controlled so that its results can be authentic.

It is incumbent of the FSDoE to conduct regular workshops which would capacitate the school managers to effectively implement the IQMS in their schools. The objective of the IQMS has to be clearly spelled out and the mindset of educators must be changed regarding their understanding of the IQMS in monetary terms.

The reasons for excellent academic performance of the Grade 12 results over the five years from 2006 to 2010 are highlighted in the following paragraphs.

5.4.9 Reasons for excellent academic performance in Grade 12 in the five year period from 2007 to 2011

In the qualitative investigation, participants clarified some of the reasons which resulted in the consistent attainment of excellent results of some township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area. The respondents provided a variety of factors contributing to this excellent performance. Factors such as well disciplined educators and learners, the educators' high level of commitment and their positive attitude towards their work, personnel relations that are properly managed, maximum and responsible utilisation of available resources were pointed out by the interviewees as contributing to a successful academic process (cf. 3.9.2.9).

Careful scrutiny of the core responsibilities extensively covered in Chapter 2 and the effective and successful execution of these core responsibilities by school managers will result in schools obtaining good academic results. For instance, school managers have the responsibility of creating a shared vision, mission and strategic plan to inspire and motivate all the workers in the school. They have to provide direction for the school's ongoing development. The development and implementation of plans, policies and procedures which aim at ensuring that the vision and the mission are transformed into realisable actions, have to be carried out by school managers (cf. 2.4.1.1).

To achieve academic success, school managers have to know that strategic planning is an essential organisational action which involves a process of conscious decision-making and constant review. Strategic planning involves laying out how the school goals of achieving academic success will be accomplished. Most school managers make use of various personnel meetings, informal meetings and personnel dialogues for strategic planning. School managers have to obtain support from the governing body, educators, and most importantly, the parents in formulating and implementing the plan for the school (cf. 2.4.1.1.c and 3.9.2.9).

School managers have the responsibility of establishing a positive culture of teaching and learning. They must ensure that the curriculum afford the learners an opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills and to participate productively in the teaching and learning practice. Furthermore, school managers need to use the applicable strategies which will make sure that learner achievement is promoted (cf. 2.4.1.1.a).

It is, therefore, essential that school managers ensure that discipline in their schools is maintained and they must also create an atmosphere of high expectation and commitment. This will assist school managers in ensuring that academic success is attained in their schools.

School managers' training needs in management and leadership fields are discussed in the next paragraphs.

5.4.10 Need for training on management and leadership by school managers

It was indicated in this study that school managers must continually promote professional development of themselves and of their colleagues. This professional development should be an ongoing process, which focuses on a wide range of aspects such as knowledge, skills and attitudes required to educate learners effectively. By regularly empowering them and their colleagues, school managers will ensure that their schools are responsive, flexible and effective and perform excellently (cf. 2.4.1.4.).

School managers have to take part in professional development which is an ongoing development programme which focuses on a wide range of knowledge, skills and attitude required to educate learners effectively. During the process of promoting professional development, the development of strategic relationship between employers, professional bodies and universities is essential in order to establish empowerment programmes which will assist school managers to become effective in their management duties (cf.2.4.1.4.a).

It is imperative that school managers develop themselves and their educators in order to provide effective school management and quality teaching and learning. This will consequently lead to academic achievement (cf. 2.4.1.4).

The literature studied indicates that there is a serious need to train and develop the existing and newly appointed school managers to effectively manage schools to bring about improvements in quality teaching and learning. Just as important for the school manager to have requisite qualifications, it is equally important to have systematic professional development programmes for practicing school managers. This will further enhance academic success (cf. 2.4.1.4).

Researchers propose that the school manager must use the particular techniques to promote the professional development of their educators in their schools, which will in turn assist them in providing quality education and also promote academic achievement (cf. 2.4.1.4.a).

The respondents' perceptions were that since one is never saturated with information and that development is taking place every day, there is a need to attend workshops in order to keep abreast with these developments. They suggested that the FSDoE conducts a skills audit to determine the level of competency of school managers in township secondary schools. To keep school managers abreast of the latest developments in management and leadership fields through in-service training and workshops organised by the FSDoE. Lastly, school managers' nature of work is associated with that of a business company's CEOs. Therefore, regular training of school managers as presently done in countries abroad, should be done in South Africa (cf. 3.9.2.10).

In the next section the proposed guidelines which can be used by school managers are explained.

