

**Factors contributing to the perceived effectiveness of the Kip  
McGrath Education Centres at Newholmes, Pietermaritzburg in  
Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa.**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Education in the School of Education, Training  
and Development. University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.**

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**July 2001**

## **Declaration**

**This dissertation, unless specified to the contrary, is my own original work.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Ramnath'.

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**July, 2001**

## ***Abstract***

This study centred on factors contributing to the perceived organizational effectiveness within an educational service provider. The guiding assumption of this research was that the general public supports effective organizations because they are perceived as rendering an effective and efficient service. This results in a reciprocal relationship between the organization and its clients.

The Kip McGrath Education Centres was studied since it is an organization that has been rendering educational service in South Africa since 1996. There are to date thirty-five centres operating in the country. However, while there has been phenomenal growth in terms of geographical expansion, no studies have been done to establish what has contributed towards this organization's perceived effectiveness.

Literature sources informed this study of the indicators that characterize effective organizations. Some of these indicators of effectiveness were used in this research to determine whether the organization under study can be viewed as one such effective organization. The theoretical underpinning of this study is that there are inherent contradictions within models of effective organizations. As such, effectiveness should be determined according to a given model and relevant indicators.

This study surveyed perceptions of the major stakeholders on matters pertaining to the organizational effectiveness of the Kip McGrath Education Centres at Newholmes. Both the qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used. That is, questionnaires were used to obtain information from large samples of educational stakeholders and interviews schedules and check-lists were used to collect qualitative data from small samples and observations of facilities and activities at the centre. The findings revealed that the organization under study was rendering an effective service that clients seem to have valued. This consequently led to their support of the organization which led to its growth in size, judged by student numbers. The conclusions derived from these findings were

that an effective organization is one that is able to develop because it possesses salient features necessary for delivering an effective and efficient service to its clients, thus ensuring their continued support. A major finding was that parents were willing to pay for the services offered by the Newholmes KMEC because they felt they got their money's worth. This leads to the conclusion that when the public has confidence in an education provider, the public is willing and able to pay for the services. A recommendation arising out of this would be to determine the extent to which perceived effectiveness translates into genuine effectiveness judged by the quality of programmes offered by a number of private education providers. This would offer evidence and support for the role of the private sector in educational provision which can guide government policy and practice.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Background to the research problem**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a background and overview of the study. The organization under study has been operating in South Africa as an educational franchise since 1996. There seems to be much support for this organization, which has resulted in geographical expansion throughout the country. The focus of the study was to determine views of stakeholders concerning an organization that appeared to be functioning effectively. The chapter begins with a brief historical overview of the organization. The theoretical framework that underpins the study is then outlined. The research problem and the critical questions that emerged from it follow on. The chapter concludes with the significance of the study.

#### **1.2 Historical background of the organization**

The organization under study is known as 'Kip McGrath Education Centres'. It is an educational organization that caters for learners of school-going age. It was named after two Australian teachers, Kip and Dagnija McGrath. They began this business when they saw that their own children were experiencing problems at school and were starting to underachieve. Kip and Dagnija McGrath began tutoring them at home in the mid 1970's. It seemed that they noticed a marked improvement in their children's performance at school, as a result of the tutoring. Soon their children's school friends began requesting assistance from the McGraths and gradually there arose an appeal from their community to help tutor other children. This led the McGraths to design what is now called the Kip McGrath Education Centres programme.



The McGraths experienced educational success with their programme during the latter 1980's. After much testing and trialing, by 1987 the programme was ready for implementation. This educational success motivated them to start franchising their organization. What they found was that their programme was very positively received. In the first year, three franchises were sold. After the first three franchises were established, the McGraths decided to extend their franchise to other parts of the country. There was a lot of support from these communities as well. In the Business Review of 1990 (cited in the Kip McGrath Education Centres Materials, (1996 -2001), hereafter referred to as 'KMEC Materials', it was reported that the number of centres in New South Wales had increased from three to sixty-seven in the past eighteen months. It seemed that the Kip McGrath Education Centres were becoming popular in Australia by that stage.

Due to the success of the programme, both in terms of meeting educational needs as well as proving a viable business, the McGraths began extending their organization overseas. A report in the Business Review of 1997 (cited in the KMEC Materials, 1996 - 2001), indicated that the Kip McGraths had built a business that covered five countries and generated a turnover of \$30 million a year. The Kip McGrath Education Centres was expanding as an international organization as well. In Australia the franchise was virtually sold out by 1996, generating more than AUD\$113000 000.00 per annum. Likewise, the New Zealand franchise was also practically sold out by 1998, generating an income of more than AUD\$5 000 000.00 per annum.

The Kip McGrath Education Centres (KMEC) have been established in the United States of America, The United Kingdom and South Africa. By the year 1999, the KMEC were also being established in Zimbabwe, Thailand, Canada and Malaysia. According to the Historical Review of the Company in 2001, (cited in the KMEC Materials, 1996 - 2001), at the beginning of the year 2001 there were 360 centres operating around the world.

The first South African KMEC was established in February 1996. The organization trades under the name 'Kip McGrath Education Centres (SA) (PTY) LTD'. The South African national office is based in Amanzintoti, near Durban in Kwa-Zulu Natal. In

South Africa there was phenomenological growth in terms of geographical expansion. By 1999 there were 35 KMEC established throughout South Africa. In KwaZulu-Natal alone, there were fourteen KMEC operating in 2001 (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001).

So what is the Kip McGrath Education Centres all about?

What follows hereafter is how the KMEC function:

### **Service**

The KMEC at Newholmes, Pietermaritzburg, Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) in South Africa, like other KMEC, offers an educational service to the community by providing learners of school-going age (7-18 years) with assistance in the areas where they are experiencing problems at school. This educational assistance covers Mathematics and English and takes place after school and on Saturdays (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001).

