The relationship between quality management and school improvement: A case study of three Secondary Schools in Umlazi District

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Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any university.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated, firstly, to my late father Kennelworth "Khwezi" Zethulele Nxumalo, and my mother, Sibongile Selda Nxumalo, for their love and support towards their children's education. Secondly, to my father's family, Humphry, Ntombi and Veli (all deceased), and their surviving mother MaShezi for their love, kindness and inspiration to my family. Thirdly, to my late grandparents Khulu MaMbanjwa and Mkhulu Ngcolosi Bhengu, and their daughters for their encouragement and belief in me. Lastly, to Suzan Mabaso Shezi (deseased), for her love and support to the Nxumalos.

Acknowledgements

ABSTRACT

In South Africa, particularly in the townships, there is a huge concern for the quality of education that children receive. As a consequence, the Department of Education (DoE) introduced policies such as the Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) to improve the quality of education and for school improvement. IQMS policy was adopted from an industrial philosophy called Total Quality Management (TQM) which sought to improve production in the industries. The study used Quality Management and Total Quality management to frame the study and understand the daily lives of the participants in the three schools studied.

This study investigated the relationship between quality management and school improvement in three secondary schools in Umlazi District. The selection of these schools was based on the public and department officials' perceptions regarding their performance, over the past three years.

The research design was qualitative and used semi-structured interviews of schools principals, Heads of Departments (HODs) and educators. Unstructured observations were also used to gather data about the schools' environment, facilities available and general atmosphere.

The findings indicate that there was understanding of quality management and school improvement. Findings also show that the understanding of these concepts was limited to principals only, with some HODs showing some understanding. Educators did not understand these at all, and also did not regard it as part of their responsibility to understand them. The study also showed that the understanding of the two concepts did not translate to better performance in the school.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

B.A	Bachelor of Arts
B.Ed	Bachelor of Education
CASS	Continuous Assessment
COLT	Culture of Learning and Teaching Service
DAS	Developmental Appraisal System
DoE	Department of Education
HDE	Higher Diploma in Education
HONS	Honours
HIV/AIDS	Human Immune Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HOD	Head of Department
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management Systems
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
M.Ed	Masters in Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
NSLA	National Strategy For Learner Attainment
OBE	Outcome Based Education
PGP	Personal Growth Plan
PM	Performance Measurement
PPN	Post-Provisioning Norms
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SASA	South African Schools Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMS	Short Message Service
SMT	School Management Team
STD	Secondary Teachers Diploma
USA	United States of America
TQM	Total Quality Management
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

South African society is undergoing profound social, economic, political and educational transformation, and simultaneously needs to negotiate the challenges in order to fit into the global arena (Heystek, 1999). With a growing awareness of the importance of education in the future economy, many business-minded innovators have addressed the problems of schooling and suggested various solutions to improve schools' performance (Harris, 2000). The most salient feature in the recent reform movement is the infusion of the business sector's ideas regarding schooling (Steyn, 2000).

The Total Quality Management (TQM) approach has been credited with enabling business enterprises to compete in a world of globalisation. The TQM approach comprises principles that could also be applied to ensure effective public schooling and the provision of education in South Africa (Steyn, 2000). The interest in Total Quality Management in education has resulted in the government's introduction of new educational reforms through policies which focused specifically on school improvement (Harris, 2000). The focus on school improvement has stimulated the development of numerous strategies directed towards improving the quality of learning and teaching. The transformation agenda of the government has also been aimed at improving quality in the management of public schools (Christie, 1998). To this end the government has introduced legislation and policies such as the South African Schools Act (No 84 of 1996) (SASA) and Outcomes Based Education (OBE) to name just a few (Christie, 1998). Recently, the Department of Education (DoE) has introduced the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) policy as a means to assure quality education.

The most important question in the context of this study is whether or not these policy initiatives are working in all contexts in schools in South Africa. This question is important considering the fact that all these policies are

influenced by western views emerging out of the industrial world. Policies fashioned along these lines are generally known to have been successful in the first world context. However, third world contexts where pockets of first world economic successes live side-by-side with a sea of poverty, a high employment rate, and a shortage of educational resources present a different scenario (Odebero, Wamukuru & Ngware, 2006).

This study explores the extent to which the principles, procedures, and policies espoused in the TQM philosophy can assist in the endeavour for improvement of schools that participated in this study. It is within the context of these observations that the researcher developed an interest in understanding the reasons for different outcomes at matriculation level within the same district. In other words, understanding what is being done in schools that succeed and not done in schools that do not, became the researcher's main motivating question. The researcher's initial impression was that perhaps many educators in schools like those that participated in the study did not understand quality management. Similarly, the assumption underpinning the study was that these educators were unable to define quality management, yet both the understanding of and ability to define quality management are important for achieving better results. Throughout this study the researcher argues that understanding concepts such as Total Quality Management and school improvement remain critical if quality is to be achieved and maintained in schools.

1.2 Background to the study

The new education policies in South Africa were introduced as part of the new government's strategies to improve the quality of education for schools and education generally (Christie, 1998). In this study policies are seen as attempts designed to bring success in terms of specific sets of goals related to improving the learner's performance. Taylor (1993) reminds us that education policies are, primarily, geared towards improving the quality of teaching and learning experiences in schools. Beard (1989) further points out that quality is

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a prerequisite for the survival of education and that it needs to be managed properly for the achievement of set goals. Mentz (1999) adds that for the success of the quality management in an organisation there must be continuous improvement, a shared vision, a culture of teaching and learning, a learning environment and school effectiveness as part of school improvement.

It must be mentioned though that quality management is not a new phenomenon as it has its roots in the philosophy of Total Quality Management (TQM) (Mentz, 1999). TQM is a method for ensuring that all the activities necessary to design, develop and implement a product or service are effective and efficient with respect to the system and its performance (Allen, 1996). Central to this philosophy are three concepts, namely, leadership, teamwork and focus on customers and suppliers (Beard, 1989). These three concepts can assist schools that are striving to improve quality, and Beard (1989) refers to these concepts as pillars for quality management.

Several policy decisions by the DoE in South Africa clearly indicate signs of commitment to improving and maintaining the quality of education. The DoE, for example, has introduced several quality management policies directed at the management of the South African public schools. The latest policy regarding quality management and assurance is the IQMS. The DoE's 2005 Employment Equity Plan explains IQMS as a quality management strategy that emerged after the ineffective implementation of Performance Management (PM), the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS) and Whole School Evaluation (WSE), respectively. It emerged as a means to reconcile the three quality management strategies: DAS, WSE and PM. The establishment of IQMS, therefore, does not replace the former quality management strategies, but incorporates them.

Despite the intentions outlined in the above paragraph, there are both positive and negative views about the IQMS. Mncwabe's (2007) research about the implementation of the IQMS in Mayville schools reported positive views among educators and school management respectively. However, Maphutha's (2005) concluded that educators studied held a negative attitude towards

IQMS. Educators' concerns were that the IQMS was adding unnecessary paper work over and above their already-overloaded teaching schedules. In addition, Maphutha (2005) asserts that many educators and schools managers were aware of quality assurance policies, but did not seem to understand or implement them. Such a view is also shared by Steyn and van Niekerk (2005).

In the Umlazi district, where this study was conducted, a growing concern about the manner in which quality was being managed in secondary schools, was observed by the researcher. The researcher is a practising educator in this district and she has, through literature, come to understand the connection between the concepts of quality and school improvement. Such an understanding raised the researcher's concerns about whether or not there was quality management in the Umlazi District secondary schools she had observed. A high rate of under-performance in learners' results, especially in the matriculation year, had been observed. Many parents in that community gauge the quality of education provided in schools by their matriculation results. When results are released at the end of each year the DoE and the media pay special attention to pass and failure rates. They focus particularly on specific subjects and also on specific categories of schools. Township schools always become a cause for concern at such times because of high failure rates.

Chinsamy (2002) has attempted to offer explanations about the causes of such under-performance by learners in the matriculation examinations. Chinsamy (2002) mentions a lack of access to free education and quality teaching and learning in environments with adequate facilities and teaching resources as factors that are expected to play a critical role in improving learners' performance in examinations. One of the strategies introduced to create an environment within which such improvements were to occur was the development of a number of improvement initiatives by utilising both donor funding and non-governmental organisations (Chinsamy, 2002). There were programmes that addressed different aspects of education such as educator development, school management, content and teaching methodology, learner

assessment and organisational development. Chinsamy (2002) concludes by pointing out that through all the initiatives on school development in South Africa, studies show that there has not been a significant impact on teaching and learning, and subsequently, on learners' performance.

The under-performance of learners over the past years has been a matter of great concern for parents, educators, learners and the broader community. The failure rate as well as the quality of the results has placed a severe strain on the already-scarce resources and the economy in general (Odebero, Wamukuru & Ngware, 2006). It seems that the quality of the results is influenced largely by the management and leadership of schools which seems to have deteriorated to such an extent that the role of the principal as school leader has become critical in terms of developing effective schools (Shaba, 2003).

1.3 Statement of the problem

Quality management and school improvement are keys to school success in terms of mission, goal and objectives (Odebero, Wamukuru & Ngware 2006). It is therefore important that schools put in place mechanisms to ensure that quality assurance practices are being followed. Some secondary schools in Umlazi district, however, do not seem to have put quality assurance mechanisms in place. Consequently, there seems to be a lack of understanding among educators and school management team members about what quality management is all about, as well as its relationship with the concept of school improvement.

1.4 Focus of the study

This study focused on the educators' understanding of the meaning of the quality management concept and the relationship between quality management and school improvement in three secondary schools in Umlazi District that were generally regarded as under-performing. In carrying out this

study the researcher placed special focus on three key aspects that are assumed to contribute to quality management: leadership, teamwork and focus on customers and suppliers (Van der Westhuizen, 2003). These aspects of quality management are seen as applicable to schools (Sallies, 1996). Focus was also placed on school improvement as a strategy that is used by the DoE directed towards improving quality of teaching and learning (Harris, 2000). Under school improvement, focus is placed on school effectiveness, the learning environment, a culture of teaching and learning and vision, mission and goals.

1.5 Critical questions

The critical questions that underpin this study are the following:

- What do educators in three Secondary Schools in Umlazi District understand by the terms 'quality management' and 'school improvement?

- How does the understanding of 'quality management' and 'school improvement' facilitate the maintenance of quality in three secondary schools in Umlazi District?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is significant both at theoretical and practical levels. It makes available voices from educators who teach in Umlazi secondary schools. Awareness of and understanding their voices may assist in clarifying and deepening our understanding about the extent to which failure or success in implementing educational policies can affect quality education. It is further hoped that this study will reveal trends that can be linked to under-performance of the learners in Umlazi District. Understanding such trends might help throw light on how quality education can be maintained through school improvement endeavours.

1.7 Clarification of terms

After presenting the background of the study, statement of purpose, focus of the study, critical questions, rationale, and the significance of the study, it is essential that key concepts underpinning this study are also presented. These key concepts are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

1.7.1 Quality

According to Pickard and Dixon (2004), quality is an ongoing process that has to be so persuasive through the institution, that it becomes the philosophy and culture of the whole institution. Quality does not only refer to goods and service but it also includes quality of time, place, equipment and tools, process, people, environment and safety and information and measurement (Dale, 2003). Deming (1986) summarises definitions of quality by stating that quality is about meeting or exceeding the needs and expectations of the customers.

1.7.2 Quality management

Sallis (2000) refers to quality management as a set of policies, processes and procedures required for planning and execution (production/development/ service) in the core business area of an organisation. Sallis (2000) further states that quality management integrates the various internal processes within the organisation and intends to provide a process approach for project execution. Quality management enables organisations to identify, measure, control and improve the various core business processes that will ultimately lead to improved business performance (Dale, 2003). Bae (2006) emphasises that quality management is about all management activities and functions that are involved in the determination of quality policy and its implementation by means such as quality planning and quality assurance (including quality control).

1.7.3 Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management can be defined as a philosophy and a set of guiding principles designed to meet and exceed expectations of various external and internal customers (Steyn, 2000, p. 12). The focus of TQM is on

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the acceptance and pursuit of continuous improvement as the only useful standard or goal of attaining quality through the participation of the role players in a school (Harris, 2000).

1.7.4 School Improvement

School improvement can best be understood not as an event, but as a process (Hopkins, 1996). Harris (2000) extends Hopkins's definition by adding that school improvement is a never-ending process because there is, and should always be, room for improvement. It involves leaders having an ideal scenario that one is striving for. Such a notion is aptly captured by Parsons (1994) who writes "If you can dream it you can improve it" (Parsons, 1994, p. 37).

1.8 Methodology

This research project utilises the qualitative approach to research and produces qualitative data that is mainly in the form of words (De Vos, 1998). The case study approach to data gathering and presentation was used because it allows a thorough understanding of one phenomenon, while drawing on multiple sources of evidence to enable the understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). More discussion of the methodological issues is presented in chapter three.

1.9 Delimitation of the study

This study was undertaken in three secondary schools that are located in Umlazi in the Umlazi District in the KwaZulu-Natal province. These secondary schools had consistently been experiencing under-performance in recent years.

1.10 The structure of the study

Chapter One provides an orientation to the study and gives the rationale for the study, the critical questions to be addressed, the significance of the study as well as the conceptual framework. Chapter Two, reviews literature especially on quality management theories, school improvement and research conducted in this particular area. Chapter Three shifts the focus to the research

design and methodology that was used to gather, record, analyse and present the data. Chapter Four describes the presentation of the data. Data is presented in different themes that emerged when doing data analyses. Chapter Five presents and summarises findings, as well as the recommendations for different stakeholders in education.

1.11 Conclusion

Chapter One has outlined the background of the study and covered the following areas: background of the study, statement of the problem, focus of the study, critical questions, significance of the study, clarification of terms, methodology, the research paradigm underpinning methodology, and delimitations of the study. The next chapter deals with the literature review.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one offers a brief contextual background to the study. This chapter presents the literature review and theoretical and conceptual framework underpinning the study. To achieve this, the chapter explains in more detail the key concepts underpinning the study. These concepts are 'quality', 'quality management', 'TQM philosophy', as well as 'school improvement'. Towards the end of the chapter, two research studies that were conducted with a specific focus on quality management and school improvement are reviewed.

2.2 The concept of quality

Before discussing TQM as a philosophy, the relationship between TQM and schools, and quality management and its pillars, there is a need to examine the meaning of quality in education. As can be expected, there is no unanimity about the concept quality (Fidler, 2002). Greenwood and Gaunt (1994, p.13), for example, regard quality in education as:

> *"being about continuous improvement of systems in order to enable the optimum state of personal, social, physical, and intellectual development of each individual."*

Sallis (1996), on the other hand, defines quality as that which best satisfies and exceeds the customers' needs and wants. Harris, Bennett and Preedy (1988) states that in education customers are the members of the staff, learners, parents, the government and society at large. Although Sallis defines quality as noted in the first sentence the author also argues that quality can be said to be in the hands of the beholder. Fidler (2002) argues that there is no single definition of the term quality and concludes that quality is achieved when every member of the staff delights their customers and where the structure of their organisations allows doing so.

2.3 The TQM philosophy in schools

This section aims at exploring the nature of this philosophy that underpins quality management in schools. Deming introduced the philosophy of TQM (Van der Westhuizen, 2003). Deming's effort to promote the restructuring of the Japanese management culture led to the conceptualisation of how organisations might operate effectively. Rampa (2005) postulates that one of the reasons for the establishment of this philosophy was that Japanese products could not compete with the world markets in Europe after World War II. To improve quality, one of the major steps that the Japanese took was to enlist the services of Deming, who then developed the ideal management approach that was later known as TQM in Japan. According to Deming (1986), the answer to the Japanese problem was simple: concentrate on achieving complete customer satisfaction. Thus Deming's quality management helped the Japanese to produce better products than that of their competitors.