5.5 GUIDELINES

In confirmation of the findings derived from the emerging themes and conclusions presented in this study, related guidelines are compiled. These guidelines, however, are by no means exhaustive. The aim is to propose strategies that may lead to enhanced management practices which will promote academic achievement in secondary schools in South Africa. These guidelines are made in relation to the basis of the themes identified during the process of data analysis and are explained below:

❖ Effective management and leadership (EML)

It is recommended that school managers must effectively use both management and leadership in their daily school management activities. They can do this by creating policies which will provide the direction the school has to follow and by motivating their personnel to perform to the best of their abilities. This will assist them in achieving academic success. There is currently an extensive body of knowledge on leadership and management that is utilised by organisations worldwide to improve the management and leadership skills of school managers as observed in Chapter 2.

❖ Important management tasks (IMT)

Effective school management depends on the utilisation of the management tasks. Planning is very important if the school has to succeed. Planning in advance by the SMT together with the educators and

the SGBs will assist the school in its efforts to ensure excellent performance. School managers will gain the support and trust of their subordinates if they engage them in planning. As a result of involving all the stakeholders during planning, everybody claims ownership of the decisions taken during this process and will consequently work hard to ensure that the plans are successfully implemented.

Leading, as a management task, is a skill school managers have to discharge with a certain measure of perfection. There are a number of leadership styles school managers can choose from, depending on a situation in which they find themselves in, to help them to perform their duties efficiently. However, a democratic leadership style is the most common. School managers have to ensure that they arrive at important decisions collectively. They can do this by engaging all the personnel members in matters that need and affect all the stakeholders. They should be proponents of a collective decision-making processes.

School managers must continually control and monitor the work of the educators and learners. It is necessary to ensure that the work of all the educators at the school is controlled and monitored on a regular basis, in order to detect failures and weaknesses early in the year and to consequently provide support. Controlling and monitoring the work of all the educators and learners at the school assist school managers to identify areas where support and how to sustain or improve good performance are needed.

❖ Creation of a positive leaning culture for the successful implementation of the NCS

A positive learning environment will ensure that the goal of the NCS, namely the development of learners so that they can be better human beings, is brought to fruition. Thus, it is critical that school managers strive to achieve academic success by frequently and regularly creating a positive learning culture in which teaching and learning progress smoothly. School managers have to ensure that school premises are tidy and there is order at the school and they should encourage learners to wear school uniforms. Furthermore, school managers have to create an environment which will encourage learners to be interested in education by ensuring that schools are safe, secure and have resources to promote teaching and learning. An environment of high expectations has to be created by encouraging learners to aim for excellent academic achievement.

❖ Importance of teamwork, motivation and communication

School managers must create collaborative teams which will enable the schools to do a variety of tasks such as the compilation of time tables,

year plans and Learning Area policies. These collaborative teams should be used to assist the school in accomplishing certain tasks which are necessary for quality teaching and learning. Educators and non-teaching personnel who must be members of these teams should be interested in, have expertise in, and a passion for the tasks which should be performed by the respective teams.

School leadership and management require school managers to be in a position to motivate and inspire their personnel. Strong school managers understand that educators must be highly motivated in order to execute their duties effectively. Motivation of personnel can include awarding merit awards to personnel members for good performance. It can also include creating promotion opportunities for educators who show dedication to their work or providing vouchers to those educators to purchase whatever they want.

School managers need to understand the importance of communication for the success of the school. Within the school, school managers have to interact with the educators and non-teaching personnel. They can therefore use meetings to communicate the decisions of the SMT. For instance they can use personnel meetings, informal meetings and morning or afternoon briefings. Communication with parents can take the form of letters, quarterly newsletters, parent meetings and parent evenings.

❖ Assurance of quality and accountability (ASA)

School managers have to ensure assurance of quality and accountability. This can be done through quarterly analyses of the learners' results and also controlling the educators' performances every week, fortnight or term. During this process of analysis and control of work, unsatisfactory performances which are observed should be immediately addressed.

Setting performance targets and ensuring that these targets are met is one method of ensuring accountability. The SMT must set the performance targets for the school and for all the grades, for example, to obtain a 75% pass rate in Grade 12 at the end of the year. After the assessment of the learners, the SMT must convene a meeting to discuss the learners' performances in those assessments. Educators have to indicate how they are going to improve the learners' performance if learners have underperformed. However, intensive support has to be given to these educators. Those educators whose learners have performed well must be praised and encouraged to sustain or even improve on that performance.