### **Procedure**

The procedure is that each learner who comes to the KMEC is initially assessed and then placed on an individualized programme suited to specific educational needs. Tuition takes place on a weekly basis, with each session lasting one hour and twenty minutes. During each session the learner has six activities to do. There are two activities that are done on the computer and three activities that require the use of workbooks and/or worksheets. One activity is spent with the tutor who engages in diagnostic work with the learner (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001).

### **Learning Materials**

The materials available to the learner include computers, audiotapes, graded workbooks and worksheets. Learners receive weekly homework in the form of audiotapes and/or worksheets. All learning materials are graded to ensure that learning is learner-paced (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001).

## **Feedback**

After twenty-four lessons the learner is re-assessed and a meeting is held with the learner's parents, the director and the tutor to discuss the learner's progress.

When the learner is able to cope well at school, having achieved the purpose of the tutoring, s/he has the option of discontinuing the KMEC programme or proceeding onto enrichment work (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001).

This service that the KMEC offered appeared to be well supported by the public.

It seemed like it is this public support of the organization that was enabling it to grow and maintain itself as a profitable organization. This brief background of the organization, provided justification for an investigation into such an organization. This study sought to explore stakeholders' perceptions of factors contributing to the perceived effectiveness within the Kip McGrath Education Centres at Newholmes (hereafter known as Newholmes KMEC).

## **1.3 Theoretical Framework**

This research was located in educational theories of organizational effectiveness. Saran and Trafford (1990:3) are of the opinion that theory interacts with practice in a mutually beneficial way. While practice needs to be shaped by theory, theory likewise, is tested and developed through practice. Similarly, according to Owens (1991:53), organizational theory provides a systematic body of knowledge upon which we base our assumptions about the nature of organizations and the people in them. Owens (1991:54) adds that theory is also used by administrators as a basis for the professional work that they do on a daily basis.

Organizational theory informs this study that effective organizations possess certain salient, reproducible features that make them effective. While there are various models of organizational effectiveness, the contradiction model of effectiveness posited by Hall (1982) is one such model that informs this study. This model of effectiveness is so called

because there are contradictions within and between the elements of effectiveness. The model subscribes to the view that any surviving organization cannot be judged to be effective or ineffective. Instead, the contradiction model considers organizations to be: - more or less effective in regards to the variety of goals which they pursue, the variety of resources which they attempt to acquire, the variety of constituents inside and outside of the organization, whether they are part of the decision making process, and the variety of time frames by which effectiveness is judged. According to this theory, an organization is effective when:

1. Goals are being met (e.g. learners succeed at school, there is growth in the business, profits are made, etc.). The goals are many and may be contradictory.
2. Personnel and clientele are satisfied with what the organization is doing (i.e. there is reliable and committed personnel and constant client base). Each of these different groups have their own perspectives on effectiveness. These may be contradictory.
3. There is agreement amongst participants within the organization at different levels and between members and non-members on what the organization is doing and how it is doing it. These too, may be contradictory.
4. The organization serves the best interest of the community. This function enables it to carry out its functions and sustain itself (Hall, 1982:271).

The organization under study seems to subscribe to the above theory in many ways. The following examples illustrate this:

### **1. Goals**

The Newholmes KMEC seems to operate within a dual organization: as an educational centre and as a business centre that is directed at making profits. The inherent contradiction is that while the Newholmes KMEC operates as an educational service provider, its operation will be seriously hampered if it does not make a profit. As an educational organization it is directed in many ways towards non-profit. As such, the Newholmes KMEC possesses those inherent features that make it different from other

business organizations. As a business organization, the Newholmes KMEC is borrowing many theoretical features from the business world that enable it operate and sustain itself.

## **2. Serves the best interest of the community**

The Newholmes KMEC is rendering educational services within the Newholmes community at a time where there appears to be grave concern amongst many parents that the public schools are not doing their job well enough. It might appear that some of the reasons for their despair are due to the political, economic, demographic and residential changes in the country since 1994. The Newholmes community was previously a racially segregated Indian community. After 1994 there was an influx of people of African descent who settled into informal dwellings in and around Newholmes. This, amongst other things, drastically altered the economic and residential status of the community. With regard to education, the implication for the schools meant that they had to deal with huge racially mixed classes that were largely under-resourced in terms of staffing and learning materials, as the article in *The Natal Witness* (23 May:2001) reveals:

*Pupils should not have to wait for a teacher to be appointed, Education portfolio committee chairman Sibusiso Ngidi said, after the promotions were announced. Any delay means the lack of service that the department should be delivering... Since the beginning of the year the department has been mired in controversy surrounding the non-delivery of writing materials and furniture to schools...*  
(p3)

This study was conducted within a time frame when there was also disillusionment about the quality of education offered in the majority of public state-owned schools. Many parents in particular were prepared to make the sacrifices to ensure that their children got what they called 'a good education'. Having an educational service provider within their community at such a crucial time meant that such an organization would be supported if it was perceived to be able to meet the needs of the community. The Newholmes KMEC seemed to provide such fertile ground for learners requiring educational support.

### **3. Personnel and client satisfaction**

In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, the growth in personnel seemed to indicate that these stakeholders seem satisfied with the centre and how it was rendering its services and were therefore keen to join the Newholmes KMEC (KMEC Materials, 1998-2001). If this were not so, the organization would have failed to attract personnel and/or to retain them. Similarly, clientele appeared to support the Newholmes KMEC by enrolling their children there. Furthermore, the fact that the parents pay fees over and above that which they pay at school, can be seen as an indicator that they value and support the services offered at the Newholmes KMEC ( KMEC Materials, 1996-2001).

### **4. Agreement between members and non-members of the organization**

At the Newholmes KMEC there appeared to be agreement amongst participants within the centre at different levels and between members and non-members on what the centre was doing and how it was doing it. This seemed to be a further indicator of its effectiveness.