Deming (1986) states that although the TQM philosophy was intended for the industrial sector, the management principles on which it rests could also be applied to service sectors, including education. Fidler (2002) embraces Deming's (1986) explanation that TQM philosophy and practices enable educators to achieve goals that they have set for the betterment of the school. This is because TQM appears to provide individuals with motivation, more involvement, and more control over their work. The mission of TQM is to get employees to identify with the organisation's mission of producing better quality (Sallis, 1996). Fidler (2002) further argues that the rationale for TQM is that an organisation will prosper if it meets and exceeds the clients' expectations, thus ensuring those clients' needs are met and that some of their expectations will be exceeded. This is integral to the operation of TQM. Schargel (1994) feels that the adoption of TQM in school is important because it is as a process which involves focusing on meeting and exceeding customer expectations, continuous improvement, sharing responsibilities with employees and reducing scrap and rework. Thakker, Deshmukh and Shastree (2006) concur with Schargel (1994) by suggesting that the whole philosophy of TQM revolves around the involvement of people at all levels. These levels

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include understanding customer requirements and working towards their satisfaction, commitment of top management and development of culture through which the organisation's wide impact can be realised. Thus TQM requires a commitment to continuous improvement which requires improvement of the quality required by the customer or the client.

2.4 Quality management

Citizen (2002) suggests that the quality principles used in successful business, commercial and industrial enterprises can be adopted in schools. Citizen (2002) further states that these principles can transform education because with them every school has the potential to provide excellent education. Van der Westhuizen (2002) agrees with Citizen's (2002) suggestion by stating that the adoption of TQM as a quality management strategy by schools means cultural change. Berry (1991) further states that quality management requires changes in the attitudes and working methods and a change in the way the institution is managed and led. TQM informs a quality management method for ensuring that all the activities necessary to design, develop and implement a product or service are effective and efficient with respect to the system and its performance. Herslman and Hay (2003) support Berry (1991) by emphasising that quality management is focused not only on product quality, but also on the means to achieve it. Quality management therefore uses quality assurance and control of processes, as well as products, to achieve more consistent quality.

According to Liston (1999), quality management is a process to maximise customers' satisfaction at the lowest cost to the organisation. Liston (1999) concurs with Rowley (1997) by putting more emphasis on customers receiving quality. Rowley (1997) further states that quality management is concerned with managing the gaps between the expectations and perceptions on the part of management, employers, as well as the customers. Such a gap arises when there is inadequate communication or a lack of communication about the customers' needs. In short, the gap refers to the discrepancy between

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what customers expect from the service being provided and what service providers perceive as what the customers expect. Within the context of education, Sign (2002) defines quality management in schools as the one that succeeds in meeting its own goals, is relevant to meeting the children's communities and society, and fosters the ability of the children to acquire knowledge and critical learning skills. Managers need to understand customers' expectations adequately and check if the right priorities are to be set.

Managing quality also implies ensuring that quality is maintained, and that is why quality assurance and quality management are intertwined and need brief discussion. Whitaker (1995, p.110) defines quality assurance as referring to:

> *"The determination of standards, appropriate methods and quality requirement by an expert body accompanied by a process of inspection or evaluation that examines the extent to which the practice meets the standard."*

Whitaker's view of quality assurance is shared by Sallis (1996), who regards quality assurance as being concerned with preventing faults from occurring. This means that a panel of experts in teaching might develop an evaluation instrument that seeks to itemise the characteristics of effective educators (Senge, 1990). The significance of quality assurance for school has been highlighted by a number of authors. Herslman and Hay (2003) for instance, give reasons for ensuring quality by stating that to ensure quality education certain quality assurance mechanisms must be established in schools in order for the stakeholders to take responsibility for their own quality improvement. This can be done by being more accountable for their own failings to achieve the required results in teaching. The above-mentioned view is echoed by Harris, Bennett and Preedy (1998), who further give a summary of what quality assurance is. According to these writers, quality assurance involves supplying evidence to external agencies about an organisation's potential effectiveness.

To ensure quality, the DoE uses the IQMS policy (Maphutha, 2005). The preamble of the IQMS Collective Agreement number 8 (2003), states that for the DoE and for all educators the objective is to ensure quality public education for all and to constantly improve the quality of teaching and learning. It further states that the successful educational outcomes depend on empowering, motivating and training educators. Quality management seeks to monitor these processes. IQMS brings all the systems dealing with development, training and evaluation under one roof.

IQMS incorporates three systems, namely DAS, PM and WSE (Bopape, 2005). Firstly DAS was established with the purpose of appraising individual educators, in a transparent manner, with a view to determining areas of strength and weakness and to draw up programmes for individual development (Bopape, 2005). IQMS requires teachers to construct a personal growth plan (PGP) based on self and peer reflections on each teacher's practice. Secondly, PM, according to Douglas (2005), aimed at evaluating individual teachers for salary progression, grade progression, affirmation of appointments and rewards. The prospect of pay progression is an important incentive for teachers to accumulate professional development points and this will, over time, become an independent valuing system. Lastly, WSE was established to evaluate the overall effectiveness of a school as well as the quality of teaching and learning. It was intended that WSE should link evaluations by schools themselves with evaluation done externally, to ascertain the overall quality of teaching throughout the school, to judge levels of learner performance and attainment, and to audit the extent of in-service professional development (Douglas, 2005). IQMS promotes individual professional growth of educators and ongoing support for educators and the school; it assists schools to look for ways to continually improve; and it provides for and encourages diversity in the teaching profession (SADTU, 2003).

Quality management has a number of key features listed in West–Burnham (1992) and Van der Westhuizen (2003), which include focus on customers and

suppliers, leadership and team work. These pillars of quality management aim at school improvement and supporting learners and educators with opportunities for success.

2.4.1 Focus on customers and suppliers

The role of customers and suppliers is crucial for the implementation of quality management. A school as an organisation depends on its customers and should address their current and future needs, meet the customer's requirements and strive to succeed in their expectations. Customers in the business sector are viewed as final judges of quality; if they say they like the product then the supplier produces more for them (Deming, 1986).

Van der Westhuizen (2003) explains that 'customer driven' refers to a notion of quality in which those who are to receive the product or service make explicit their expectations of this product or service, and quality is defined in terms of meeting or exceeding these expectations. Quality management utilises the concept of external and internal customers (Van der Westhuizen, 2003). De Viler, Wethmar and Van Der Bank (2000) believe that internal customers are those inside the organisation and that in the school situation internal customers are the learners, educators, staff and workers. Van der Westhuizen (2003) emphasises the importance of learners as customers by saying that learners are widely perceived as the primary or ultimate customers who determine the content of the educational programme. It is therefore an ultimate goal of the school to provide the opportunity to learn and develop their capacities and capabilities.

Learners are the crucial customers because they are supplied with education by the education system (Van der Westhuizen, 2003). According to the South African Constitution Bill of Rights Chapter 2 Section 29 (1), everyone has a right to basic education and further education which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

According to Shaba (2003), learners should exercise this right in making sure that they get quality education. Shaba (2003) further emphasise that the DoE and the school as a whole including the non-teaching staff, must supply the learners with effective learning tools and a good learning environment.

According to De Viler, Wethmar and Van Der Bank (2000), external customers are those outside the school who receive the school product or service such as the community members, tertiary education, parents, tax payers, government and businesses. External customers have a special interest in learners' performance and progress in the school because at the end of the day they are the recipients of the learners when they look for work or study at tertiary institutions. External customers invest in learners while they are still at school by supporting them in different ways such as bursaries, in-service training and workshops. Parents are the most important external customers of the school because they share a special bond with the school. Oosthuizen (2004, p.28) clarifies the relationship between parents and educators by stating that:

> *an educator recognises parents as partners in education and promotes a harmonious relationship with them. This means that parents should also have a say in how the school is managed.*

Heystek (1999) argues that the relationship between parents and schools should change from a client-type relationship to a partnership-type of a relationship. Shaba (2003) explains that educators cannot take all decisions regarding learners because they act *in loco parentis*; this means acting in the place of a parent. Acting in the place of parents does not necessarily mean that people acting are, in law, entitled to complete rights of the parents over the children in their entirety. It means that parents should be involved in all decisions that the school makes for learners and the learning programmes. Shaba (2003) further states that it is a duty of the parent to ensure that learners actively participate in the schools' curricular and extra-curricular activities. Communication is important between internal and external customers to improve the quality of education and to make sure that the external customers

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receive the right quality (Oosthuizen, 2004). Suppliers, the school and the DoE should work on delivering the best service to satisfy the needs of the internal customers (Van der Westhuizen, 2003).

Oosthuizen (2004) supports Shaba (2003) by stating that as a primary educator to a child a parent has a duty to give continuing attention and to be involved in educational training. Parents should offer the child his or her attention and love. A parent's involvement in the children's education demonstrates love for his or her child. Oosthuizen (2004) further emphasises that parents should work together with educators because parents lack professional skills, such as specialised knowledge of subjects as well as in vocational training, and are thus dependant on the educational skills of an educator. De Viler, Wethmar and Van Der Bank (2000) mention that all parents, irrespective of whether they are members of the School Governing Body (SGB) or not, should support the school and attend its meetings to be informed about its activities. Moreover, they should ensure that their children adhere to school rules and behave in accordance with these and deal with any disruptive behaviour of their children. It is crucial that the relationship between educators and parents is characterised by mutual respect and transparency for the sake of harmony (Shaba, 2002).

2.4.2 Leadership

There are different definitions of leadership, but most of them suggest that a good leader must possess certain skills. Ruitzug (1993) defines leadership as a process that results in the determination of organisational objectives and strategies. It entails building consensus to meet those objectives and involves influencing others to work towards those objectives. Sergiovanni (2001, p.41) supports Ruitzug in terms of the definition of leadership as:

> *"involving a reciprocal process that enables the members of the school community to construct meanings that lead to common purposes."*

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Leadership is essential in the implementation of change (Ruitzug, 1993). Change is necessary in the transformation of South Africa's education. The leaders in the school situation are commonly the School Management Team (SMT) and the SGB. Leaders must commit themselves to inspire and promote commitment to the development of the culture of performance and excellence for educators, learners and parents (Shaba, 2003). For this culture to be successful, Calitz, Fuglestad and Lillejørd (2002) state that leadership is not a one-man task, performed by a principal of a school or educator in a classroom. It requires participation and co-operation of all parties: school authorities on all levels, colleagues, learners, and the local community. Calitz, Fuglestad and Lillejørd (2002) explain the duties of the leader by stating that a leader has to ensure that human resources are used efficiently for achieving certain goals. As leaders, managers must display the vision and skills necessary to create and maintain a suitable teaching environment, to develop goals and to inspire and to motivate others to achieve their goals. A leader must have a vision of a desired future, and showing how to get there is a basic component of the inspirational process. Calitz, Fuglestad and Lillejørd (2002) further state that the aim of the leader is to energise the critical mass of educators, learners and other stakeholders towards attaining common goals. It is essential that the leader inspires the team to actively participate in determining how to reach these goals. The goals, ideas and practical solutions generated by the team should be broken into chunks with clear time frames, acceptance criteria and individual responsibility.

The question of vision and attainment of organisational goals is closely related to quality management. Quality management is one of the most elusive undertakings, particularly in education. According to Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994), the implementation of quality management by leaders has not been entirely successful. A number of reasons have been given by Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994) as to why the quality philosophy might fail in schools. The first and most important reason is the lack of viable commitment by leaders. As Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994, p. 191) observe, staff will look to the behaviour and actions of the principal and the top team rather than the words

spoken. If they do not see the behaviour of the top team as a genuine and sustained commitment to quality, then it is unlikely to be produced from below. The educational leaders need to "buy in" to the quality philosophy if it is to take root (Deming, 1986). Leaders need to learn the tools and techniques that are used in quality management processes. Rapport (1993) supports Murgatroyd and Morgan (1994) by stating that a leader must embrace and espouse the quality philosophy for it to be successfully implemented. Rapport (1993) further states that a manager's commitment is measured in terms of tangible and visible things, not rhetoric. School leaders are responsible for quality in the schools because, as school managers, they are essentially responsible for the process of planning, organising, leading and controlling. Van der Westhuizen (2003), explains that a quality-driven school has distinct characteristics. Most schools have a hierarchical "top-down" organisational structure. At the top is the Head; below that person are the Deputy Heads, then the Learning Area Heads followed by the Grade Leader and so on. For Van der Westhuizen (2003), quality in schools should have a much flatter hierarchy. Such an organisation could, for example, be reduced to three levels: the Head, then the Executive Staff and finally the remainder of the staff.

Sergiovanni (2001) states that there are numerous strategies and personal attributes that make a good leader such as self confidence, flexibility, consistency, objectivity, a high level of motivation, good communication skills, the ability to make difficult decisions and solving problems. Williams (1983) states that the quality of leadership in any school is a determinant of an effective school, and it is the most essential factor that contributes to school effectiveness. He also points out that the leadership style of a principal has a direct impact on the performance of the school, its learners and staff. Squelch and Lemmer (1994) define leadership style as a way in which leadership is conducted. The style of leadership conditions what is expected of followers. Squelch and Lemmer (1994) also describe three leadership styles that are used by leaders in different situations or all the time. Firstly, leadership by being a boss whereby the leader is autocratic and quite difficult to work with. He or she likes to do things in his or her own way and uses this position and power

to get things done. He or she seldom delegates and does not encourage teamwork. He focuses more on the task than on individual development and motivation. He is less flexible and tends to resist change. Secondly, leadership is by participation, where a leader focuses more on teamwork, individual involvement and interpersonal resolutions. Such a leader prefers shared decision-making and problem-solving methods. He or she believes in delegating tasks and responsibilities, and motivating individuals. Thirdly, there is free-rein leadership in which the leader is very casual and prefers not to get involved. He or she provides general rules and guidelines and leaves the individual to get on with things. He or she is reluctant to make decisions or deal with the problems directly.

Squelch and Lemmer (1994) further state that research on effective schools has produced numerous types of leadership behaviour that lead to attainment of high academic achievements. Leadership tasks for effective schools include an emphasis on achievement, building a positive learning climate, ensuring safety and order in the school, monitoring students' progress continuously, vision and symbols, learners' autonomy, experimentation and support where there have been mistakes or failure. Sallis (1993) adds the voice of the customers: building effective teams, leading staff development and having organisational structure.

2.4.3 Teamwork

Demichiel and Ryba (1997) cited in Van der Westhuizen (2002), regard teamwork as a major component of a quality improvement process and as second nature in a world-class organisation. Teams form part of the contemporary visionary and more reflective styles of management, which focus on consensus and decision-making by teams generating quality products and services in a timely and customer-driven manner. This definition means that every school must have certain teams to get work going. Teams must seek to satisfy their customers (Williams, 1983).

According to Sallis (2002), teams clarify issues and ideas, and they are the means by which conflicts over direction and policy can be handled. Working in teams can give every person in the organisation a means of expressing their views and making contributions to the quality improvement process. A number of different types of teams are needed to produce quality improvements such as the curriculum team, policy developers or makers, library committee, class manager's committee, sports co-ordinators, subject facilitators, examination committee, time table committee, learners' study supervision committee, safety and environment committee and so on.