❖ Effective management of resources (EMR)

Effective management of resources makes it possible for educators and learners to achieve the set objectives and outcomes. It is recommended

that the school compile a register of all the resources it has and to regularly update it. The school can have an asset or textbook committee which is headed by the educator to manage and monitor these resources. The policy on the issuing and retrieval of the school textbooks must be in place. The parents must be requested to sign the register acknowledging receipt of the textbooks and undertaking to replace the textbook if it is lost, whilst in possession of the learner. Finally, school managers are advised to use the available resources sparingly and maximally.

❖ **Ensuring parental involvement and community participation (PCP)**

Ensuring parental involvement and community participation is one of the tasks school managers have to carry out. It is advisable that school managers arrange regular parental meetings, and parent evenings to discuss school related issues. Parents should be motivated to check the learners' books by signing those books. They are also encouraged to meet with Learning Area educators to discuss the challenges faced by the learners. Parents must have the timetables of the learners, sign their books and where they are not satisfied, they must liaise with the school, especially with the subject or class educator. If parents do not attend the meetings or sign learners' books, the SMT must visit these parents to find out why they are not supporting the education of the learners. Incredibly, sports can be used by school managers to encourage parental involvement in the school affairs. Soccer, cricket, rugby and netball games can be arranged between the educators and the parents. The SMT can also organise sports trips for the parents and the educators. This will promote an intimate relationship between the parents and educators. School managers must invite parents during the prize giving ceremonies, cultural and youth day celebrations.

School managers must create a rapport with the community by ensuring that the school becomes a community hub. Some township schools have school halls, soccer and netball fields. The schools can encourage the community to use these amenities when they have meetings, funerals or sports activities. When the community is permitted to use the school facilities, they assume co-ownership of the school and serve as the school's protector against criminal acts. The educators must also be encouraged to support community activities by attending funerals and sports activities in the community. The community based organisations should be invited to the schools to assist the learners and parents with the procedures involved in receiving state grants, applications for Identity Documents and birth certificates as well as assistance with regard to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The local businesses which are supported by the school and the community can be approached to provide donations to the schools. For

instance, the school can request the local businesses to donate refreshments and certificates for merit awards to the learners.

❖ **Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)**

It is categorically clear that the IQMS is a tool which has the capacity to take education to greater heights. The challenge with the FSDoE is to provide thorough training and retraining of school managers. After providing training and retraining opportunities to school managers, intensive support must be provided to school managers by the district, provincial and national officials. Schools must be visited regularly to monitor if the system is implemented accordingly.

Seemingly, classroom observation does not ensure continued quality teaching and learning as this is done once in a year. It is recommended that the DoE review this once a year classroom observation and increase the number of class visits to enable school managers to frequently provide development to educators.

❖ **Reasons for excellent academic performance in Grade 12 in the previous five year period from 2007- 2011 (REAP)**

Excellent academic performance is influenced by a school environment in which discipline reigns. Respect for authority should be emphasised. At the same time, those in position authority must establish their authority. School managers should ensure that their educators are committed to their work. By frequently motivating their educators, school managers will be able to command highly committed teaching personnel. Creating of an environment of high expectations will ensure that schools perform well. This can be communicated through policies and practices which focus on academic goals. Setting high expectations is a critical component of effective schools. It also encourages the educators and the learners to work harder in order to fulfil those expectations.

❖ **Training needed by school managers on management and leadership (TNS)**

There is an urgent need for training on management and leadership by school managers. Training involves releasing the potential of individuals, allowing them to flourish and grow and to release their capacity to infinite improvement. Without doubt, the professional development of school managers will enable them to utilise their capacity to bring about academic improvement in their schools. The current political environment in South Africa has an enormous effect on the education dispensation. Consequent changes which occur in the education sphere require school managers to be strong and to have the ability to overcome the challenges

emanating as a result of these changes. Therefore, school managers must continually take part in professional development processes.

It is recommended that school managers don't wait for the system to provide professional development. They should make a personal effort to engage in professional development processes. They can do this by registering for education and management courses at the local universities. Alternatively, they can consult recently published literature in the form of journals, dissertations, theses or articles relevant to their profession.

The FSDoE can forge partnerships with the local universities with the intention of providing professional development for school managers. The UFS currently presents a management and leadership course. The course is known as ACE in School Leadership and Management. School managers should enquire at the University or at the district offices about this course which is offered freely to school managers employed by the FSDoE.