The study was relevant in that it sought to explore why the Newholmes KMEC appeared to be doing well, judging from growth in enrollments. Using the theoretically based measures of growth, resources, personnel and client satisfaction, sustainability and profits, this study speculated that in the case of the Newholmes KMEC, these measures were probably being satisfactorily addressed. This study sought to find out to what extent this was the case for the Newholmes KMEC.

## **1.4 Statement of the research problem**

### **Purpose of the study**

The geographical expansion and growth of the KMEC as outlined above, indicate that nationally, the KMEC were extending their services throughout the country and expanding their boundaries. However, there was no information available regarding factors contributing to this physical expansion. It was important to find out what was contributing to the expansion of the KMEC in South Africa. The purpose of this study was therefore to determine the extent to which the KMEC appeared to be effective by using the various indicators of organizational effectiveness generated from the literature. Accordingly, the following critical research questions were addressed:

### **1.What made the KMEC function and grow?**

#### **Indicator 1: To determine the ability of the organization to function and grow**

The KMEC had been rendering educational service to pupils, parents and the school in thirty-five different centres in South Africa since 1996 and continues to operate throughout the country. The growth of the organization can be assessed in terms of the number of pupils that have enrolled at the KMEC. During 2000 the average enrollment at the South African KMEC was 3500 learners (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001). This study sought to determine stakeholders' perceptions of the reasons behind the Newholmes KMEC functioning and growth.

**2. To what extent did the stakeholders at the Newholmes KMEC think that the popularity of the centre was due to its ability to acquire and utilize resources?**

**Indicator 2: To determine the ability of the organization to acquire and utilize resources**

In order to function, organizations need to acquire and use resources adequately. In the case of the KMEC, these resources include the following: assets such as furniture and fixtures, learning materials, tutors and a centre within a relatively safe and non-threatening environment (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001).

The Newholmes KMEC had the following physical and material resources: - customized classroom furniture and equipment, modern and high-tech assets such as computers hi-fi and audiotapes as well as child friendly reception furniture.

With regard to the human resources, the KMEC had an international team of curriculum designers who are involved in regularly updating their programme (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001). According to the KMEC guidelines, the tutors needed to undergo regular training so that they could gain the expertise and experience necessary to make use of the most innovative teaching skills/methods according to internationally accepted standards (The KMEC Manual, 1996-2001).

The study sought to determine how stakeholders perceived the resources at Newholmes KMEC as well as how these resources were used to enable the organization to render an effective service.



### **3. Why was the Newholmes KMEC a popular choice amongst its stakeholders?**

**Indicator 3: To determine the popularity of the Newholmes KMEC as an educational organization**

Public experiences with organizations generate impressions that sell or damage organizations. This study sought to determine the source of popularity of the organization according to various parties such as parents, learners and tutors. It was assumed that if an organization was perceived as rendering an effective service, it ought to gain support from its stakeholders. The Newholmes KMEC appeared to be effective due to its popularity with the following groups:

#### **i. Popularity with parents**

In contrast to the public schools where evidence reveals that parental involvement in learners' school activities are minimal (Henning, 1983; Rocher, 1989), at the Newholmes KMEC there appeared to be structures that support and encourage strong parental involvement. Parents seem to be kept up to date on their child's development through assessments and re-assessments that take place on enrollment and after every 24 lessons. Parents are kept informed of pupils' progress and whether their child still needs more lessons to help him/her cope with the academic difficulties s/he is experiencing (KMEC Material, 1996-2001).

Perhaps the fact that parents could see progress in their child's performance (through tangible indicators such as school tests and exams) was an indicator of why they continued to use the services of the Newholmes KMEC. The study sought to determine the extent to which this is the case.

## **ii. Popularity with learners**

There is a general perception within the public that absenteeism is high, especially in public schools. Reasons for this vary from lack of effective teachers to lack of school materials such as books. At the Newholmes KMEC there appeared to be adequate resources for the learners in terms of staffing and learning materials (KMEC Material, 1996-2001). Learning seemed to be learner-paced and there were built-in programme incentives for the learners. The question was: to what extent did the programmes, teaching methods or philosophy of the KMEC encourage continued learner attendance and minimal dropout at the KMEC?

This study sought to find out if learners stayed on once they had enrolled at the Newholmes KMEC, and why they did so. It also sought to determine whether the reason for their attendance was due to the fact that they liked learning at Newholmes KMEC or because of other reasons that had nothing to do with the Newholmes KMEC such as knowledge that their parents pay for the tutoring.

## **iii. Popularity with tutors**

The fact that an organization had the ability to attract and retain staff to continue its functions seemed to indicate that it was an effective organization. Generally, staff of an effective organization stayed on primarily because of the benefits that the organization had to offer them. For educators, the intrinsic rewards of the satisfaction of a job well done, together with the recognition from the organization's staff are also motivation to stay on in that organization.

Incentives for tutors at the Newholmes KMEC include the following:- competitive remuneration, a part time job, small classes, highly conducive working environment, staff

development incentives in the form of regional and national conferences and workshops, minimal administrative duties and others(KMEC-Materials, 1996-2001).

There appeared to be systems within the organization aimed at reducing the workload of tutors. One such system, namely the assessment system, seemed to offer tutors a lighter workload. The initial assessment allowed the tutor to place learners at the correct level at which they are functioning and simultaneously select graded materials for the learner. The job of the tutor was primarily directed at tutoring the learner and monitoring his/her progress.

The study sought to find out why the tutors at the Newholmes KMEC work at that organization and remain there. Is it because of the benefits or any other reason that has nothing to do with the centre, such as financial needs?