Van Kradenburg (1999) explains that there is a difference between the traditional team and a quality management team. The traditional management team lacks the real engagement to ownership and control, while the quality management team is equipped with total quality on the environment. A quality management team is based on the empowerment of people. Teamwork is therefore important because it creates an energy to work together to add value to thinking, services and achievement. Van der Westhuizen (2003) describes a quality management team as a small group of workers who have been empowered by the school management team (SMT). The SMT should assign responsibilities to the team, in this case, the staff. In this way there is better communication between the SMT and educators and work is done.

Van Kradenburg (1999) further states that one of the prominent features of quality management is the reduction of hierarchal levels and restructuring of the organisation to a self-directed team. Having a quality management team in a school means having an alternative to a top-down management style where the SMT controls everything; here educators have a say in a way the school is managed. Not all work is done by the SMT but educators are also assigned work which is relevant to their post level 1 duties. The SMT is not there to supervise them in terms of monitoring performance appraisals and controlling budget but to work with them as a team in order to produce good results. This means that they work together all the time. They communicate with each other

as a group. They have regular meetings. The group plans objectives, goals and schedules which must always be in line with the school and government policies.

Maeroff (1993) states that the improvement of the quality of education can only happen if the educators are prepared to take risks inside and outside their own classrooms and to study to advance change throughout the school. Educators must be motivated to attend workshops and bring back new information and share it with other educators. Schools need also to be constantly visited by the supervisors from the DoE in order to find out new challenges, do problem-solving and also receive advice. It is also essential that the principal of the school motivates educators to improve their education so that they can help in upgrading the school.

2.5 School improvement

Fidler (2002, p.70) regards school improvement as a systematic and sustained effort aimed at changing learning conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals effectively. Fidler's (2002) definition accepts that there are school processes and conditions which directly contribute to the attainment of educational goals. According to Halsall (1998), school improvement is an approach to educational change that enhances student's outcomes as well as strengthening the school's capacity for managing change. Joyce's (1999) definition is parallel to Fidler's and Harsall's (1998) and states that school improvement is about creating continuous efforts needed to meet the challenging needs of our societies without losing sight of their prime purpose as centres of individual learning. The people who should be doing improvement are the responsible parties such as the parents, educators, community members, institutions and businesses. From these definitions of school improvement it appears that school improvement is about raising the learner's attainment by focusing on the teaching and learning process and the conditions which support it. Liston, cited in Bush (1999), identifies typical features of school improvement. These

features give direction for schools in areas that can be targeted for school effectiveness and improvement. These features include: continuous improvement, shared vision, culture of teaching and learning, a learning environment and school effectiveness.

2.5.1 Continuous improvement

According to Greenwood and Gaunt (1994), continuous improvement is about continuously improving the quality of the product in the work place. The term "continuous improvement" comes from the Japanese concept of *kezien*, which means that everyone in the organisation is dedicated to continuous improvement, not only on the job, but in every aspect of life (Parsons, 1994). West-Burnham (1992) sees school improvement not as a one-time effort but a never-ending journey of self improvement, the improvement of other people and the promotion of achievement. West-Burnham (1992) adds that for continuous improvement in a school, educators and all other staff members must meet regularly to find ways of improving the school. For Joyce (1999); certain methods must be used by the school to refine their procedures in order to become more effective, for example, the school can draw a bar graph in order to see if there is any improvement. In so doing they can recall the changes or things that happened in that year which caused a decrease or increase in the graph. Reviewing the time book can help in continuous improvement; there can be faults and such faults need not be ignored but revisited so as to improve the quality of the forthcoming results.

Atkinson (1990) emphasises that for school continuous improvement, educators need to be dedicated to their work. Dedication means that educators must make an effort to improve the quality. The role of the principal is to motivate educators through education (Crawford, Kydd & Riches, 1997, p.52). Motivated educators are efficient and creative and they can assist in bringing change in the school environment and can influence others to change. It is the principal's duty to remove the barriers and build a culture of innovation (Deetz, Tracy & Simpson 2000). The principal is able to motivate others only if he/she is motivated (Spreitzer & Quinn, 1996). According to Atkinson (1990) motivation

involves the human will to work, to contribute and to co-operate. Motivation consists of initiating activity that will lead to desirable results. Furthermore, motivation has been defined as all those inner-striving conditions described as wishes, desires, drives, etc. It is an inner state that activates or moves. A motivated person works very hard, sustains a pace of hard work, and has self-directed behaviour towards important goals.

2.5.2 Vision and mission statement

Hallinger and Hetch (1999) give conceptual clarity to the terms 'vision' and 'mission'. The notion of school vision as articulated by the school leader draws influence from its impact on the leader's own behaviour and also from its potential to energise others to invest in work with meaning. Meaning-making is a central role of the school leader. A vision is a starting point of finding meaning in one's work. A mission exists when the vision of the critical mass cohere in common sense with a community. This word often connotes a moral purpose. The moral or spiritual character of a shared vision reaches into the hearts of people and engages them to act on behalf of something that is in their own immediate self interest. According to Smith (1995), the vision and mission helps to establish the climate of the school because when the vision is clear, shared goals are achieved by the school. An educational goal might describe the state that the school wishes to achieve by the end of the year in relation to student learning, attendance, graduation rates and school climate (West Burnham, 1992). Smith (1995) explains that we often define success by whether or not the school's functional goals have been achieved. Unlike a vision or mission, the power of the goal or management objectives lies not in its inspiration or motivated force but in its ability to focus attention of people on a limited frame of activity.

Halsall (1998) states that when creating a vision, mission and goal, all stakeholders are involved in the process. If they are not involved it is essential that these are communicated to all educators, other staff members and all the stakeholders. They must be understood and approved by as many as possible,

resulting in unity of purpose and shared vision. For the school as an organisation to be able to satisfy the needs of all the stakeholders it must strive for improvement by constantly visiting its vision and mission statement and goals. Hallinger and Hetch (1999) stress that school leaders influence school improvement and that schools operate in the context of goal setting.

2.5.3 Culture of teaching and learning

Lethoko (1999), cited in Calitz, Fuglestad and Lillejørd (2002, p.239), uses Smith (2001) to define the culture of teaching and learning as referring to:

> *the attitude of educators and learners towards learning, the spirit of dedication and commitment in a school which arises through the joint effect of school management, the input of educators, the personal characteristics of students, factors of family life of students, school-related and societal factors.*

Through promoting the culture of teaching and learning the DoE is trying to establish faith in the education system by removing the on-going habits and values that are stumbling blocks to learning and teaching (Rampa, 2005). Bush (1999, p.103) argues that for improvement in teaching and learning, educators and head educators need to have an opportunity to update their subject knowledge and teaching skills and to gain new skills throughout their careers. They need to have opportunities to exchange ideas and best practice with others in the profession and to have access to high quality research and teaching materials (Bush, 1999). In this way the education standard will be raised because educators will know what to teach and how and learners will achieve more. Calitz, Fuglestad and Lillejørd (2002) explain that school improvement is displayed when certain characteristics are in place, such as a positive classroom environment, where educators are committed to teaching and learners participate in learning and teaching activities; order and discipline prevail and interpersonal relationships are sound.

2.5.4 Learning environment

All the economic problems of South Africa ranging from poverty and hunger to the need for the creation of sustainable, safe and green environments necessitate the enforcement of environmental management in schools and such related organisations. In this research, the concept *school environment* refers to both natural and physical surroundings (outside the classroom) in which the school operates or functions with a focus on both the natural and other visible man-made physical modifications (Young, 1997). Buchel (1995) identifies several man-made management strategies of the schoolyard that include erection of sports grounds, removal of refuse as well as care and maintenance of the buildings as having an important role in school improvement.

2.5.5 School effectiveness

The theory of school improvement can be linked to school effectiveness because it is also about school management; however, they both have different foundations. Sergiovanni (2001, p. 78) defines school effectiveness as:

> *achieving higher levels of pedagogical thoughtfulness, developing relations characterised by caring and civility and achieving increases in the quality of students' performance as measured traditional tests and/or alternative assessment.*

School effectiveness is concerned with measurement of factors such as school rates and the relationship between factors such as the leadership styles or level of educator expectations (Bush, 1999). Liston (1999, cited in Bush, 1999) identifies typical features of effective schools. These features give direction for schools in areas that can be targeted for school effectiveness and improvement. These features include: professional leadership; shared vision; a learning environment; concentration of teaching and learning; explicit high expectation; positive reinforcement; monitoring progress; pupils rights and responsibilities; purposeful teaching; home and school partnership.

2.6 Research conducted in this area

The researcher found two research studies that had been done on quality management and school improvement: one internationally and the second one in South Africa. These studies were based on policies that underpin quality management. For instance the international study was done in the United States of America (USA) and is about the quality management system called ISO 9000. The second study was done in this country and is about quality management policies and school improvement. The following section reviews these two studies so as not to repeat studies that have already been done.

2.6.1. International context study

The empirical study: The study of the relationship between implementation of ISO 9000 quality management systems and educational outcome of schools was conducted in United States of America (USA) Pennsylvania by Bae in 2006 to investigate empirical evidence regarding how the implementation of ISO 9000 is related to school performance. Performance was measured by student achievement on the state-mandated standardised tests and the students' attendance rates at schools, or the graduation rates, in the case of high schools.

The researcher of this study was interested in the new reforms in the education sector in the USA. During the past few decades USA schools have been the place of a variety of educational experiments because of the growing awareness of the importance of education in the future economy. Many business-minded innovators had aggressively addressed the problems of public schooling and suggested various solutions to improve school performance such as quality management systems. Reformers and researchers, through arguments and debate, claimed that ISO 9000 was the best way to improve school performance and, eventually, the efficiency of the entire public education system. A further claim was that more systematic and standardised process control was giving excellence to underperforming schools. The problem was that this claim was not based upon empirically-

supported research results. There had been research conducted on ISO 9000's impact on the efficiency of school administration, but little had been given to its effects on student achievement.

This study aimed at investigating the empirical evidence to determine the relationship between being registered to ISO 9000 standards and student achievement in schools, particularly comparing average pass rates of students on the state-mandated tests in schools participating in ISO, and rates in schools not participating in ISO 9000. It also sought to explore both the relationship between ISO 9000 implementation and the academic achievement of disadvantaged students.

This study found that there was no relationship between school districts that were registered to ISO 9000 standards and school districts that were not registered on the state-mandated test, after controlling for the percentage of students in a school receiving free or reduced price lunches, student educator ratio, and annual per pupil expenditure of school district. The results were consistent across maths and reading achievement across all school levels.

Bae's study is relevant to this study because it also aims at understanding how new quality management policies impact on school improvement. Both studies focus on the reasons for under-performance in secondary schools when there are new policies introduced for quality management and school improvement. However Bae's (2006) study differs from this study because it studies the implementation of a specific policy, ISO 9000, which is meant for quality management. In contrast, this study is not specifically based on any quality management policy; rather it intends to look at quality management as a whole.

2.6.2 South African context study

Rampa (2005) conducted a survey in South Africa. The main aim was to assess the relationship between TQM and school improvement. That survey sought to find out whether TQM had a relationship with school improvement in District D3-Tshwane North schools that were under-performing. There had

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been well-intentioned attempts to reconstruct a culture of teaching and learning in district D3-Tshwane North schools, however, the culture of teaching and learning did not improve as expected. Matriculation results remained low. Schools in this district appeared to be dysfunctional because of reasons such as educators' anti-academic attitude towards teaching, principals having given up attending to school problems, educators losing the desire to teach, vandalism, gangsters, rape, drug abuse and related problems, and learners roaming the streets during school hours.

Through this study, Rampa aimed to firstly identify issues that negatively affected the culture of teaching and learning in district D3-Tshwane schools. Secondly, to determine the efforts schools made to improve the culture of teaching and learning, and, thirdly, to explore the implications of TQM principles for schools. Finally, Rampa aimed to recommend a possible TQM framework for improving the culture of teaching and learning for district D3-Tshwane schools.

The findings of this study revealed that the principals, SMTs and SGBs did not have a clear understanding of what it was that their schools were trying to achieve. The schools' environment, infrastructure, resources and facilities were not favourable for the establishment and maintenance of a culture of teaching and learning of high quality. Role players did not know what they, as individuals, had to do to contribute to the establishment of a quality culture of teaching and learning in their schools.

Rampa's study is very similar to this study in the sense that both studies seek to understand the relationship between quality management and school improvement for three Umlazi township schools. The difference between these studies is that Rampa's study, like that of Bae (2006), researched quality management policies such as Tirisano, COLTS, Batho-Pele and Call to Action which are viewed as the bases of quality management in the study. The current study focuses on the quality management activities done inside the school for school improvement by the principal, HODs, and educators,

specifically, while Rampa focused on a wider population by including learners, parents and the community.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the literature that guides quality management and school improvement. The literature reviewed shows that many writers assert different views that are intended to improve the quality of learning in schools. The literature reviewed also shows that the TQM philosophy can be the basis of school improvement if managed properly. The following chapter outlines the procedures used to collect data for this study. These procedures are guided by the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter first presents the research design and later methodology that was used in gathering the data on the educators' understanding of the concepts 'quality management' and 'school improvement'. Emphasis is placed on the theoretical framework called interpretivism which underpins the study. This also led to the selection of the methodology that was used to collect data.

3.2 The research design

This study adopted a case study design comprising three case study sites, and it is located within qualitative research approaches. A case study design was deemed relevant because of the study's aim to understand reality in its uniqueness (Patton, 1999). In each case study site the following categories of participants were interviewed, namely, school principal, two heads of department (HODs) and two post-level one educators. Five participants were interviewed at each site. In total there were fifteen participants across the three case study sites comprising three principals, six HODs and six post-level one educators. The choice of the type and number of participants in the study was based on the focus of the study. The researcher chose to interview one principal, two HODs and two post level one educators in each school in order to get a balanced view about the school in relation to the aims of the study. It was felt that interviewing the SMT only might not have given a true reflection of what was happening at the school.

Visits to case study sites varied from at least five to seven times. The first visit was to negotiate access and introduce the study. Subsequent visits were for interviews, unstructured observations, bringing back interview transcripts for verification and for transcript collection, respectively. Since different participants gave the researcher different days for delivery and collection of

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transcripts, this meant that, in some instances, the school was visited six or seven times.

3.3 Methodology

To collect data for this study the researcher used qualitative methodology. According to Cohen and Manion (1994), the aim of methodology is to describe and analyse methods, throw light on their limitations and resources, clarify their consequences and relate their potential to the twilight zone at the frontiers of knowledge. It is to venture generalisation from success of particular techniques, suggest new applications, and to unfold the specific bearings of logical and metaphysical principle on concrete problems suggesting a new solution. De Vos (1994) cited in Denzin and Lincoln (2003), defines qualitative methodology as a multi-perspective approach utilising different qualitative techniques and data collection methods to social intention, aimed at describing, making sense of, interpreting (or reconstructing) this interaction in terms of the meaning that the subjects attach to it. Qualitative methodology is relevant to the study because the study is guided by the interpretative paradigm. The researcher intends to understand by describing and looking closely at the quality management philosophy and its relationship to school improvement through semi-structured interviews and unstructured observations. To acquire relevant data she used the case study method.

3.4 The research paradigm underpinning methodology

This research is located in the interpretive paradigm. This paradigm was deemed appropriate because the study sought to understand the phenomenon of quality management from the perspective of the researched (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The strength of this approach lies in the fact that it projects the voices of the researched from their own perspective (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). The interpretive paradigm is associated with qualitative research methodology (Neuman, 1994). Neuman (1994) describes the interpretive approach to research as a systematic analysis of social,

meaningful action through direct and detailed observation of people in a natural setting. This, according to Neuman (1994), is done in order to arrive at understanding and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social works.