It is worth noting that these findings, guidelines and recommendations cannot be generalised to all secondary schools in Bloemfontein, the Free State or South Africa since they are from a specific geographical area. This study only included five township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area which performed remarkably well in the five year period from 2006 to 2010.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher initially intended to involve five practising principals and five practising deputy principals from township secondary schools in Bloemfontein that are performing well. Some of these principals refused to be involved in this study citing that they were too busy. Others were, however, prepared to take part, but since their schools were busy with mid-year examinations, they sent their HODs because they had to manage the examinations. Other principals were represented by their HODs who were accompanied by the deputy principals. Another reason was because some principals had apparently resigned. As a result some deputy principals acted as principals.

Despite this, eight school managers participated in the focus group interview. Since the aim of the study was to obtain the perspectives of school managers with regard to academic achievement in their schools the sample was considered sufficient. Moreover, the researcher could not rule out the application of subjectivity, since he used his own understanding to interpret data within the context of school management.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Based on the findings of this study, the following are suggested for further study:

- ❖ Conducting a similar investigation throughout the Free State province to find out what the situation is in other districts.
- ❖ Interviewing school managers who are actively involved in effective school management practices and who continuously produce remarkably excellent academic achievement.
- ❖ Compiling a comprehensive programme for the district officials to assist school managers in township secondary schools about effective management and leadership practices which contribute to academic success.
- ❖ Establish and implement a plan of action on conducting a follow-up on school performance regarding school management and leadership as well as academic achievement.

5.8 CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that school managers of well performing township secondary schools possess excellent management and leadership abilities and skills which they practice to a great extent. Excellent management and leadership abilities, skills and practices largely attribute and contribute towards the school's excellent academic performance.

It was evident from the results of the investigation that school managers in well performing secondary schools effectively and efficiently utilised both management and leadership in order to improve school effectiveness. This was done through expedient execution of activities such as strategic planning, creation of a positive learning environment and of high expectations, continuous monitoring and control of work, regular analyses of learners' and educators' performances, effective management of resources, regular motivation of personnel and learners, team building and open and free communication as well as parental involvement. Lastly, the appropriate execution of the core responsibilities of school managers ensured that some township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area performed successfully.

Nevertheless, there are some challenges which school managers believe they need support on. These include a regular and ongoing training programme to keep them abreast with the latest management and leadership developments. They also require assistance with regard to the correct implementation of the

IQMS which will enable them to strengthen, improve or sustain their position in terms of academic achievement.

It is therefore anticipated that better management and leadership in schools will promote academic success in township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area. Furthermore, the guidelines laid down in this study will ensure that school managers receive an appropriate opportunity to develop their skills, abilities, knowledge, values and attitude that will enable them to contribute towards building better and effective schools.

Although the study was done in five township secondary schools in Bloemfontein, the review of the literature discussed in this research study provided a body of knowledge that will contribute not only to school improvement in township secondary schools, but in all schools in the Bloemfontein area. Nevertheless, the researcher is hopeful that this knowledge base will be of assistance to the Free State province and probably to the whole South African education fraternity.

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ANNEXURES

- ANNEXURE A: REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT**
- ANNEXURE B: CONFIRMATION OF REGISTRATION OF THE
RESEARCH**
- ANNEXURE C: PERMISSION FROM PRINCIPALS**
- ANNEXURE D: PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING**
- ANNEXURE E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

ANNEXURE: A

REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

4 Sep. 2009 10:46



education
Department of
Education
FREE STATE PROVINCE

Enquiries: Matimane IM
Reference: 10/4/1733-2009

Tel: 051 404 6602
Fax: 051 447 7318
E-mail: matimane@edu.fs.gov.za

2009 - 08 - 21

Mr. NM MAJOLA
UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
UNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear Mr. Majola


REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

1. This letter is in reply to your application for the registration of your research project.
2. Research topic: **The Management practices for Quality Schooling in the Mangaung area Motheo District in the Free State Province.**
3. Your research project has been registered with the Free State Education Department.
4. Approval is granted under the following conditions:-
 - 4.1 Principals, Deputy Principals, HoDs and Educators participate voluntarily in the project.
 - 4.2 The names of all schools and participants involved remain confidential.
 - 4.3 The questionnaires are completed and the interviews are conducted outside normal tuition time.
 - 4.4 This letter is shown to all participating persons.
 - 4.5 A bound copy of the report and a summary on a computer disc on this study is donated to the Free State Department of Education.
 - 4.6 Findings and recommendations are presented to relevant officials in the Department.
5. The costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.
6. You are requested to confirm acceptance of the above conditions in writing to:

The Head: Education, for attention: DIRECTOR : QUALITY ASSURANCE
Room 401, Syfrets Building, Private Bag X20565, BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301

We wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely


FR SELLO
DIRECTOR: QUALITY ASSURANCE

Directorate: Quality Assurance, Private Bag X20565, Bloemfontein, 9300
Syfrets Center, 65 Mairland Street, Bloemfontein
Tel: 051 404 8750 / Fax: 051 447 7318 E-mail: quality@edu.fs.gov.za

ANNEXURE: B

**CONFIRMATION OF REGISTRATION OF THE
RESEARCH**

21 GEELVIS
BLOEMSIDE
BLOEMFONTEIN
9306

15 SEPTEMBER 2009

For attention: Mr. Malimane I.M.