#### **4. How was the Newholmes KMEC able to sustain itself as an organization?**

##### **Indicator 4: To determine the sustainability of the organization**

Organizations are effective when they grow and continue to exist from one year to another. What did the stakeholders think led to the continued survival of the organization? The two primary measures that contribute towards the sustainability of an organization are networking and the quality of service. As a commercial business the Newholmes KMEC needed to network with a wider environment in providing business services. Through these liaisons, the organization would be enable to gain exposure and be seen as profitable and reputable. This study sought to find out what the business stakeholders of the Newholmes KMEC perceive to be contributing to the assumed effectiveness of the organization.

The Newholmes KMEC functioned as a service provider. The services that the KMEC offered to the community include: free assessments, provision of a remedial service for individual learners, provision of sponsorships to schools through referral systems and

service to parents and their children after school, during weekends and school holidays (KMEC Material, 1996-2001). The study sought to assess stakeholders' views of the services that the KMEC provided in relation to sustainability. Did stakeholders see these services as necessary enough to support the organization and hence to sustain it? These two factors are expanded below:

#### **i. Acceptance as a commercial business**

The Newholmes KMEC appeared to network with other profit making and non-profit-making service providers. Through these liaisons the organization seemed to have placed itself in a strategic position where it could gain exposure for itself as a profitable and reputable organization. The study sought to find out how the wider business community perceived the KMEC as an organization. Did they see the KMEC as an effective educational organization that they were proud to deal with or was the KMEC merely tolerated by other organizations?

#### **ii. Acceptance as a service provider**

The professionalism with which businesses operate enables them to attract stakeholder relationships and to sustain such relationships. The fact that stakeholders can see the business as both effective and profitable, strengthens the involvement of these stakeholders. The Newholmes KMEC operates in a residential area. Why do homeowners and surrounding businesses tolerate and /or support a business operating within their neighbourhood? The study sought to find out the reasons for the community's support and tolerance of the KMEC in Newholmes.

With regard to schools, not all schools can provide the much-needed individual attention that learners with remedial problems require, due to various reasons such as lack of specialized staff and materials. The Newholmes KMEC appeared to be in a position to fill this gap by providing this service. It was assumed that the Newholmes KMEC activities are directed at enabling school based teachers to do their job more effectively

by producing better results, since diagnosis and referral which was part of what the KMEC did, served to improve learning at school. Such a service could have been the source of antagonism or envy by schoolteachers or it could have been fully supported. The study sought to find out the reasons for the schoolteachers' support or lack thereof, of the KMEC at Newholmes.

## **5. What made the Newholmes KMEC a profitable organization?**

### **Indicator 5: To determine the profit-making ability of the organization**

All business organizations use profits as the most significant measure of organizational effectiveness. This can be seen as a conflict of interest in non-profit educational organizations such as state schools. In the case of the KMEC, the centres operate as business organizations. Being a franchise means that growth and development is closely monitored. What appeared to be the case at the KMEC, is that royalties are paid on a progressive scale and are thereafter fixed (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001). This meant that the larger the number of students enrolled, the larger the profit would be. This measure seemed to allow the centres the ability to determine their growth and consequently their profit making margins.

At the Newholmes KMEC overheads appeared to be simple, limited and fixed, thus ensuring maximum profits. The fact that the business had been established over a few years and was enjoying financial growth, seemed to indicate that the KMEC at Newholmes was a profitable business (KMEC Material, 1996-2001). The study sought to determine stakeholders' perceptions related to the profitability of the organization, using measures of financial gains.

These five critical research questions related to the growth factor, acquisition and utilization of resources, popularity and sustainability of the organization as well as the profitability of the Newholmes KMEC were selected for answering the critical questions posed in this study.

### **1.5 Significance of the study**

This study sought to determine stakeholders' perceptions of factors contributing to organizational growth as they apply to the KMEC at Newholmes as well as to other similar centres. Using theoretically derived indicators, evidence of effectiveness on these measures would render the findings significant in the following ways:

#### **Maximizing on resources**

How an organization acquires and utilizes resources is significant because the ability to do the above is not necessarily a guarantee of effective delivery of services. The way in which the above is acquired and consumed is dependent on other factors such as personal leadership and relationships. These human dynamics shape and influence the resources and impact on the growth and sustainability of the organization. The study results are therefore significant for people in administrative and management positions where strategic planning and controlling of vital resources are involved so that they could benefit from what stakeholders value in terms of resources and more importantly how it is put to use.

#### **Permeating an environment/community**

How an organization succeeds in creating an image for itself within the environment where it operates is due to its ability to send out signals that it hopes will be positively received by the recipients of that environment. This factor has direct consequences on the survival of that organization. If the stakeholders within the environment perceive that the organization is rendering an essential and effective service, they will support that organization. This assured support contributes towards the sustainability of the organization for the future.

The results of this study would be significant to people involved with public relations, which include among others, people concerned with personnel and clientele relations. In particular, educational managers and supervisors may benefit from the way in which human relations are built and established by organizations that appear to be operating effectively. Of significance, is the way in which the Newholmes KMEC interact with the clientele, which assure them of their continued support. Through stakeholders' perceptions, educational managers and supervisors would be able to ascertain what contributes towards a valued relationship.

### **Sustainability through networking**

How an organization conducts its affairs will impact on the how it networks with other organizations. If an organization is rendering an efficient and effective service, it will be networking with other organizations to enable it to deliver an even wider and more effective service within the business world.

The results of this study are therefore significant to other similar agencies in order for them to gain some insight on how organizations operate effectively. Those features that are seen to be contributing to the effectiveness of the organization can be replicated on a wider scale in other educational organizations, if this is possible.

### **Visible profit-making ability**

Many educational organizations are not set up to generate financial profit. Therefore effectiveness is sought in other ways. In the case of the KMEC at Newholmes, profit can be determined by the growth in student numbers. Accordingly, if the Newholmes KMEC is able to grow as an organization that is operating within the dual capacity of a business and an educational provider, it shows a capacity to function as an effective organization. Therefore the results of the study would be significant to other similar profit making educational organizations who may wish to duplicate some of the salient elements that make the organization under study appear effective.