Interpretive social science theory describes and interprets how people conduct their daily lives (Corbetta, 2003). A positivist paradigm, for instance, would not be appropriate due to its preoccupation with prediction, control and manipulation of variables and measurements, and also its belief in the existence of objective reality (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Furthermore, positivism reduces people to numbers and is concerned with laws and formulas that are not relevant to the actual lives of the people (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003), qualitative research is a field of inquiry in its own right, cutting across disciplines, fields and subject matters.

The above paragraphs provide justification for the choice of interpretivism as a research paradigm that guides the study. The researcher opted to use interpretivism because it describes meanings, understands participants' definitions of the situation, and examines how objective realities are produced (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). The next section presents the methodology that is associated with interpretivism.

3.5 Methods of data elicitation

The main data elicitation method was semi-structured individual interviews that were conducted on a face-to-face basis. Semi-structured interviews were complemented by informal and unstructured observations of facilities available in each case study site. Semi-structured interviews are suitable for studies of this nature where the focus is on describing, analysing and gaining understanding and insights into each case being studied.

3.5.1 Selection

A combination of both purposive and convenience selection methods were used in allocating schools to the research. It was purposive in the sense that the researcher was looking for schools that demonstrated certain typical characteristics of underachievement over a specified period (Cohen & Manion, 1986). In purposive selection methods the researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of typicality (Cohen & Manion, 1986). The researcher selected, purposely, three secondary schools out of 33 schools in the Umlazi District. Information about schools producing good results and those that produce bad results is made available to schools in the district from the district office. The researcher used the previous year's matriculation results from a document called the Umlazi District: National Strategy for Learners' Attainment (NSLA), (2006).

The choice of participating schools was guided by the following characteristics: the school had to be in the Umlazi District; it had to be a secondary school with a matriculation class; the school had to have a reputation in the community for having been producing a high pass rate in the matriculation year; the school's matriculation pass rate had to show a decline in the past three years. Although the selected schools had the specified characteristics, the final choice of the three schools was also based on the researcher's view that data elicitation at the three schools would be manageable, she would have easy access and it would be convenient. Easy access was defined in terms of gate keepers allowing researchers access to them and also in terms of distance from the researcher's home. An effective transport system was also considered.

3.5.2 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews were based on the two critical questions: The researcher wanted to find out what educators in three under-performing Umlazi secondary schools understood by the terms 'quality management' and 'school improvement,' as well as how their understanding of quality management and school

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improvement facilitated the maintenance of quality in the participating schools. Semi-structured interviews were preferred for their flexibility and freedom they give researchers to modify questions and to add new questions to the list as the study progresses (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews provide space for the researcher to explain the questions to the participants and ensure that they understand what is required of them (De Vos, 2000). The purpose of these interviews was to elicit the data that would facilitate credible conclusions in terms of understanding whether or not participants understood linkages between quality management and school improvement.

Cohen and Manion (1994), further regard interviews as a two-person conversation that is initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information. Such information is focused by the researcher on the content specified by the research objectives (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Interviews allow direct interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. This method helped the researcher to obtain more information and in-depth information about the relationship between quality management and school improvement. All the interviews were between each participant and the researcher, and took place on the school premises; these lasted for about 30 minutes to an hour. The interviews took place during breaks and free periods so as to avoid interference with the educators' teaching time.

All the interviews were tape recorded using a battery-charged tape recorder. Tape recording the interview ensured that an accurate record of verbal exchanges between participants and the researcher was kept. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002) maintain that tape recorders are useful in allowing the researcher to keep a record of the interview without having to be distracted by detailed note keeping. Using the tape recorder allowed the researcher to focus on the discussion and keep notes about the participants' posture and conduct during the interview process. That was meant to complement the tape recording as a tape recorder is unable to record such aspects as gestures.

Before recording the interview the researcher asked for the participants permission to tape record the discussions. It was explained to the participants that the tape recorder was to be used in order to ensure accuracy of the content of the discussion.

3.5.3 Unstructured observation

Observations were done after the third visit in the data elicitation process at each case study site. That was to ensure that the researcher had sufficient time to establish rapport with participants and the learners were aware of the researcher's presence and purposes. Observations were recorded in a note book as field notes. Field notes are easy to take without interrupting anyone and attracting much attention (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). The researcher had asked for permission from the principals to do such observations; informal observations entailed walking around the school and in certain instances, the researcher was accompanied by any available educator so to ask questions and get clarity. The purpose of doing observations was to explore the physical environment of the school. Observations would enable the researcher to identify and describe the facilities available in the school so that the profile of each school could be created for analysis purposes (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). The rationale for this process is that the researcher believes that the school environment is extremely important to the success of the school.

3.6 Data analysis

When doing data analysis the researcher, working within an interpretive paradigm, did not want to lose focus and thus fail to provide a description of what happens in schools. The researcher was mindful of Terre Blanche and Durrheim's (2002) advice that data analysis in interpretive research is not just a mindless technical exercise, but involves the development of ideas and theories about the phenomena being studied. After transcribing the interviews the researcher gave the copy of the interviews to the participants for confirmation. The researcher asked the participants to proofread the transcript

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and give her permission to use the transcript as part of data collection. Invariably all the participants gave permission, and in fact they appreciated the idea.

Before analysing data the researcher familiarised herself with the data gathered by reading the transcripts and notes several times, searching for similarities and differences that emerged from the responses. A table was used to categorise similarities and differences in responses. During this process the researcher manually coded data in the transcripts. This process entailed highlighting chunks or phrases in the transcribed data and marking these phrases. These chunks of data were then linked to each other in order to form some clusters of meaning which were later given labels to facilitate further analyses (Yin, 2004). From these labels emerged themes. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002) describe this process as inducing themes using a bottom-up approach where one looks at one's material and tries to work out whether the organising principles are those that naturally underlie the material.

3.7 Ensuring trustworthiness

When doing qualitative case study research the researcher has an intense interest in personal experiences and views. It is therefore important that trustworthiness is ensured in the study, (Yin, 2004). To ensure trustworthiness in this study, Guba and Lincoln's model (1985) was used. This model proposes the usage of criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, cited in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002).

To make this study credible the researcher used a variety of measures to ensure trustworthiness of the findings. These measures included the triangulation of both the data production methods by using both semi-structured interviews and unstructured observations. Credibility refers to the ability of the researcher to produce findings that are convincing and believable, (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Different data sources ensured that the

picture about the life in each case study site was balanced and this was achieved by talking to all key stakeholders, namely, the principals, HODs and educators. Unstructured observation of the schools allowed creation of profiles of the schools which further provided an understanding of quality management and school improvement in the researched schools. Conformability was ensured by coming back to the participants to check the researcher's initial interpretation of the content of the interview. Such a practice helped the researcher get more clarity about other issues that were raised during the interview process.

Transferability is achieved through producing detailed and rich descriptions of the contexts (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). These give readers a detailed account of structures of meaning which develop in specific contexts. These understandings can then be transferred to new contexts in other studies to provide a framework with which to reflect on arrangement of meaning and action that occur in these new contexts. This study describes and analyses data for the purpose of giving the reader a thorough report about what is happening in the schools studied. This study can be used by other researchers to understand not only the context of secondary schools in Umlazi District but also other schools that face similar problems relating to a decline in results.

Dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that the findings did indeed occur as the researcher says it did, (Yin, 2004). This study gives rich and detailed descriptions to show how certain actions develop in each context. Producing such descriptions does not necessarily mean that all researchers will find similar findings when doing research in the studied schools. As this study utilises the interpretive paradigm, it is expected that participants in this study may behave differently and express different opinions in changing contexts.

3.8 Ethical issues

Ethical issues are always important when doing research. At the heart of ethics in research is the notion of beneficence and non-maleficence (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Beneficence refers to the extent to which the researched or participants are going to benefit by participating in the study. The non-maleficence principle states that no harm of any kind should occur to participants, and the researcher must take all necessary steps to prevent or minimise harm that may be caused to participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Other ethical issues that must be observed when doing research include informed consent by participants, voluntary participation and the right to withdraw from the study at any stage, anonymity and confidentiality of the content of the discussion between the researched and the researcher.

The researcher took a number of steps to ensure that no harm was done to the participants. Permission to conduct research was sought and granted at three levels. Seeking permission from the DoE comprised the first level of gaining access to the research site. The second level included asking permission from school principals. The last level included asking permission from each participant. The researcher was mindful of the fact that getting permission from higher-level Department of Education personnel for instance, does not mean that the researcher should no longer request permission from potential participants. Participants have the right to agree to participate or to refuse permission. The researcher explained to each participant what the purpose of the study was. When these had agreed to participate, they were then officially given letters of request a few days prior to the interviews; they were also asked to sign the letter of consent as evidence of their agreeing to participate. Throughout the data elicitation process the researcher ensured participants of the confidentiality of the information they provided. The researcher also assured participants that their real names would not be disclosed when the report was written.

3.9 Coding of participants

The researcher requested the principals of the researched schools to participate in the study and to provide 2 HODs and 2 educators to be interviewed. This means that the researcher had 5 participants from each school. To hide the identity of participating schools, they were coded as follows:

A: refers to School-A

B: refers to School-B

C: refers to School-C

Principals were coded as follows:

P- A: refers to the principal of School-A

P- B: refers to the principal of School-B

P- C: refers to the principal of School-C

HODs were coded as follows:

HOD-A1: refers to the first HOD of School-A that participated

HOD-A2: refers to the second HOD of School-A that participated

HOD-B1: refers to the first HOD of School-B that participated

HOD-B2: refers to the second HOD of School-B that participated

HOD-C1: refers to the first HOD of School-C that participated

HOD-C2: refers to the second HOD of School-C that participated

Educators were coded as follows:

Edu-A1: refers to the first educator of School-A that participated

Edu-A2: refers to the second educator of School-A that participated

Edu-B1: refers to the first educator of School-B that participated

Edu-B2: refers to the second educator of School-B that participated

Edu-C1: refers to the first educator of School-C that participated

Edu-C2: refers to the second educator of School-C that participated

3.10 Limitations of the study

The researcher had to face different challenges at the beginning of the data collection process such as participants not being available on appointment dates because of absenteeism, leaving school early and being busy during break time. This limitation became an advantage to the researcher because it gave time for observation while waiting for the participants. This also gave the researcher the chance to understand how the school functioned.

Another limitation to the study was that it utilised the case study method for data elicitation. Case studies are commonly criticised for their lack of generalisability, (Punch, 2001). To overcome the lack of generalisability, Yin (2004) believes that a case study must be transferable. This study is transferable because it gives thick descriptions of what is happening in studied cases as it is an interpretive study. That is why the research produced minute details about how the study progressed from conceptualisation to analysis.

3.11 Conclusion

In this chapter the researcher presented the research design and methodology used to collected data. It was also important to tackle the issue of validity because this study is limited to only three schools in the province.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses data that was produced during the visits to
the case study sites for interviews and unstructured observation purposes. The
data is presented and discussed in such a way that findings on the relationship
between quality management and school improvement can be clearly
understood and interpreted. The school profiles based on the researcher's
notes are presented first. Secondly, follows a presentation and discussion of
the biographical data of the participants. Lastly, there is a presentation and
discussion of the findings.

4.2 Site-by-site profiles

4.2.1 School-A

School-A is one of the biggest schools in this Umlazi District. This school has
learners from different economic backgrounds. These range from four-room
houses, informal settlements, so-called 'subsidy' houses and low-cost
government-built houses. This school is believed to be one of the best schools
in Umlazi and parents prefer to send their children to it.

The school has 2400 learners enrolled this year (2007). Apart from the
principal, there are two deputy principals and five heads of departments. The
total number of educators is 80. There are 32 male educators and 48 females.
This school has 15 blocks that are built in different styles and positions. The
school has 42 classrooms and six workshops. One of the workshops was
converted to a Care Centre where educators and one cleaning staff member
help to cook for about 200 learners who are orphans. There is one small
library which used to be a classroom a long time ago. This library does not
have many books that are useful to learners and educators but it operates
because there is an educator trained as a librarian who tries to keep it in good

condition and usable. Next to the library there is a small room that is used for storing books. This room is not in good condition. Books are strewn all over the place. There is one Physical Science laboratory which is used mostly for teaching rather than experiments because the school lacks the equipment and chemicals. There is a technical section where there are workshops for subjects such as electricity, welding, technical drawing, motor mechanics and electronics. These workshops were built and supplied with material and equipment by a motor company 16 years ago. The school has two staffrooms used by educators. The staffrooms have books and exercise books all over because there are no shelves or cupboards for storage. There are many tables where educators sit in threes or fours. Only one staffroom has toilets and water taps. There is one big administration office for the administration staff and the principal and one deputy. The other deputy uses one of the workshops as an office. All members of the management team have their own offices outside the administration office.

Classrooms are congested with learners ranging from 50 to 70 per class. This scenario occurs in all grades from Grade 8 to 11. The biggest class in grade 12 is 45. In Grades 8 to10 learners sit in twos in double desks. In Grade 12 they sit in single desks. Each school day starts at 6.45 a.m. in the morning and finishes at 3.00 p.m. The learners start arriving at 6.30 a.m. for the study period which lasts from 6.45 a.m. till 7.00a.m. The school has only two morning assemblies a week, from 7.15 a.m. to 7.30 a.m. A special assembly can be called when necessary. Classes begin at 7.30 a.m. and continue to 3.00 p.m. Grade 12 has a study period between 3.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. which is supervised by educators.

The school is often used by the community from the area and outside for church services, political meetings and social activities. The school premises are not in good condition, except for a new building that has 12 classrooms. The walls and floors have cracks, the windows are broken, and the doors do not close. Some of the classrooms have torn chalk boards and some notice

boards have unacceptable words scrawled on them. In the classrooms there are loose electric wires and broken plugs. The school has three sports grounds for netball, soccer and rugby, while another is used for general purposes. These sports grounds are well maintained and used by the school as well as the community. There is also a big gravelled area that is used as parking for the educators and the visitors. The school has two tuck shops inside. Hawkers crowd the three school gates. Some hawkers have built shacks for selling. Learners are not allowed to leave the school during breaks for safety reasons.

4.2.2 School-B

School-B is one of the oldest schools in the Umlazi District. Many learners that attend this school come from the surrounding area which has houses that were originally built for old people but are now used by families. There are learners that come from government-built houses, informal settlements and subsidy houses but there are very few of these learners.

The school has 43 educators, including the principal and two deputy principals. There are 20 male educators and 23 females. The school is built in an old-fashioned way; it is U-shaped and there is one block added on the left hand side. In the first block there is a library, Science laboratory and guidance room. The last block has the Biology laboratory. The library is approximately two classrooms in size and has many good and useful books which are well arranged on shelves. The Science laboratory was converted to a classroom after experiencing an increase in the number of learners and also because the laboratory was no longer used because there were no instruments. The guidance room is well-maintained. There is a special guidance educator who gives counselling to learners about their personal problems. The Biology laboratory is full of desks and built-in sinks. This laboratory is not used. It is locked and full of dust. The management staff has offices in different areas in the school. The school does not have an administration office. The school clerk uses the storage room next to the principal's office as an office. This room is not easy to find because one has to pass through the staffroom to go to

it. There are two staffrooms for males and females. Both staff rooms have neither toilets nor water taps.

The school has 18 classrooms, each of which has about 70 learners in Grades 8 to 12. Learners are congested in the classrooms. They sit in threes in double desks except in Grade 12 where they sit in twos. The educators do not have the space to move around because there is not enough space in the passages. The school starts at 7.00 a.m. and finishes at 2.30 p.m. There is a compulsory study period for all learners in the morning from 7.00 a.m. to 7.30 a.m. Afternoon study periods are for grades 11 and 12 learners only.