The Director: Quality Assurance
Department of Education: Free State
Bloemfontein
9300

Dear Sir

RE: REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

I wish to refer to your letter reference no: 16/4/1/33-2009 dated 2009/08/21.

This letter is a confirmation of the acceptance of the conditions for the registration of a research project with the Department: Free State as outlined in your letter as mentioned above.

Thanking you for your co-operation

Yours faithfully

N.M MAJOLA

ANNEXURE: C

PERMISSION FROM PRINCIPALS

**21 Geelvis Avenue
Bloemside
Bloemfontein
9306**

**Cell: 0732129430
29.07.2010**

The principal

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS**

I am presently studying for a Masters degree at the University of the Free State. My research focuses on the management practices utilised by the Bloemfontein principals and their SMT in order to enhance quality teaching and learning. The focus group interviews form an essential part of this research. Authorisation for this research was given by the Free State Department of Education. Your school was randomly selected to participate in this research. You and your deputy principal kindly requested to participate in the focus group interviews.

Before participating in the interviews, take note of the following:

- The participation in the focus group interviews is done on a voluntary basis.
- No harm can come to you as a respondent in participating in the focus group interviews.
- Information will be treated confidentially.
- The identity of the individual and the school will not be revealed and will remain anonymous.

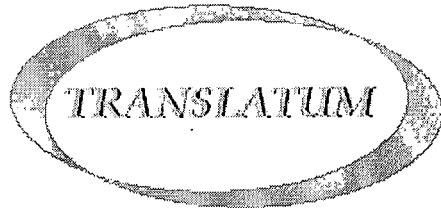
Your cooperation is highly valued and appreciated. Your positive attitude will contribute to the benefit of our profession by promoting school management and leadership and consequently improving academic performances in township secondary schools.

Regards

N.M.Majola

ANNEXURE: D

PROOF OF LANGUAGE EDITING



Mrs H C Lombard
B.A. (Bibl)
B.Bibl (Hons) - (Cum Laude)
M. Inf. (Cum Laude)
M.A.(Language Practice) - (Cum
Laude)

P.O. Box 12122
BRANDHOF
9324

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I, Huibrecht Christiana Lombard, hereby confirm that I have edited the under mentioned dissertation to the best of my ability.

**ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN SCHOOLS: PERSPECTIVES
OF TOWNSHIP SCHOOL MANAGERS**

by

NDOYISILE MOSES MAJOLA

Mrs H C Lombard
MA (Language Practice) (Cum Laude)

ANNEXURE: E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Do you provide both effective management and leadership in your school activities? Discuss briefly.
2. Do you think there is a need for some of the school managers in township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area who need to undergo more training especially, in management and leadership? Please provide reasons for your answer.
3. Which management tasks do you utilise to promote the achievement of academic success in your school? Please elaborate.
4. How do you ensure that there is a positive learning culture which will ensure that the NCS is effectively implemented in order to promote academic achievement in your schools? Explain briefly.
5. What do you do to ensure that there is team building in your schools which will promote academic success? Please expand.
6. What do you do to ensure that there is communication in your schools which will promote academic success? Please elaborate.
7. What do you do to ensure that there is motivation in your schools which will promote academic success? Please motivate.
8. Assuring quality is important for the schools' academic achievement. How do you ensure that quality is exercised effectively in your school to promote academic achievement?
9. Securing accountability is important for the schools' academic achievement. How do you ensure that accountability is exercised effectively in your school to promote academic achievement?
10. How do you ensure that school resources are effectively utilised in order to enhance academic success?
11. How do you ensure that parental involvement and community participation are promoted in the school and thus, lead to the improvement of the school's academic performance? Please expand.
12. How effective is the implementation of the IQMS in your school for the promotion of academic performance? Please expand.
13. Few township secondary schools in the Bloemfontein area obtained between 75 % or more in their Grade 12 results in the previous five years. What do you think are the reasons for this kind of a performance?