The survival of a business depends on whether it can make money. How an organization generates income is dependent on whether it is profitable to carry out that business in the short, medium and long term. A businessman/woman expects to see profits within his/her organization in order for him/her to invest in resources and efforts in sustaining it.

Findings that support the theoretically derived indicators that reveal that it is possible to provide quality service and make money, would allay fears and perceptions of private organizations as fly-by-night money making ventures which provide no educational service. Such finding would be significant in many ways: Firstly, they could help the centres to increase awareness of how their stakeholders perceive them. Secondly, they could provide the centres with a means of improving their practices, where loopholes exist, so that they could provide an even wider and better service.

## **Summary**

In this chapter, the background to the study and the theoretical bases of the research questions were presented. The purpose was to establish the bases for the study as verifying through stakeholders, the reasons for the perceived effectiveness of the KMEC at Newholmes in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal.

This study focused on an educational service provider that has been operating within the country since 1996 and continues to do so in 2001. Besides the geographical expansion of the organization, not much was known of it. Therefore this study sought to look at this organization to explore what appeared to be contributing to its effectiveness, as perceived by its stakeholders. Roux (1998) states that there are many factors that may influence people's perceptions on any new education model. If an education provider is perceived in a certain way, people will respond to it accordingly. This can have implications for that education provider's sustainability. This study is also useful in providing an understanding of issues that affect or contribute to organizational effectiveness and efficiency.



## **1.6 Structure of the Dissertation**

Chapter one begins with a brief historical outline of the organization, informing the readers of its function and purpose and presents them with the theoretical framework and the source of the researched indicators of the centres' effectiveness. This is followed by an overview of the research problem and the significance of the study. Chapter two reviews the relevant literature and locates the study within the organizational and educational perspectives. Chapter three outlines the methodological aspects of the study, focusing on the site, sample selection, research techniques and tools, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures used in the study. In chapter four the research findings are presented. In chapter five the interpretations and discussion are provided and in chapter six conclusions are made and recommendations for further study and practice are given.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The literature sources related to effective organizations and effective schools informed this study. These organizations are perceived as dynamic enterprises because of certain salient features that they possess. While the theories of organizations and organizational effectiveness formed the theoretical background to this study, the literature attempts to clarify, confirm and dispute some of the issues raised in this study. As such, the literature reviews some of the theoretical perspectives on organizations and organization management, franchising and the global trend towards networking in business organizations. The role of organizational behaviour in educational settings is expanded on in this chapter. The literature review concludes with the current trends in research in effective schools and organizations.

#### **2.2 Theoretical perspectives on organizations and organizational development**

##### **2.2.1 Development in organizational thought**

During the period from the early 1950's to the mid-1970's there were many theories and researches into educational administration. However, these theories and the research done, did not fully capture the happenings within these organizations. Instead, there was a great emphasis on logical-positivist assumptions about schools as organizations, that is, there was some rational, logical, systematic order underlying the organizational realities. According to Owens (1991:20), people like Hoy and Miskel claimed that the road to generalized knowledge could only lie in scientific research and not in introspection and

subjective experience. However, by 1974 people like Greenfield raised the concern that the organization was being 'anthropomorphised'. In reality, an organization exists because of the people that operate within it and not because they are there to serve it. Therefore the essence of the organization ought to be people within the organization who choose, act and behave in a certain way (Ibid:21).

Consequently, one of the powerful emerging ideas in understanding organizations and the behaviour of people in them was the notion of the contingency theory. This theory, originally proposed by Fiedler in the early 1960's, focused on the leadership factor in organizational behaviour. Others after him (e.g., Cohen, March and Olsen cited in Owens 1991:23) saw organizations as much more complex and unstructured, where problems, potential solutions, people and the opportunities to make choices intermesh in complicated ways. Such a description leads to a more accurate description of how organizations actually operate.

### **2.2.2 Change in organizational thought**

In the recent conceptualizations of the contingency theory, the focus fell on the effects of change on the organization (e.g., Slater and Teddlie, 1992; Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993 cited in Reynolds, 1994:105). The underlying assumption is that as the context changes, so too ought the organization. For the organization this necessitates adapting to the change elements in a meaningful way so that it can function effectively without unnecessarily hampering its growth and progress.

In the case of the organization under study, the political circumstances since 1994 had a direct impact on the environment in terms of educational provision by the state. This led to the dissatisfaction of the people within the community towards the increased pupil: teacher ratio and the perceived lowering of the standard of education that their children were receiving due to the inherent imbalances caused by increased class sizes and inadequate resources, to name but a few.

The appearance of a supplementary educational service provider in that community during this period of disillusionment meant that many parents would be attracted to it. The Newholmes KMEC, as mentioned earlier, appeared at that time and was able to offer free assessments to the school children in the community. This appears to be an important feature for the organization because in its effort to reach out to the community, it appears to be simultaneously marketing its product. This can be seen as an important factor contributing to the growth of an organization.

Olthof and Lughart (1992) cited in Reynolds et al. (1994:106), refer to several proponents of the contingency theory in their study of the effectiveness of secondary school organizations. They state that the school will be effective when the structuring of its organizational subsystem coheres with the demands put forward by such situational influences as educational technology and environmental factors (Ibid:106). This means that, for example, if the educational organization is equipped with modern educational technology, its services will be more favourably received than one that does not have such technology.

In the case of the organization under study, their claim to the use of state-of-the-art computer software, possibly enables them to offer their learners a cutting edge in technologically based-learning. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier in the historical review of the organization, the technologically based educational programmes are continually upgraded by a team of curriculum planners. It appears that an organization that has these features puts itself in a position to offer an effective service to its clientele.