The school is not used by the community for church or public meetings as is the case with School-A and School-C and many others in this district. It is only used for government-related meetings and voting. The school has two sports grounds. There is one for soccer which is used by the school and the community. The other one is for netball. The grounds overall are very small and overgrown with grass. The premises generally are not in a good condition. The walls are dirty, the chalk boards are broken, almost all the windows are broken, and most of the classrooms do not have doors at all. One of the classrooms has a big crack on the floor. This school has a tuck shop inside that sells different kinds of food. There are also hawkers in the school that sell food and drinks to the learners and educators. Learners in this school are allowed to go to the nearest shops or to their homes during breaks.

4.2.3 School-C

School-C is one of the most modern schools in the Umlazi district. This school does not have learners that come from the area for which it was built. The learners come from an area which is partly rural and partly informal settlements that are quite far from the school and from other sections in Umlazi.

The school has 29 educators which include 1 principal and 1 deputy principal. There are 15 male and 14 female educators. The buildings are built around a square. There is an administration block and in this block there are offices for the clerks, principal, deputy, and HODs. There is also a big kitchen and toilets. There is a block for laboratories including a Science laboratory which is not functioning because it was burnt down and has never been renovated. The Biology laboratory is next to it and it is not used because there are no resources. In the other block there is a big library which used to be filled with books but they were stolen. Now educators use it as a staffroom. The empty book shelves are placed next to the wall. Next to the library there is a room that used to be a typing room but now it is empty and has been waiting for computers for more than a year. The block facing the administration office used to be the school hall. It has been converted to two classrooms that are used for split subjects.

Classrooms are located behind this block. They are also built around a square shape and consist of 2 storeys. There are 450 learners in this school. There are 33 classrooms but only 12 are used for teaching. There are about 40 learners in each class. The school starts at 7.30 a.m. and finishes at 2.30 p.m. Assembly is held every morning at 7.30 a.m. to 7.45 a.m. The school often has morning and afternoon study periods. The school has many sports grounds which are not maintained, such as ones for tennis, soccer, rugby, netball and even a gymnasium, which is empty. Next to the gymnasium there is a building with showers and sports offices. This building is not used because the school is not active in sports. When entering the school there is a car park. When looking at it closely it used to be a well-built, marked netball court. This school does not have a tuck shop inside the grounds. Hawkers that sell food are well-organised. They only come during breaks. They pick up litter before they leave. Learners are allowed to leave the school during breaks to buy food from the nearest shops; some even go to their homes for meals. The local community utilises some of the buildings for church purposes as is normal practice in many schools in this district.

4.3 Participants' biographical data

Below is a presentation of the information gathered from the participants during the interviews and afterwards, when the researcher visited the schools to confirm and ask for further information based on the interviews. This information is important because it informs the reader about the kind of educators who teach in these schools and also because it is important to understand how their experiences and qualifications can influence their responses.

Principal	Highest qualifications	Years teaching	Years as principal	Years as principal in this school	Gender
A	M.Ed	19	12	12	Male
B	B.Ed (Hons)	27	15	15	Female
C	S.T.D	14	3	2	Male

Table 1: Biographical details of principals

Table 1 above shows that the principals of the three schools have long experience as educators. Principals of School-A and School-B have many years' experience as principals in their current schools. All three principals were appointed as principals because of their considerable experience as educators. They had to undergo the process of selection and recruitment by the DoE. The principal of School-C had had the shortest experience (two years) as a principal in the current school. This principal was a principal in his previous school for a year and was placed in School-C because there were disputes about his post in his previous school. The principals of School-A and School-B were very popular with the staff and the community they served because they started as educators in their schools. The principal of School-C confessed that he was struggling to be accepted by educators and the community because they saw him as an intruder and his instructions were not

taken seriously. Educators who participated in the study felt that a principal should have been someone from inside the school.

The principals' qualifications show that the principals of School-A and School-B have degrees. The principal of School-A has a Masters Degree in Education Management and is currently doing a Doctoral Degree in Education Management and leadership. Principal of School-B has an Honours Degree in Afrikaans which is not offered in his school as a learning subject. The principal of School-C has only a diploma in teaching. Educators and HODs at the two schools (B and C) where principals do not have a degree in education management and leadership, ascribe what they see as poor maintenance and control to this lack of relevant qualifications. Educators and HODs felt that there were educators inside their schools who had management qualifications, long experience in teaching and had the potential to lead the schools and should be principals.

In terms of gender, only the principal of School-B is a female and principals of School-A and School-C are males. This was not intentional, as the selection of schools was not based on the gender of the principals. The researcher only knew the gender of the principals when visiting them for the first time to ask for permission to conduct the study. All participants are Black South Africans.

HOD	Highest qualification	Teaching experience	Years as HOD	Years as HOD in this school	Department headed	Gender
A1	S.T.D	19	5	5	Human Social Science	Male
A2	B.Ed (Hons)	30	15	5	Economics Management Studies	Male
B1	B.A (HDE)	19	5	5	Language and	Male

					Communi-cation	
B2	B.Ed (Hons)	30	10	10	Mathemat-ics and Science	Female
C1	S.T.D	12	4	6	Arts and Culture, Life Orientation English and IsiZulu	Male
C2	S.T.D	15	5	7	Mathematics and Science	Male

Table 2: Biographical details of HODs

Table 2 above shows that HODs in the schools studied had between 10 and 30 years of teaching experience. All HODs in the study had ample knowledge of the subjects that they were heading since they had majored in them when training as educators and had taught them. All HODs were educators in the same schools before they became HODs. The HODs said that it was easy for them to manage their departments because they had taught in the same schools and thus knew where to make adjustments and changes. HODs mentioned that there were challenges that they faced such as educators taking advantage of them because they used to share a staffroom and also when educators reminded them of their weaknesses when they were post level-1 educators and when they gave educators instructions.

The above table also shows that three HODs had degrees and three had Diplomas in teaching. The HODs that have degrees all indicated that they majored in Education Management. These HODs portrayed their understanding of education management when they were defining and discussing issues around quality management and school improvement. These HODs understood questions and gave examples by referring to their departments when they were answering the questions. The HODs with diplomas had an understanding of quality

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management and school improvement, however, their responses to questions were not accurate, and they showed that they lacked knowledge of education management. For these HODs questions had to be simplified so that they could understand them and could give answers. Only one female HOD participated in the study and five male HODs. The researcher was given the list of HODs that were willing to participate in the study by the principals after they had had a meeting discussing the letter asking for permission to conduct the study in their schools.

Educators	Highest qualification	Teaching experience	Years as an educator in this school	Subjects taught	Gender
A1	B.Ed (Hons)	4	4	Library use and English	Male
A2	B.A (HDE)	12	6	IsiZulu	Male
B1	S.T.D	9	9	Mathematics	Male
B2	S.T.D	20	5	Biology	Female
C1	B.Ed(Hons)	18	4	Arts and Culture, Life Orientation and English, and IsiZulu	Male
C2	B.A (HDE)	21	3	Mathematics, Physical Science Arts and Culture and Life Orientation	Male

Table 3: Biographical details of educators

Table 3 above shows that four educators have degrees and two educators have diplomas in the schools that participated in the study. The responses of the participants were influenced by their experiences in the teaching field and by

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their qualifications. All educators gave reasonable responses to the questions and showed better understandings of quality management and school improvement than the HODs that had diplomas. In School-A and School-C educators had degrees. Only one HOD had a degree in School-A and School-C. The two educators interviewed at School-C had more years of teaching experience than the two HODs interviewed.

Regarding teaching experience, and the years in the same school, only A1 had taught in only one school. All other educators were placed in their current schools after they were redeployed because of the decrease of the number of learners in their previous schools. It is important to have this knowledge because some of the responses might be influenced by the educators' movements from their previous school.

Female educators' voices are dominant because there are four women and two men. As in the case with the HODs, the researcher could not get equal representation of gender because these were ones that agreed to take part in the study according, to the principals.

4.4 Themes emerging from the data

The following section is a presentation and discussion of findings of the study. Findings are presented under themes that emerged when doing data analysis in six sections. Under each theme there are a number of sub-headings which show different angles of tackling the theme as it emerged from the data.

4.4.1 Section A: Different understandings of quality management and school improvement

"Schools, understanding of quality management differ"
In the data collected it was evident that the participants had different understandings of what quality management is. Participants described quality management by mentioning that quality management had features such as teamwork, leadership and decision-making. They also added management functions such as controlling, organising and planning. School principals

emphasised that quality management was about supervising and controlling the work being done by the staff so that there could be good results. This statement was given by School-B principal:

> *It's about how you as leader supervise to get a quality job. As a quality manager you supervise the year plan and all the procedures* **(P-B).**

HODs' responses to the question about their understating of the term quality management were similar to the principals'. However, HODs' understandings were based on the things that they expected the educators to do for them to be able to manage quality. HODs mentioned that for the school to manage quality there must be a controlled timetable, staff development, punctuality, resources and an encouraging teaching and learning environment. The HOD of School-B gave his full understanding by saying that:

> *I understand that it is about educators, quality teaching not banking classes, making sure that learners are getting preparing work, that is actuality quality, and it must be managed. The HOD must see to it that work is done, work is marked, work is given to learners, the syllabus is complete, testing is done continuously, you see recording, interviewing kids, getting their problem solved* **(HOD-B1).**

It was also found from data analysis that the educators did not have a clear understanding of quality management. Educators had to think for a while to be able to give their understanding of quality management. In the definitions that they gave it was clear that they did not consider that they, as educators, were also responsible for quality management. This is evident in a statement given by an educator from School-B when he said:

> *That is for the SMT, we as teachers we teach* **(Edu-B2).**

"Schools understand school improvement differently"

The SMTs had an understanding of school improvement because in their definitions they associated school improvement with promoting the culture of teaching and learning among all stakeholders, and having resources. According to the data collected from studied schools, school improvement is witnessed at the end of the year when learners get results. One of the principals defined school improvement as:

> *School improvement is about developing the school through curricula. At the same time it's about developing buildings, improving educators' qualifications, having best results, and commitment in teaching and learning among educators and learners* **(P-A).**

Educators also associated school improvement with being able to improvise to get best results. According to educators, school improvement can also be witnessed if all stakeholders, including the parents and the SGB, can work together, be committed and be motivated in improving their children's results and education. This is what one educator said:

> *Learners are the important ingredient in the school improvement. As educators, parents, SMT and the community we have to work hard for them to get good results* **(Edu-C2).**

4.4.2 Section B: Quality management

This section deals with how schools conceptualised quality and quality management, as well as how schools conducted their business in the name of quality management.

"The schools' ability to manage quality is questionable"

Participants in all three schools were not happy about their learners' performance. They all agreed that their learners did not do well after they

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finished school. Their learners had problems such as not being able to fill in application forms correctly and not being fluent in English, so as a result they did not go beyond a first interview. They were also not able to write assignments correctly when they furthered their studies.

> *They are not ready for anything. If it was for me they'll all go for bridging courses after finishing grade 12. Grade 12 learners can hardly construct a correct English sentence. In tertiary they fail to write assignments after we've taught them creative writing* **(Edu-A2).**

Respondents at the schools studied acknowledged that they had a problem in managing the quality of learners that they produced. Despite this, participants mentioned that there were learners that did exceptionally well after leaving their schools. Educators said that they were able to recognise these learners in class and concentrate on them. One educator said that they did this in order to have good symbols; however, at the same time they tended to forget about other learners.

"The IQMS implementation is accurate for SMT but not for educators"
The studied schools used the IQMS policy to ensure quality education. However, there were differences of opinions about IQMS implementation among different participants within and across study sites. It was interesting to hear different opinions from the SMT and educators across study sites (on how they have implemented the IQMS policy as part of quality assurance measures). It was not all members of the staff that saw the necessity for the implementation of IQMS for school improvement. SMT members were very certain that their schools ensured quality in the way that the DoE wanted by implementing IQMS. This is what one of them said about quality assurance:

> *We follow IQMS in order to ensure quality and we've had a lot of change in teaching attitudes because of*

it. Educators now do lesson preparation because of
IQMS **(P-A)**.

Educators gave a different picture from what the SMT member said about IQMS and about quality assurance. The educators of the three schools were not as positive as their SMTs about how IQMS was implemented. They mentioned that in their schools fraud occurred when they were given scores in the final document which was sent to the DoE. According to the interviewed educators even those who were not assessed were given high scores so that they could also get incentives. In School-B educators were very emotional about their principal when they spoke about this issue. According to them their principal did not want anything to do with IQMS. This principal did not want to give educators time to have meetings to discuss IQMS. This is what educators had to say about quality assurance in their schools:

> *We have to demand meetings to plan dates for IQMS.*
> *To him it's like we do not want to teach. I don't know*
> *what he understands of IQMS* **(Edu- B1)**.

"Finger pointing between educators and SMTs is the order of the day"
Educators and SMT members blamed each other for the lack of quality management and school improvement in their schools. According to the SMT members, educators often absented themselves from work and did not bring the doctors' reports. Claims had been made about educators' misbehaviour which included reluctance to perform their primary duties, namely, going to class and teaching. It was alleged that instead educators stayed in the staffroom or hid somewhere; they left the school early almost daily and they also did not keep the lesson preparation files. SMT were also very concerned about the staff attitudes towards teaching. This is what one principal said:

> *Educators do not teach. They are always complaining*
> *about learners' class attendance and poor*
> *performance in tests. Our black children suffer*
> *everyday because of their laziness* **(P- A)**.

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On this issue educators gave different reasons for lack of commitment and laziness. They pointed at salary issues, learners' problems and, most importantly, at the SMT members. Educators raised the issue of lesson preparation files which was also raised by SMT members as evidence that educators were lazy and not committed to quality management. They mentioned that they did prepare lessons but did not write them down because they did not have time and also because their HODs did not have their own lesson preparation files and did not keep records for their submissions. In analysing the educator's statements it was clear that educators resisted instructions from the SMT. Such a practice tended to undermine the schools' performance. To show that educators followed what their leaders did, this is what one educator said:

The problem here is the principal himself. How many times have you seen him around since you've been coming here. We follow our leaders (**Edu-C2**).

4.4.3 Section C: School improvement
This section focuses on school improvement as this theme was one of the key aspects of quality management from the perspective of key literature in the area. This theme is discussed under a number of sub-headings that are listed in the following paragraphs.