Lussier (1997: 272) describes the culture of a learning organization as a culture with a capacity to learn, adapt, and change with the environment to continuously increase customer value. Such a culture requires high level restructuring that is sensitive to an environment that is undergoing change and transformation.

In the case of the organization under study, the residential and demographic changes that began since 1994 brought on new challenges and needs for that community. For an

organization to impact positively on such a community meant that it had to meet the community at the point of its need. The need expressed by most parents in this community was to ensure that their children receive a quality education. Therefore the challenge facing the organization was to provide an educational service that would meet the needs of these parents. For an organization to succeed in meeting this need meant that it ought to be able to render an appropriate and effective service. This seems to be the case with the organization under study.

### **2.2.3 The strength of organizations**

Rue and Byars (1995) provide a definition of an organization thus:

*An organization is a group of people working together in some type of concerted or coordinated effort to attain objectives. As such, an organization provides a vehicle for accomplishing objectives that could not be achieved by individuals working separately (p5).*

Organizations are important because of the function that they play. The importance of the organizing function according to Rue and Byars (1995) is to determine how organizational resources will be employed to achieve goals. They state that it also establishes lines of authority and improves the efficiency and quality of work through synergism (Ibid:7).

In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, it is a registered organization that is operating within the confines of a residential zone. The fact that there appears to be no objection from the members of this community to its operation indicates that it is recognized as an organization within that community and as such, allowed to operate. Being recognized as an organization also has its merits over the individuals working separately. The synergism factor that an organization has generally allows it to be seen as more favourable than a lone individual, as is the case with the Newholmes KMEC. Furthermore, the fact that the Newholmes KMEC is an international franchise

organization possibly provides people with the reassurance that it is an established organization. Hence, being a franchise tends to strengthen peoples' perceptions of the Newholmes KMEC as an effective organization.

#### **2.2.4 The role of franchising in organizational development**

What is franchising?

Franchising is defined by the International Franchise association as:

*The grant of a license by the franchiser to the franchisee to trade under the name/trade mark of the franchiser and to make use of an entire package, comprising all the elements necessary to establish a previously untrained person in the business developed by the franchiser and to run it with continuing assistance on a predetermined basis. (Reuvid and Priestner, 1997:225).*

Hodgetts and Huratho (1995) see the franchise as a system of distribution that enables a supplier (the franchiser) to arrange for a dealer (the franchisee) to handle a specific product or service under certain mutually agreed-upon conditions (p.151).

This means that both parties have a mutually agreed on understanding regarding the operation and delivery of service/ or product. This results in effective service/or product delivery.

According to Reuvid and Priestner (1997) franchising presents a viable opportunity to business people wishing to capitalize on a proven business concept, name and brand in expanding their operations into the market. They add that a number of franchisers that have become household names internationally have also established themselves with great success in South Africa, according to the 1996 FASA Handbook and Kessel Feinstein Consulting (cited in Reuvid and Priestner. 1997:106). In the case of the KMEC, the geographical expansion into the country is a possible indicator of its successful integration into South Africa.

Trading under a trademark 'the Kip McGrath Education Centres' allows the Newholmes KMEC to make use of the entire package that the organization has. This means investing into tried and tested system of business-related strategies as well as educational practices.

Moodie (1996:17) says that buying a franchise means also being part of a bigger group that has already been established successfully by another person and has a reputation and a well-known name. The primary benefit of a franchise is that one is purchasing a proven business concept. This appears to be the case with the Kip McGrath Education Centres.

Moodie (1996:18) states that the disadvantage of franchising is that the franchisees are required to operate the business within certain guidelines, or the franchise system may fail and cause the franchisees to lose their investment. This disadvantage does not appear to be hampering the operation of the KMEC at Newholmes because the business plan appears to be working well and the organization seems to be making profits (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001).

The fact that the KMEC exists and continue to exist in many parts of the country and the world is a possible indicator of its effectiveness as a franchise organization. This also indicates that the KMEC is a globally competitive organization. In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, it appears that the potential exists for the organization to develop into one such organization, provided the business plan is adhered to in the future.

### ***2.2.5 Global trends in organizational development***

Rue and Byars (1995:131) explain many of the reasons why organizations extend their operations to other countries. Generally, the decision to extend an organization's operations to other countries is based on profits, stability, or competition. In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, the decision to establish a centre in the Newholmes area appears to be market-related. The demand for such a service seems to have led to the creation of an opportunity for a business minded person to establish his centre there.

In order to grow the business, networking with other organizations can prove to be a very vital element. Lussier (1997) explains what network, reciprocity, and coalition have in common:

*Networking is the process of developing relationship for the purpose of socializing and politicking. Reciprocity involves creating obligations and developing alliances and using them to accomplish objectives. Coalitions are a network of alliances that will help the person achieve an objective (p.481).*

An organization that is able to do the above appears to be building short, medium and long term relations that will help build and sustain the organization for the future. In the case of the organization under study, it might appear that the type of relationships that these developing networks are building is shaping and influencing the public's perception of the organization.

Marquardt (1998:192) says that the global advantage that effective global organizations have is that they realize the need to collaborate, share and synergize with resources both inside and outside the company. Knowledge is seen as the main resource needed for performing work in an organization because all the organization's traditions, culture, technology, operations, systems and procedures are based on knowledge. In the case of the KMEC, knowledge appears to be disseminated within the organization by making use of a team of researchers and curriculum planners from outside the organization to devise the new computer programmes. This is an indicator of the organization's ability to share and synergize with resources both inside and outside the company.

Marquardt (1998:193) add that globally successful organizations recognize that only one asset grows more valuable as it is used, and that is the knowledge skills of people. These skills tend to actually increase in value when they are used and practiced. Therefore, it appears that managing the intellectual investments of a company needs to be



treated very attentively.