"Principals striving for school improvement and quality management"
Educators and HODs were not completely satisfied about their principals when it came to the effort they were putting into school improvement and quality management. Educators and HODs stated that their principals made an effort but it was not good enough because their schools were not moving forward. According to educators and HODs, principals did not put in enough effort for the success of their schools. In all three schools principals tended to own the schools because they did not want to delegate. They did not work as a team with all role players in problem-solving. Principals took decisions without informing deputy principals and HODs. Educators and HODs

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mentioned that they did not appreciate their principals' leadership styles because they were either laissez-fair or autocratic principals. There was no democracy in the way they led. This is what an educator in School-A said about her principal's role in school improvement:

> *He is working alone. There isn't much that he does*
> *with his team and also us. He is letting the school*
> *down because he wants to do everything on his own*
> **(Edu- B1).**

"Educators and HODs blame principals for school improvement failure"
The data analysis shows that educators and HOD participants blamed their principals for the lack of school improvement in their schools. Educators and HODs had a lack of respect, loyalty and trust in their principals. Each participant had a negative comment to make about the principal when responding to questions. The principal either did not have enough qualifications, according to these participants, or was not being responsible, or was misusing school fees, or was not being punctual, or was always absent, or was failing to communicate with stakeholders, or was failing to mobilise teamwork, or was not understanding policies. In School-B educators and HODs were frustrated about their principals not having further education in management and leadership but having a senior degree on the subject that was not offered in their school. This is what one educator said:

> *He has an honours degree in Afrikaans but the school*
> *doesn't offer Afrikaans. He also has no leadership*
> *qualification* **(Edu-B 2).**

"There is no action since after submitting the school improvement plan to the DoE"
All participants explained that after doing the WSE internal evaluation they submitted the school improvement plan to the district office which did not respond. They expected that the district office would invite them to in-service training, provide them with the materials and teaching resources, improve

school buildings and address other areas they recommended for school improvement. All three schools, especially the principals, blamed the DoE for the lack of improvement in their schools. According to participants, poor facilities and resources lead to poor results. The researcher received responses like this one about the lack of improvement in schools:

> *We did an improvement plan but there has never been a response from the DoE for two years now. When the laboratory was burned down they came here and checked the damage and never returned. Staff members have personal growth plans but their peers are failing to improve them because they also lack knowledge and the DoE is failing to improve them by not having proper workshops* **(P-C).**

"Schools use similar strategies to improve learners' attainment"

The three schools use similar strategies to solve the problem of under-performance from Grade 8 to Grade 12. They have morning and afternoon study periods and Saturday and holiday classes for Grade 12. In School-A and School-B they have a roster for educators to do study supervision and in School-C educators volunteer to help the principal in supervising study periods. For extra classes during holidays these schools draw up a timetable for educators who would like to teach. The principal of School-A explained why it was important for each school to have study periods:

> *We have study periods and extra classes that help our learners a lot because they get time to discuss and do homework. Remember most township learners have a lot to do at home. They have to cook, wash, and clean. By the time they have to do school work they are tired so it is better to keep them in here and help them* **(P-B).**

Educators and HODs said that it was good to have study periods and extra classes but they did not improve results since the pass percentage for matriculation kept on dropping every year. As a result many educators refused to do extra work because there were no visible results. Principals also had a problem with this strategy. They said that even though they supervised the study periods learners bunked them or had excuses for not attending them. Educators also refused to teach over the holidays and weekends. The principal of School-C explained this problem:

If an educator is committed to getting best results he teaches and also learners that want best results attend study and extra classes. I can't force anyone because they have rights and reasons for what they are doing. Study periods and extra classes help those who want to be helped. No one is forced to supervise and teach over holidays. I mark a register for study periods and punish absentees but learners continue to bunk **(P-C).**

"The lack of teaching and learning resources prevents quality education"
All participants complained about the lack of teaching and learning resources in their schools. Participants expressed the view that the lack of resources prevented them from enhancing quality education. These schools often do not have basic teaching materials such as chalk, learners' text books and exercise books, photocopying paper for tests and examinations and cleaning equipment most of the time. All schools expressed the view that many learners did not pay school fees so they could not afford to buy basic teaching and learning resources. Principals gave reasons such as this one for lack of resources:

Right now as we speak we do not have school fees so how can we afford to buy basic resources? **(P- B).**

All three schools also had a problem with learning facilities such as the laboratories, computer rooms, technical subjects' equipment, library, and

untidy staffrooms. Another common problem these schools face is that of water and electricity. Schools have to be closed early on certain days because the municipality switches off the water supply because of the schools' failure to pay the bills. It is also difficult for the educators to teach in certain classes in winter because they became dark when there is no electricity. This is what one principal had to say about this crisis:

> *It is hard to teach here. Sometimes I feel like I teach in rural areas. A month doesn't go by without releasing learners early because toilets are dirty and there is no water* **(P-C).**

"Schools' improvisation in relation to teaching and learning resources"
To deal with the situation of lack of resources participants said that they improvised in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning because they wanted to improve learners' results. Principals said that they often encouraged educators to try and help learners with learning materials. HODs and educators said that not all educators improvised and were creative when dealing with lack of resources. There were educators that taught theory only which led to learners failing to manage practical subjects during examinations. Some educators went out of their way by asking to use nearby schools and technical colleges so as to use their facilities. This is what one of the participants said she did when she improvised:

> *I've arranged with the nearby school to take learners over at least once a semester to do practical. This is not easy because learners cannot afford transport. I have to ask for sponsorship from the supermarket so we can pay for transport, electricity and the equipment we will use* **(Edu -B2).**

This is what educators in School-C do to improvise:

> *I buy my own photocopying paper and make copies from other schools because we often don't have electricity and our photocopying machines are often broken* **(Edu- C2).**

"School goal, vision and mission statements are not taken seriously"

Participants know and understand that schools must have a goal, vision and mission statements for the schools continuous improvement. According to principals they formulated their school's goal, vision and mission statement after they received a circular from the DoE instructing them to construct these statements which would guide them to continuous improvement. The schools' SMT members mentioned that these statements in their schools were formulated democratically and all stakeholders were involved. They also utilised them in their schools because they often referred to them during meetings as a guide to achieving goals. This is what one principal said about the formulation of these statements:

> *Like all other policies all stakeholders were involved. They sat in small groups whereby each group was given certain areas to develop and then they reported back to everyone. After a few meetings with educators and SGB members these statements were adopted and now they function* **(P-A).**

In contrast, educators knew that it was important for a school to have these statements but they did not see them functioning in their schools. Unlike the SMT, educators were dissatisfied about how these statements were formulated and also stated that they did not know about them because they last saw them on the day they were approved. These were the responses of the educators:

> *It was formulated by the principal and his SMT and SGB. He gave it to us, we crushed it. So it is his own thing we don't embrace it* **(Edu-C2).**

Another educator was quoted as saying:

> *I can say that it is just a thing that was done in a*
> *boring meeting where only SGB and SMT members*
> *spoke. It was then put over there (pointing at a*
> *corridor); I don't see it now* **(Edu-B1).**

Educators mentioned that parents, beside the SGB members, did not know about the presence and importance of these statements. Educators also mentioned that the learner representative council was not well-informed about these statements. They could not convey them to other learners as part of a motivational plan. Even the newly-employed educators, according to the interviewed educators, were not informed about these statements.

"Educators' lack of motivation to teach and to improve their education"
Educators in the three schools studied said that they were not motivated to teach and improve their education. In summarising their responses it was clear that educators needed incentives in order to be motivated. Educators also said that they were not intrinsically motivated because they are not part of decision-making, and were not being given a chance to prove themselves by being given tasks and responsibilities other than teaching, and because their excellence in their subjects was not recognised in their schools and at district level. It was only in School-A where educators indicated that they had received educators' awards for the past two years. According to the educators of this school these awards de-motivated them because of reasons such as the following:

> *We don't know how certificate and dinner set winners*
> *are selected. We voted privately but their obvious*
> *favourites won. For instance I am active in coaching*
> *netball, try my best to make our poor library*
> *conducive and organise parties for the staff but never*
> *won a thing* **(Edu-A1).**

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Participants also pointed out that they were not motivated because of the lack of extrinsic motivation. According to the participants the government was failing to pay them salaries or give them incentives that would make them want to work and improve their education as happened under the apartheid government education system where the educators' salaries increased after completing a new diploma or degree. A HOD of School-B gave this reason for ceasing to further her education:

> *I stopped doing my masters after I learnt that I will only get few thousand rand once off after I finished. We need money for our education because we end up assisting other educators because we have more knowledge and skills* **(HOD-B2).**

Educators expressed the view that they only furthered their education with a hope of getting work in industry and companies and most of the time they did not declare their new academic achievements to their schools because it was of no use. Edu-C2 said that she was doing a certificate in assessment and was gaining a lot of knowledge. This educator said she was keeping her knowledge to herself until she found new work because the education system would not pay her for her knowledge.

4.4.4 Section D: Leadership issues
This section discusses leadership issues as these emerged as contributing to the maintenance of quality in schools studied.

"The SMTs' decision-making skill leads to poor quality management, according to educators"
The SMT seemed to be happy about the decision-making process in their schools. They explained the process of decision-making whereby they met as SMT members alone and presented the problem, then each HOD would meet with his or her department members and then there would be a staff meeting to discuss different views. The SMT mentioned being democratic, discussing all matters with the staff or individuals involved and giving each individual a

chance to participate. On the other hand, educators were not happy about their involvement in decision-making; according to them this was one of the signs that there was no quality management and school improvement. Educators did not feel empowered in decision-making because when they tried to take part in the staff meetings their opinions were disregarded and not implemented by the SMT. According to educators in School-A during staff meetings the SMT came with the problem and solution, and then asked them as educators if there was anything they would like to add. Staff would remain quiet because a decision has already been made. This is what one educator said:

> *It depends on whether we like the topic. If we don't like it, the principal closes the meeting without a word from us. Our discussions are not always open because it is often clear that the SMT has made the decision before consulting us* **(Edu-C1).**

"The involvement and selection of the SGB affects quality management and school improvement"

Only the principals were happy about the involvement of the SGB in the school improvement and quality management. According to principals, the SGB members did well in representing parents because they were elected in a school parents meeting by other parents to represent them in the school management team. Through the interviews principals spoke about SGB members as if they had a right to represent parents in all cases even when a specific parent was needed. SGB members made decisions for other parents. This was evident when one principal said:

> *Through anything the SGB is there as they represent the parents. When we discipline learners we call the educator representative and one SGB member. When we have to make decisions as SMT we invite all members of the SGB* **(P-A).**

On the other hand the educators and HODs spoke vehemently when they talked about their unhappiness about the selection of the SGB and how decisions were made when the SGB was involved. The educators explained how the school's SGB members were elected and how it functioned by saying:

> *The SGB that comes to this school is the SGB that has been cooked and organised. Principals come in and put their people on the SGB. It is not that the SGB members have learners as children in the school. They don't have children here. They adopt learners that have their surnames. They lie by using learners who have their surnames. They do corruption inside the school. They are the principal's people; they control us. The principal prepares them before they come to meetings* **(Edu-C2).**

4.4.5 Section E: Team work

The section below tackles the issue of team work. The literature on leadership, quality and management of quality invariably focused on team work as the key ingredient for quality maintenance in organisations.

"Team work is a myth that exists according to the educators but not according to the SMTs"

Principals understood that for quality management in their schools they needed to emphasise the spirit of team work so that there could be continuous improvement. Principals mentioned that in their schools teams and committees dealing with such matters as sports, timetable, catering, discipline, fundraising and culture were very active and motivated. According to principals, the team spirit in their schools allowed individuals to display their talents because every educator in their schools belonged to a certain team. The HODs spoke strongly about team teaching in their departments as a sign of the presence of team spirit in their schools. According to the HODs educators assisted each other when teaching. They stated that they encouraged educators

to assist each other in areas where they lacked knowledge or teaching resources. The SMT members believed that they were responsible for building team spirit among the staff and that was why one HOD responded this way:

There is team work. We work together. Well there are those that want to work individually but we call them to order. So we work beautifully **(HOD -A1).**

Educators on the other hand explained that there was no team spirit in the schools because everyone did as they pleased. According to educators the SMTs were failing to mobilise educators to work as teams in assisting each other in every instance such as teaching as a team, organising sports activities and understanding each others' weaknesses. Educators blamed the SMTs for the lack of unity among the staff. For educators the SMTs failed to do their work such as organising them into teams and taking control by making sure that what had been discussed was implemented. This is what an educator said about team work in his school:

Educators are not working as a team. There are teachers in the same grade that teach the same subject but teach different topics. At the end of the year these teachers fail to set a common paper **(Edu-B2).**

"There is a lack of communication between stakeholders and this affects quality management"

The SMT members regarded communication between them and educators as crucial for the functioning of the school. According to them, they constantly planned meetings at departmental and committee level so that they could discuss examination and test dates, sports, learners' performances, behaviour and discipline, workshops and tours. In these three schools there was information-sharing time in the morning where they discussed special plans

for the day and reported educators that were absent. The principal of School-A explained the importance of information-sharing:

> *As a big school there are many things that happen during the day that need to be communicated so that we don't become confused. So as educators we meet almost everyday at 7.15 in the morning and discuss who is doing what and where so that a day becomes manageable* **(P-A).**

Unlike SMT members, educators were not happy about communication in the school. According to them, the SMT members failed to co-ordinate and communicate with them. In School-B an educator cited an incident when the school was closed without informing educators. They later found out that the SMT had met and decided to close the school earlier because there had been no water for two days. This educator expressed the view that she was frustrated on that day because she was expecting visitors who were going to come and address Grade 8 girls about health-related issues. An educator in School-C explained what communication was like in her school by saying:

> *Communication in this school is very poor; you can not just go to the principal and talk to him. He only tells us about workshops that we have to attend in the morning, or not at all. He does not consider what we have planned. No one knows why he does that because we lose a lot by not attending workshops and crucial meetings* **(Edu-C1).**

4.4.6 Section F: Issues which lead to lack of school improvement and quality management

This section deals with matters relating to school improvement and quality management, as well as factors that contribute to the lack of school improvement.

"Learners' admission to raise Post-Provisioning Norms (PPN) contributes to the drop in good matriculation results"

There is a strong perception that admitting learners for purposes of boosting PPN does not assist the schools in terms of quality maintenance, but rather that it has negative outcomes. In all the three case study sites, educators complained about procedures that were being followed in learner admission. They said the method used to admit learners was problematic because they ended up with all sort of learners, such as those from prison and those who were pregnant. All three schools had admission policies but they were not effective because they did not consider the ages of the learners and conditions that a learner must meet in order to be admitted as it was written in each school's admission policy and SASA. There were also large numbers of learners in these schools that did not pay the school fees because their parents and guardians could not afford to pay. Principals admitted that they did demand school fees from the learners but they did not force them to pay because they understood their home situations. This attracted all sort of new learners to these schools because they knew that they could learn without paying school fees. In School-A there was an entry test which was administered by the admission committee, however, this test had been neglected for the past 3 years because when the school opened at the beginning of the year learners had to be admitted without a test. Educators said that they were told by their principals to admit learners because of the instructions from the district office. According to educators this admission system was a problem not only for the school matriculation results, but also for other learners who were interested in learning. There was a high number of learners who ended up being a bad influence on other learners and as a result there was a high rate of theft, teenage pregnancy, drop-outs, and alcohol and drug abuse. Educators became very emotional when they explained the kind of learners their schools had and the effect they had on the school's matriculation results:

> *They came to school here because they are hiding*
> *away from the police and going to jail. Most of them*

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have failed in their schools. Here you get learners who are 24 or 25 years old in grade 11. Learners came here because they don't have to pay school fees. Some register here knowing that they are pregnant, sick and even crazy at times. We admit learners for the sake of PPN otherwise most of us will have to move to new schools (**Edu-B2**).

"Educators do not provide learners with proper feedback"

In the three researched schools assessment was done informally by giving learners tests, homework, class activities, practical work, and also formal exams when learners write examinations. These schools followed the DoE assessment policies when they assessed learners informally by doing activities that were set by the DoE in order for learners to have Continuous Assessment (CASS) marks. A CASS mark is combined with the examination mark, and the total mark determines the pass percentage in each subject. These schools were failing to give quality feedback to the learners after doing informal assessment because of the large numbers of learners in classrooms. As a result learners did not know if they were progressing during the year.