This knowledge is needed for several reasons:

- To provide quality service to clients and consumers;
- To update products and services;
- To change systems and structures;
- To communicate solutions to problems.

In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, the fact that it is part of an international organization, seems to provide it with exposure to other similar organizations and this seems to make its product globally competitive. Exposure to the worldwide web enables the KMEC to communicate with other locally, nationally and internationally bases centres as well as to network with other similar organizations. This appears to give the organization a global advantage in terms of providing quality service to clients by means of updated products and services.

## **2.3 Theoretical perspectives on organizational behaviour**

### **2.3.1 Effective practice in educational management**

According to Burgoyne and Reynolds (1997:1) in most or all management settings there are practices that are regarded as objective because of the clear achievement of outcomes that are judged to be good. In other settings these attributes of effectiveness can be seen as a consensus of subjective views among those people who matter in that situation.

In this study both perspectives are acknowledged, that is, settings where there are practices that are regarded as objective because of the clear achievement of outcomes that are judged to be good as well as the consensus of subjective views among stakeholders. By acknowledging these two perspectives, the findings would be able to provide some directives related to the effectiveness of organization under study.

### 2.3.2 Perspectives in school effectiveness

Literature ( Fullan, 1992; Teedlie and Reynolds, 2000; Watson, 1994 et.al.) inform this study that school effectiveness research (SER) has emerged from virtual total obscurity to a very central position in the educational discourse that is taking place within many countries. According to Teedlie and Reynolds (2000) there are three major strands of school effectiveness research that have emerged:

- School Effects Research - studies of the scientific properties of school effects evolving from input-output studies to current research using multilevel models;
- Effective Schools Research - research concerned with the processes of effective schooling, evolving from case studies of schools through to contemporary studies merging qualitative and quantitative methods in the simultaneous study of classrooms and schools;
- School Improvement research - examining the processes whereby schools can be changed using increasingly sophisticated 'multiple lever' models (p.3).

Teedlie and Reynolds (2000) state that school effectiveness studies are very deficient at the level of the study of 'processes'. School processes, defined in terms of attitudes, values, relationships and climate have been somewhat neglected (Ibid:45). School effectiveness studies therefore needs ideas and inputs about how schools came to be effective (or ineffective).

Of particular concern in this study was the organizational processes, defined in terms of attitudes, values, relationships and climate. These organizational processes have been looked at in this study to fill the gap that Teedlie and Reynolds (2000) point out is deficient in current research. The findings from this study will therefore be able to shed some light into how educational organizations come to be effective.

Harber and Davies (1997) looked at school management and effectiveness with special emphasis on *school effectiveness* and *ineffectiveness*. There appeared to be a dire need for

flexible schools. Similarly, Levin and Lockheed's (1993) review of a large number of effective schools indicated the need for the following:

1. Productive school climate and culture
2. Focus on student acquisition of central learning skills
3. Appropriate monitoring of student progress
4. Practice-oriented staff development at the school site
5. Outstanding leadership
6. Salient parental involvement
7. Effective instructional arrangements and implementation
8. High operational expectations and requirements for teachers (p.27).

In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, there appears to be a productive climate and culture for maximizing student learning, as learner-paced activities ensure student acquisition of central learning skills which are promoted by high operational requirements for teachers as well as salient parental involvement. Therefore, based on, Levin and Lockheed's (1993) review of a large number of effective schools, the Newholmes KMEC appears to fit into this category.

### **2.3.3 Organizational behaviour in educational settings**

Owens (1991) looked at organizational behaviour in educational settings. He notes five basic assumptions of effective schools thus:

1. The central purpose is to teach - success is measured by the students' progress in knowledge, skills and attitudes;
2. The school is responsible for providing the overall environment in which teaching and learning occur;
3. Schools must be treated holistically;
4. The most critical characteristics of a school are the attitudes and behaviours of the staff, not the material things;
5. The school accepts responsibility for the success or failure of the academic performance of the students ( p.31).

In summary, effective schools share the following characteristics:

Strong leadership, high expectation for student achievement, emphasis on basic skills, orderly environment, frequent and systematic evaluation of students and increased time in teaching and learning tasks.

While the above are important factors, not all can be expanded on in this study because they are very comprehensive and therefore require a bigger study. The factors pertaining to student achievement, cultural transmission at home (parental influence) and managing of resources, as pertaining to the Newholmes KMEC, are expanded on below:

### **Student achievement**

A major outcome of the school effectiveness movement for policy makers was the emphasis on using tests and examination results as the major performance indicator to schools. Hence, a good school is one with good exam results.

Reynolds (1994:21) see educational improvement and its evaluation as a factor that can contribute to the enlargement of our knowledge base about what matters in schools and classrooms, which may improve process-product research. They state:

*To become highly effective, schools must become high reliability organizations which perform highly complex tasks with such regularity that their effectiveness is often assumed... When cultures perceive the organization's potential to do well, eventually the citizens' response has been a demand for greatly increased reliability (p.179).*

Being able to perform highly complex tasks seems to prepares the students in a more meaningful way for their academic studies. In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, students seem to receive practice in skills that can be applied to their weak subjects. These skills can also transferable to other subjects that they do at school. If applied, this will have a significant effect on their overall results. When the parents and community

perceive this, their faith in the organization becomes strengthened, thus strengthening the reliability of the organization.

### **Cultural transmission**

Parents have great potential to effect children's school-related learning. Research has repeatedly found that students benefit from family contexts and activities that emphasize and encourage school-relevant learning (Coleman et al., 1966; Epstein & McPatland, 1979; Majoribanks, 1980 cited in Reynolds 1997). By encouraging their children, and by modeling a joy of learning, parents increase students' incentive to learn. By working with the school and their children's teachers, parents increase the appropriateness of instruction that children receive at school and at home.