When the researcher was walking around in School-A and School-B it was observed that there were more than 70 learners in each class except in Grade 12 where they were about 45 in class. According to educators having 45 learners in Grade 12 classes was good only if all learners were conscientious and active in class, and not if each learner needed special attention, as was the norm in their schools. Educators in these schools had a teaching load of 6 classes which meant each educator had approximately 420 learners to deal with. In School-C there were fewer learners in each classroom and educators had a minimum of 4 subjects that they had to teach in different grades which was frustrating for them. Educators in School-A also failed to give quality feedback because they had to teach different subjects in one day which, according to them, led to confusion and frustration. This is what an educator in School-B said about giving quality feedback:

We do marking, but it is not enough. Sometimes we submit marks to our HODs without marking or doing practical work because we don't have time to mark because of our loads. We actually do mark examinations, but not all of us mark accurately (**Edu-B1**).

"Hunger and poverty have negative effects on learners' performance"

Educators and the SMT considered poverty as one of the reasons for under-performance among the learners. Because of poverty in these schools learners did not pay school fees and as a result the school failed to purchase learning resources and to improve the school buildings and learning and sports environment. Learners in these schools came to school hungry and failed to cope when being taught. Educators and SMT members showed empathy towards the learners' family backgrounds. They explained that most of their learners came to school hungry because no one at their homes was working. Some of the learners had became 'parents' to their siblings because their parents had passed away. In School-A educators started a programme to care for and feed learners that could not afford to bring or buy lunch for themselves. They get sponsorship from local supermarkets and companies had bought them equipment such as a fridge, stoves, pots, plates and so on in order to cater for such learners. Principals in these schools said they had spoken to the DoE several times about the feeding system but there had been no response. This is what an educator said about poverty and how the school assisted learners:

Our learners come from poor families. As you can see our school is surrounded by shacks and old aged houses. Learners sleep in class instead of learning. They are always tired. Sometimes we buy them food when we see that they are too hungry to cope (**Edu-B2**).

"Learners are de-motivated and they drop out"

Learners in the researched schools were de-motivated. Educators and the SMT said that this was because of issues that affected them such as lack of employment after they had matriculated. As a result learners dropped out of school because they were pregnant, addicted to drugs and chose crimes like hijacking because they needed money. Family issues and problems also de-motivated learners because some dropped out of school so as to take care of sick parents and relatives and were forced to look for work because there was no one to feed the family. Educators and the SMT in these schools said that they motivated learners by talking to them like parents and also inviting professionals like nurses and social workers to advise learners on health issues such as HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and on how to handle family issues while at school. They also invited people such as ex-students to come and address learners. These young people had made it in life. They also invited career guidance counsellors. This is how a principal of School-A motivates learners:

> *I always tell them that at the end of the day they are responsible for their own lives. No one is going to help them. They have to make a choice of whether to learn or not to learn* **(P-A).**

"Unhealthy school environmental and lack of safety impedes quality teaching and learning"

It emerged from all participants that the schools were not in a healthy and safe environment and that such a situation impeded teaching and learning. Although toilets were flushable ones, usually there was no water in the toilets, and water from the tap was dirty most of the time. Similarly, the classrooms were usually untidy, the grass not cut in the sports grounds and there was litter all over the schools. Learners ate unhealthy food which was sold by the vendors at the gates. Vendors also sold learners cigarettes and drugs covered in sweet wrappings. To illustrate this point, an educator from School-A had this to say:

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> *One of our learners bought a muffin from the gate not*
> *knowing that it was made of dagga. That learner had to*
> *be rushed to hospital* **(Edu-B2).**

In these schools learners engaged in activities which should be done by other staff members in the school. For instance, learners used to sweep classrooms even though there were government-hired cleaners who only swept verandas, staffrooms and offices. Educators were not happy about this and one of them was cited as saying:

> *Some of our learners suffer from sinus and asthma*
> *often after sweeping classrooms* **(Edu-C2).**

These schools were also not safe because all participants expressed the view that they always felt threatened when they were at school because their schools were surrounded by areas that were full of crime, and also, inside the school there were learners that were criminals, rapists and ex-prisoners. One principal's statement showed that crime existed inside schools:

> *I always tell learners and staff to carry their*
> *belongings such as books, car keys, and handbags,*
> *not to wear expensive jewellery, not to bring a lot of*
> *money to school because no one knows what might*
> *happen* **(P-C).**

"Lack of communication between the schools and parents affects quality management and school improvement"
In the researched schools there was a lack of communication between the parents and the school. Staff understood that they needed to have constant communication with parents regarding the learners' performance and discipline, decision-making on budget, facilities and resources. However, during the time of this study, communication between the school and parents was not happening. According to educators, such lack of communication convinced them that parents

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were not interested in the school's affairs, and by implication, they were not interested in their children's performance and school improvement because they did not come to school when they were invited or just to check their children's progress without being invited. To invite parents for anything schools used the traditional method of writing letters to them or by telling the learners orally. This method of communication had shortcomings; these included the fact that learners often did not give invitations to parents or tell them. As HOD-C1 explained,

> *"We give them letters to give to parents, we find some letters scattered in the grounds"*

The principals raised work commitments as another reason usually given by parents for not attending meetings called by the school. Parents sometimes sent their older children to attend, and this was regarded as inappropriate because those children were also young and could not act *in loco parentis*. All the above-mentioned issues indicate the extent to which parents regard the importance of their participation in the affairs of the school. Furthermore, this creates some doubts about commitments to quality schooling and improvement of teaching and learning.

4.5 Conclusion

This study began attempting to understand the reasons for under-performance in three secondary schools in Umlazi District. The researcher wondered if quality management was related to school improvement when there was under-performance in researched schools which used to have good results and which now experienced a decrease in the pass percentage in matriculation. In this chapter the data collected was analysed in an attempt to answer the critical questions which are in Chapter 1. This was done by looking closely at the common themes that emerged during data analyses. In the next chapter the presentation and summary of findings and recommendations from the results of data analysed in this chapter are made.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This study is about the relationship between quality management and school improvement with reference to three secondary schools in Umlazi District. The previous chapter presented and discussed data from the study. This chapter presents an analysis and summary of the key findings about educators' understandings of the relationship between quality management and school improvement and how the understanding of these two concepts facilitates the maintenance of quality in these schools. Towards the end this chapter recommendations for the road ahead are made.

In presenting the findings, the researcher has analysed the schools' profiles, participants' biographical data and restated the research questions by using research questions as subheadings. Under each research question findings are analysed. To link the findings some literature is referred to.

5.2 Site-by-site profile and analysis

Chapter 4 described at length the characteristics of the three studied schools. This section concludes with how the socio economic status of the three case study schools affected teaching and learning and the affect it had on quality management and school improvement. Calitz, Fuglestad and Lillejørd (2002, p.9) state that:

> *"Quality management is a comprehensive concept for leading and operating an organisation aimed at continually improving performance by focusing on customers while addressing the needs of all stakeholders. In other words, this concept focuses on managing the total organisation to deliver high quality to customers."*

Thus the school as an organisation must have the means of satisfying the needs of the learners as they are the primary customers. The permanence of

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the learners, as the literature established, could be affected by many factors such as the physical resources, managing of teaching and learning and positive school climate.

The architectural design of School-A and School-B differ from that of School-C. This could be linked to the fact that School-A and School-B were built by the non-democratic government that existed before democracy in 1994. School-C was built during the democratic era. This school has a completely different and interesting shape compared to School-A and School-B respectively. School-A and School-B classrooms, laboratories, administration, workshops, toilets and playgrounds are scattered all over the school because they were added at different times.

Builders of the new blocks did not consider the amount of time that would be consumed when changing classes, attending meetings and visiting the administration area (not only by learners but also the parents and other visitors). Learners take a long time to walk back to the classrooms after attending classes at the workshops and laboratories. Behaviour problems surfaced when they have to go back to their classrooms after attending the workshop classes. During the interchange learners bunk the classes, smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, use drugs, fight, speak to the outsiders over the wall, and steal from one another and also from educators' bags. Such poor structuring of the schools affect the quality of education the learners receive. It also contributes to learners' motivation levels as learners who are interested in learning are usually distracted.

The weather conditions also affect teaching and learning as learners cannot walk to the workshops and laboratories when it is raining as the verandas and passages are not covered. When it is extremely hot or cold learners tend to want to sleep as there are no air conditioners. Even if fans and heaters can be provided, the schools often do not have electricity. Toilets are also an issue that these schools have to pay immediate attention to. Learners have only a few toilets that they use. During breaks there are always long queues and most learners do not get the chance to use toilets. Furthermore, there are only a few

taps. A lack of water can affect the learners' health. The toilets usually have a bad smell. The problem of toilets and taps for learners is the same for educators as they also have a limited number of toilets and taps. Notwithstanding the above-mentioned challenges, School-C is better than School-A and School-B respectively, as School-C was built in a different way architecturally. The architecture of this school provided enough toilets and taps. The administration block is easily accessible. Learners can be easily monitored when walking to the workshops and laboratories as they are not far from classrooms. The school verandas and passages are covered to protect everyone against bad weather conditions.

Even though School-C is better in terms of architectural design it also has problems of its own. It is not as safe as the two other schools are. The school has a broken fence. Learners and outsiders jump in and out all the time even though there are security guards. Educators mentioned safety as one of the problems which affected teaching and learning in the school. Educators mentioned that there were often people walking around the school who did not wear school uniforms and also that learners often reported to them that they are being mugged by outsiders inside the school premises. At school educators did not feel safe to teach and move around. Principals regarded lack of proper fencing a sign of poor basic infrastructure. Lack of safety impacts negatively on learners and educators and on the quality of education provided in these schools.

The studied schools adhere to the prescribed working hours. This is something which is supposed to improve the quality of education and improve the learners' results. However, looking at the number of learners in classrooms, educators seemed to be working less hours then they were supposed to. All the studied schools had enough educators to handle the learners, according to the interviewed principals. Principals mentioned that they always filled the new posts and also opened governing body-paid posts when the number of learners increased so as to maintain standards. However, educators had different views when it came to the number of educators and how the teaching posts were filled. Educators have to teach more than seventy learners in classes even in

matric in School-B. This is difficult because they cannot concentrate on all of them at once. These situations affect the quality of education that learners receive as educators became disheartened by the thought of the numbers of learners, seating arrangements, teaching resources and physical condition of the learners. When educators finally reach the classroom more time is spent dealing with issues unrelated to teaching.

The community uses studied schools for meetings, church services, sports and selling food and beverages during such gatherings after school hours and weekends. Although common wisdom holds that schools belong to communities where they are built, and that schools need to be accessible to these communities, the experiences of these schools were negative. The community used schools for various functions and activities mentioned above. Such activities negatively affected the teaching and learning situation in the school. The educators alleged that the community played a bigger role than learners in vandalising and untidiness in the schools. Cleaning the school before teaching and learning resumed impacted on teaching and learning time. Learners have to pick up the papers, sweep classrooms and clean the toilets before each learning session. Thus when they have to learn they are already tired.

Through data collected for the purpose of compiling profiles of the three studied schools it became clear that quality management and school improvement was not implemented in the way that could lead to the increase of learner attainment. The stakeholders, that is, parents, educators and the community were not working together to improve the school infrastructure. Through following the policies of quality management and school improvement the studied schools could improve their infrastructures.

5.3 Educators' qualifications and quality management are not related

The qualifications of the participants revealed little impact on improving teaching and learning in their schools. The conclusion drawn was that education qualifications of the HODs and educators did not matter to the principals. Educators and HODs who were better qualified than principals, as

in School-C and others and who had post-graduate degrees were not included in decision-making and matters that related to quality management and school improvement. Secondly, the years in teaching indicated that the participant's experience in the field of education did not motivate them to work harder in improving the current situations in their schools. The participants that have many years in the education field were as de-motivated as the educators in School-A which have less experience. Lack of incentives from the DoE was cited as a common factor that contributed to educators' low morale. Thirdly, the years the educators and HODs had spent in the current posts and subjects taught indicated that they try to do what they can for better results. They all mentioned that they improvised, conducted fundraising campaigns and asked for sponsorships in order to enable their schools to buy teaching and learning material. However it is all becomes in vain because learners lack interest most of the time. Fourthly, gender showed that female educators were doing more than their male counterparts in terms of ensuring the wellbeing of the learners. Female participants mentioned that they organised the care centre for hungry learners and liaised with social workers to assist learners deal with their family problems. In conclusion, of this section it can be said that the participants' experiences and qualifications have little impact, if any, on teaching their subjects and leading their departments in promoting the culture of teaching and learning in their schools. The problems that they mentioned can possibly be overcome if they work together by sharing the same vision and mission.

5.4 Findings based on the problem of research questions

The findings presented below are arranged according to the research questions used to guide the study.

5.4.1 'What do educators in three Secondary Schools in Umlazi District understand by the terms 'quality management' and 'school improvement'?

It was noted that the participants' understandings of the concepts quality management and school improvement differed among participants in different

categories of participants across the three research sites. Principals and other members of the management teams seemed to have views about this concept while teachers at Post-Level One did not seem to have opinions about these concepts. The SMT members expressed the view that for quality management to prevail there must be activities such as controlling, organising and decisions-making that had to be undertaken by all stakeholders. The SMT members mentioned that they were following the policies of the DoE to maintain quality. Such a view was in line with Bae's (2006) notion of quality management by maintaining that quality management is about all management activities and functions that are involved in the determination of quality policy and its implementation by means such as quality planning and quality assurance, including quality control.

It has become evident that, unlike the SMT members, (Principals and HODs), the educators across the three sites had a problem with understanding quality management. This concept of quality management was like a new term to them. The researcher had to give them time to think and also had to clarify the concept. It became evident from discussions that quality management was outside the domain of educators at classroom level. Educators mentioned that it was not for them to know and understand quality management because they were not part of the SMT. An educator from School-B for instance, said that quality management was for SMT members while theirs was to teach. This is indicative of the extent of the challenge some schools still have to grapple with; if quality is the preserve of a few, this must be worrisome. As a result of this perception, the gap in understanding between educators and members of the SMT persists. The gap in understanding quality management between the SMT and educators across the three sites seemed to contribute to the undermining of quality management and thus frustrated possibilities for school improvement. Such a view is shared by Rampa (2005) by suggesting that educators need to be able to shape learners' lives, and that this could be achieved through educators reading literature that is relevant to their professional work, work context and learning area.

Another worrying factor was total apathy among educators to further their studies. A major contributing factor was the withdrawal of monetary incentives that educators used to get in the 1980s and early 1990s for completing post-graduate qualifications. By studying further, educators are better able to engage in intellectual and professional discussions and debates. That ultimately puts them in better positions to be able to understand many concepts including quality management and others as well.

It was surprising to hear from all participants that they did understand that there must be a harmonious relationship among staff members for quality management to succeed even though there was a gap in co-operation among them and they knew about it.

When it came to the concept of school improvement, all participants understood it to mean improving school facilities, teaching and learning resources, promoting the culture of teaching and learning, having common vision, a mission and goals supported by all stakeholders, and communication between the school and parents. Projects for school improvement are usually aimed at changing learning conditions in schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals effectively (Fidler, 2002).

To conclude this section, it should be reiterated that according to various pieces of literature reviewed, quality management does lead to school improvement. Furthermore, principals and other members of the SMT hold similar views with regards to the efficacies of quality management. Sadly, it has emerged in this study that other staff members operating at levels lower than school management were not at all familiar with this concept. Neither did they regard it as necessary even to have understanding of the concept.

5.4.2 'How does the understanding of 'quality management' and 'school improvement' facilitate the maintenance of quality in three secondary schools in Umlazi District?'

Evidence from the three schools studied indicated that they did use the IQMS processes for purposes of trying to ensure quality in their schools. The SMT members showed good understanding of IQMS and spoke enthusiastically about its usefulness, as well as how it had brought some positive changes to their schools. According to them, the IQMS had helped their schools to manage quality because educators had started taking their work seriously. That was due mainly to the fact that they knew that they would be assessed in a formal manner and be given scores for incentive purposes. Another interesting finding was that educators demonstrated awareness that even though members of the SMT understood the IQMS processes, they somehow still lacked knowledge about its implementation. At a practical level it was very difficult to confirm that IQMS processes were being used effectively by the SMTs in these schools to assure quality and bring about improvement in the schools. The two points raised above raises some doubts about the credibility of the SMT members' claims that the IQMS process had somehow contributed to school improvement in their institution. Claims by educators that SMT members did not actually understand IQMS implementation discredits the whole notion of the efficacy of IQMS in particular, and quality assurance measures in general, in bringing about school improvement in the respective schools studied. The evidence that follows in the next section illustrates this argument even further.

The findings mentioned in the above paragraph are based on the fact that internal WSE processes had not been followed at all. None of the three participating schools were following policy guidelines in awarding scores to educators who were supposed to be evaluated. As a matter of fact the researcher was intrigued by two contradictions in the schools. On the one hand the SMT was not interested in getting proper information about the implementation of this policy and were not willing to work with educators that

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were interested and saw the need for quality assurance. The National Policy on WSE (cited in www.education.gpg.gov.za) states that:

> *"This policy implementing is an important step towards improving school education, helping educators work more effectively and ensuring all learners get the best opportunities* of success."

The failure of the schools to implement this policy makes it difficult to reflect school improvement because they do not know what exactly they lack and therefore they need assistance.

These schools did submit school improvement plans after the internal WSE processes. However, as mentioned, these were not proper improvement plans, it was just paper work aimed at pleasing the DoE. What the researcher found intriguing was the fact that both educators and SMT expressed unhappiness about the alleged lack of response from the DoE after the schools had submitted their school improvement plans. They complained that the DoE did not assist them in the areas they had indicated for school improvement. It did not appear that members of these schools had any faith in the sincerity of the process, or that they had sought to find any alternative ways of overcoming the obstacles in the first place.

To try and address the research questions driving this study, the researcher used the framework of the three pillars of quality management, namely, teamwork, leadership and a focus on suppliers and customers, which are aimed at ensuring that there is school improvement.

5.4.3.1 Team work

On the issue of pillar of teamwork, evidence points to the lack of teamwork. Furthermore, there is evidence that there was no collaboration and no communication between various stakeholders in the school. Whenever there is lack of communication in an organisation, chances of effective quality management and school improvement remain non existent. Teamwork and

collaboration is always critical for schools to be able to satisfy their customer needs (Williams, 1983).

Instead of building and sustaining teamwork in the schools studied, finger pointing between educators and members of the SMT prevailed. Educators blamed the SMT for lacking the strategies that could be used in building a solid team which could lead the school to better learner attainment, good attendance of workshops and provision of teaching and learning resources by the Department of Education. The only semblance of teamwork was shown during fundraising campaigns for learners that required transport to attend science experiments in the nearby FET College. There were educators who played active roles in that regard, and they need to be commended for that.

5.4.3.2 Leadership

Evidence from all three schools indicates that principals of these schools were not accepted by educators and HODs because according to both educators and HODs, they did not fulfil their roles as leaders. All these principals seemed to me to be visionary leaders that believe in quality teaching and school improvement when interviewed. However, both educators and the HODs viewed principals as either being laissez-fair or autocratic. For example an educator from School-A maintained that the principal:

> *"Just delivers what they have decided with the HODs or alone to them"* (Educator A-2).

Even though the hierarchy of management in the studied school exists, consultation and distribution of work seems to be a problem. This was proven by the HODs when, like the educators, they regarded principals as ineffective and having poor management skills. According to the HODs and educators in the study, principals did not play leadership roles at all; they were not responsible, dedicated, committed and willing to improve their schools. They did not show an interest in working together with other role players such as the community, parents, sponsors, learners and the DoE. Such leadership

failures were exacerbated by the fact that there was a lack of safety and an unhealthy environment and this could be evidenced by a number of social ills including chronic theft, drug abuse and drug dealing, alcohol consumption, untidiness in the toilets, classrooms, sports ground and water taps that distracted attention from teaching and learning and, also, vendors who used to sell unhealthy food to the learners. No action was being taken to resolve any of these issues.

5.4.3.3 Focus on suppliers and customers

To use just the pillar of focus on suppliers and customers as an example: educators did show signs of commitment to teaching but they, however, did not treat learners as their primary customers that needed to be satisfied with their needs and services. It appeared that these educators were teaching just because they were expecting pay at the end of the month. Their actions were contrary assertions by Deming (1986), that a school as an organisation depended on its customers and should address their current and future needs, meet the customers' requirements and strive to succeed in their expectations. Principals of the schools studied seemed to have missed this point completely.

5.5 Recommendations

The next section provides just a summary of recommendations that the researcher believes could make a difference if various stakeholders concerned could take cognisance of these points.

5.5.1 Recommendations for the principals

Evidence from these case studies indicates that principals lack basic expertise in terms of leadership provision and management of schools. Critical issues which regarded as basic include consultations with educators and working collaboratively with them and other stakeholders in the school. Teamwork is built and sustained through establishment of a sense of self worth and belonging among staff members in particular. Although this study could not establish if training workshops were being provided for school principals in the district, it is usual practice that workshops are usually provided for

educators at different levels. It is therefore recommend that principals need to try and implement ideas and recommendations that come out of such workshops.

5.5.2 Recommendations for the HODs

HODs should work as a link between the educators and the principals. Through this study it was clear that HODs were eager to have a positive culture of teaching and learning, however, they seemed to be struggling to understand quality management and school improvement. This is despite the fact that it is mainly their responsibility to ensure that quality is maintained in the school; even educators viewed it as such. HODs therefore need to work closely with their respective principals, and provide support to educators, and this can only occur when they are conscious of their responsibilities as people who provide a link between principals and educators. Leadership training for HODs should be instituted since some of them are not improving their education and had a problem in explaining important educational terms such as quality management and school improvement during the interviews. Communication skills should be stressed in training since it was shown in this study that lack of dissemination of information among the staff members leads to conflict and lack of team work.

5.5.3 Recommendations for educators

Educators should play a role in creating the positive teaching and leaning environment so that learners can get good results. Lack of team work is a serious problem among the educators and the SMTs. Team spirit could assist because there are too many learners to be handled by one educator in a class. Other areas that need urgent attention of educators are basic issues which include doing lesson preparation, submitting of work files to HODs, and keeping records of learners' performance and so forth.

5.6 Conclusion

This study has shown that all school stakeholders need to work together for improvement in their schools. The study has provided evidence that not all participants clearly understand quality management and its implications for

school improvement. There seems to be a need to communicate quality management and school improvement to all stakeholders.

All stakeholders need to have a clear understanding of quality management and school improvement if quality teaching and learning is to occur. There is a need for principals to provide leadership and be examples to other members of staff. It is clear from the study that the problem of poor performance of learners starts with the lack of leadership skills of principals and that all other stakeholders fail to promote the culture of teaching and learning because they are not motivated enough. For these schools to have quality management that leads to school improvement they should work on their leadership skills, decision-marking, focus on customers and suppliers and how to sustain continuous improvement. There is a relationship between quality management and school improvement when the school stakeholders work together for the sake of effective learning. The literature reviewed during the process of this study confirms this belief. However, it is sad that the study has indicated that as important as this issue may be, it has not received proper attention in the three case study sites.

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7. LIST OF APPENDICES

7.1 Participants' biographical data

7.2 Interview guide for principals and HODs

7.3 Interview guide for educators

7.4 Approval letter to conduct research from KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.

7.5 Ethical clearance letter from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Letter to participants' in schools

7.6 Letter to participants' in schools

Appendix 1

Participants' biographical data

The principals' biographical data

1. What is your highest qualification?

2. How long have you been an educator?

3. How long have you been a principal in this school?

4. How long have you been a principal in this school?

The HODs biographical data

1. What is your highest qualification?

2. How long have you been an educator?

3. How long have you been an HOD?

4. How long have you been an HOD in this school?

5. Which department do you head?

The educators' biographical data

1. What is your qualification?

2. How long have you been an educator?

3. How long have you been an educator in this school?

4. Which subjects do you teach?

Appendix 2
Interview guide for principals and HODs

1. What do you understand by quality management?
2. How do you manage the quality of what you teach?
3. How do you as a school ensure quality management?
4. What do you understand by school improvement?
5. How do you promote the culture of teaching and learning among
6. educators and learners?
7. How do you ensure that there is continuous improvement in matriculation learners' attainment?
8. How do you make decisions concerning learners, parents and educators?
9. What effort do you make in your school to ensure team work among educators?
10. How do you involve all parents, especially of matriculation learners, in improving the learners' results?
11. What role does the school management team play in ensuring that the school achieves the goals set at the management meetings?
12. What is your understanding of quality education?
13. Who decides on quality in your school?
14. How do you ensure quality in your school?
15. How do you make sure that educators and learners get all the material they need for positive learning?
16. What is your school environment like?
17. How do you ensure a healthy and secure school environment?
18. Are learners motivated to learn?
19. Are educators motivated to teach?
20. How do you motivate learners and educators to perform well?
21. How do you ensure the culture of teaching and learning?
22. How do you make sure that educators have the material and equipment to make teaching and learning effective?
23. Are your learners ready for tertiary education or employment when they finish matriculation?

24. Does the school have goals, vision and a mission statement?

25. How were goals, vision and mission statements formulated?

26. How often do you as the staff revisit the goals, vision and mission statements?

27. What do you do to ensure that the goals,(vision and mission statement of the school) are upheld and fulfilled?

28. How do you make sure that educators upgrade themselves in their teaching subjects?

Appendix 3

Interview guide for educators

1. What do you understand by quality management?

2. How do you manage the quality of what you teach?

3. How do you as a school ensure quality management?

4. What do you understand by school improvement?

5. How do educators promote the culture of teaching and learning?

6. Do you think educators are involved in decision-making in the school?

7. How encouraged are you as educators to work as a team and what team work do you do?

8. How do educators communicate with parents and what do you discuss?

9. How do you deal with a situation when learners do not have learning material that is essential?

10. Do you think that learners are motivated to learn?

11. How do you motivate learners?

12. Do you think learners get enough feedback from you after assessment?

13. Do you think that your principal is able to establish a good relationship with parents and learners and give a reason for your response.

14. Do you think the principal is striving enough for school improvement?

15. Do you think the school environment and health have any affect on the learners' results?

16. Are your learners ready for tertiary education or employment when they finish matriculation?

17. Does the school have goals, vision and a mission statement?

18. How were goals, vision and mission statements formulated?

19. How often do you, as the staff, revisit the goals, vision and mission statements?

20. What do you do to ensure that the goals, vision and mission statement of the school is upheld and fulfilled?

21. How do you as educators upgrade yourselves in your teaching subjects and other fields?

Appendix 4

Approval letter to conduct research from KwaZulu-Natal DoE

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

RESEARCH OFFICE (GOVAN MBEKI CENTRE)
WESTVILLE CAMPUS
TELEPHONE NO.: 031 – 2603587
EMAIL: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

6 JULY 2006
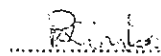
MS. T NXUMALO (9603981)
EDUCATION

Dear Ms. Nxumalo

ETHICAL CLEARANCE: "THE RELEVANCE QUALITY MANAGEMENT TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the above project subject to grammatical errors being corrected on all informed consent forms:

This approval is granted provisionally and the final clearance for this project will be given once the above condition has been met. Your Provisional Ethical Clearance Number is HSS/06154

Kindly forward your response to the undersigned as soon as possible

Yours faithfully

MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA
RESEARCH OFFICE

PS: The following general condition is applicable to all projects that have been granted ethical clearance:

THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES SHOULD BE CONTACTED IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE NECESSARY

APPROVAL SHOULD THE RESEARCH INVOLVE UTILIZATION OF SPACE AND/OR FACILITIES AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS/ORGANISATIONS. WHERE QUESTIONNAIRES ARE USED IN THE PROJECT, THE RESEARCHER SHOULD ENSURE THAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE INCLUDES A SECTION AT THE END WHICH SHOULD BE COMPLETED BY THE PARTICIPANT (PRIOR TO THE COMPLETION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE) INDICATING THAT HE/SHE WAS INFORMED OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT AND THAT THE INFORMATION GIVEN WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.

cc. Faculty Research Office (Derek Buchler)
cc. Supervisor (Dr. TT Bhengu)

Appendix 5

Ethical clearance letter from University of KwaZulu-

Natal

<table>
<tr><td>PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS</td><td>Tel: 033 341 8610
Fax:033 341 8612

Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

228 Pietermaritz Street
Pietermaritzburg, 3201</td></tr>
</table>

INHLOKOHHOVISI   **PIETERMARITZBURG**   **HEAD OFFICE**

| Enquiries:
Imibuzo: Sibusiso Alwar
Navrae: | Reference:
Inkomba: 0145/06
Verwysing: | Date:
Usuku:
Datum: 22/05/06 |

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to serve as a notice that Ms T Nxumalo (9603981) has been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

➤ That as a researcher, he/she must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution.

➤ **Ms T Mxumalo** has been granted special permission to conduct his/her research during official contact times, as it is believed that their presence would not interrupt education programmes. Should education programmes be interrupted, he/she must, therefore, conduct his/her research during nonofficial contact times.

➤ No school is expected to participate in the research during the fourth school term, as this is the critical period for schools to focus on their exams.

[signature]

for SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

Appendix 6

Letter to participants in schools

C288 Umlazi

PO Umlazi

4031

14 March 2006

Dear Sir/Madam

A REQUEST TO INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS IN THE SCHOOL

I am a Masters in Education Management (University of KWA-ZULU NATAL Edgewood Campus) student. I obtained my teachers' degree from the University of Durban-Westville in 1999 and the B.ED Honours at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2003. My contact no. is 0762927386.

I am conducting research at three Umlazi secondary schools that have under-performed in the past year i.e. 2005. The title of the research project is **THE RELEVANCE OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.** From the study I want to understand if there is a relationship between school improvement, which promotes the culture of learning and teaching in schools, and the philosophy of quality management. I want to see if these two elements, when combined, can lead to improvement in the learners' performance.

As a researcher I would like to interview you about certain issues at your school. The interviews will take place at any time that suits you so that teaching and other school activities are not disturbed. This interview may take between 15 to 30 minutes. You will only be required to answer set questions.

During the interviews I will be using a tape recorder and I will also write some information down. Your participation in the research will be voluntary

and you can withdraw from the study at any stage and for any reason. Your withdrawal will not disadvantage you in any way.

The interviews will remain confidential even after the research has been published. Your name as a participant will also not be mentioned. Your name and the school will be coded. The data gathered during the interview will be analysed and published in the complete research document that will be placed in libraries and given to educational institutions so that other schools can benefit from it.

If you need further information about this research you can contact Dr T.T. Bhengu, the research supervisor, on this no 033 2605354.

If you agree to be a participant please fill in the consent form on the next page. Feel free to ask questions concerning the research and to consult with anyone before filling in the consent form.

Thank you

Yours faithfully
Thulile Nxumalo (Miss)

CONSENT FORM

**THE RELAVANCE OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT TO SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT**

I ……………………………………………….. (Full names of the
participant) hereby confirm that I understand the nature of this research
project and I consent to participate in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw at any time should so I
desire.

Signature of the participant   **Date**

…………………………..   ………………