In recent studies Fraser and Walberg (1991), looked at educational environments and focused on families, schools and students' educational outcomes. They saw highly effective schools as the products of the combined effects of cultural transmission by the family and the cultural transmission by the school. Similarly, Coleman (1966) cited in Owens (1991:183), suggests that the outputs of education result from the interaction of qualities the child brings from home. This can be loosely characterized as attitudes, effort, and self-concept with qualities of the school. According to the 'Wisconsin model' of status attainment mentioned by Coleman (1966) cited in Owens (1991:184), perceptions of parent support can be seen as mediating variables between social background and the ability of students' educational outcomes.

The assumption is that a relationship exists between the cultural transmission by the family and the cultural transmission by the school. This seems to be the case at the Newholmes KMEC.

## **Resource management**

While comparative effectiveness studies in developing countries (Harber and Davies, 1997) show that there appears to be no agreement on factors pertaining to effectiveness, Reynolds (1994) reported that the highest consensus was around 'specific material inputs' indicating the importance of learning material to the effectiveness of the organization. In the case of the organization under study, the material resources such as the individualized and computerized programmes, appear to be attracting clients to the organization.

Ford, (1998:94) state that a company has internal and external resources.

The internal resources are acquired through ownership while the external resources constitute the relationship counterparts. These external resources are a major factor in a company's effectiveness and efficiency. Hence, having specific material resources does not necessarily guarantee the organization's effectiveness. Rather it is how these resources are used that contribute towards organizational effectiveness.

In the case of the Newholmes KMEC the managing of resources appears to be seen as pivotal to the overall success and effectiveness of the organization. For example, the fact that the Newholmes KMEC tutors seem to be known to and respected by the members of the community, seems to indicate that the way in which the resources available are being used, is contributing to the organization's perceived effectiveness (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001).

Reynolds (1994:214) states that the search for mechanisms to explain educational effectiveness models are becoming evident as these results could be useful in selecting key variables for comparative studies. Such key variables will enhance further research into effective organizations. In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, those key variables related to resource acquisition and use, which seem to enhance the assumed effectiveness of the organization could be used for further research in similar organizations.

## **2.4 Summary**

The focus on effective schools and effective organizations stresses that there are salient features that contribute towards organizational effectiveness. Amongst others, the process factors are seen as vital in reinforcing the behaviour and practices within such effective organizations. The current trends in research in effective schools and organizations brings to the fore these process factors that are enhancing the behaviour within such organizations that appear to be highly effective. Furthermore, global trends towards networking and franchising are gaining momentum in organizational behaviour. Effective organizations are becoming globally competitive. The focus of this study was therefore to provide key variables to identify effective organizations. The next chapter looks at the methodology employed in gathering data related to perceived organizational effectiveness at the Newholmes KMEC.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the research methodology is presented and justified. This research was a case study of an educational service provider that has been operating within the country since 1995 and continues to do so in 2001. Most of the fieldwork took place at the research site because of its convenience to all parties concerned. Since most of the subjects reside in the community where the organization is situated, data collection was relatively convenient for the researcher. The data collecting tools and techniques were adequate in gathering the relevant data for the study. Consequently, the data analysis yielded findings that could justify the research questions posed at the beginning of the study.

#### **3.2 Site**

The research site was the Newholmes district in Northdale, Pietermaritzburg. The organization under study is situated in the northern section of Pietermaritzburg. This organization is set within the centre of the community where there appears to be a hive of activity from the early hours of the morning till late at night. The Newholmes KMEC is situated in the main street and is surrounded by shopping complexes, residential flats and houses. The surrounding population covers approximately 16000 homes. The socio-economic background of this population is very diverse, with a relatively large proportion being on the middle and lower socio-economic scales and a small percentage being on the very affluent socio-economic scale of the population (Transitional Local Council - Deputy Mayor's office records: 2000).



### **3.3 Population and sample of the research**

The target population of the research was all the stakeholders at the Newholmes KMEC. These comprise the director, the learners, their parents and schoolteachers, tutors, referring agents, business associates and informed members of the community.

The sample was selected for relevance and accessibility, that is, those chosen were able to provide direct and immediate information on the organization under study.

The design of the research necessitated that the sample be categorized into two groups. The first group (listed as group A below) was able to provide data on the educational service that the organization was offering. The second group (listed as group B below) was able to provide data on the organization from a business perspective.

These groups were sub-divided as follows:

#### **Group A- educational stakeholders**

This group comprised the learners, their parents, schoolteachers and their tutors. These are categorized and expanded on below:

a) The learner sample was sub-divided as follows:

i.) The number of learners in the Newholmes KMEC population from 1999 to 2000 was 325 learners. The average number of learners per month for this period was 60. At the time of the fieldwork there were 60 learners were selected for the first learner sample. This included the learners who were at the organization (53) as well as those learners (7) who had recently completed the programme (+/- three months). This selection was done so that a representative learner sample of 60 learners over the 1999 to 2000 period could be represented.

ii.) The population for the current learners was 65. There were 12 learners (who were not included in the 60 learners above) that were selected for this learner sub-group. These learners were chosen to represent the learner population with regard to issues pertaining

to scholastic ability before and after attending classes at KMEC. A purposive sampling technique was used to obtain this sample of 12 learners. This means that learners were selected purposely based on certain criteria. These criteria were the subjects done at KMEC and the learners' school phases. Only those learners who had been at the organization for a period of not less than six months were selected so that their progress at the organization could be meaningfully charted. This purposive sampling technique was used to enhance meaningful learner representation in the study. This sub-group excluded learners who had just joined the KMEC because they would not be able to provide meaningful data relating to pre and post tests since they would not have reached that level in the programme where testing could be done to gather such data. Therefore, based on the above criteria, the learner selection of the 12 learners is justified.

b) The parents of the 12 learners in the learner sub-group were selected for inclusion in the sample. These 24 (12 pairs) parents were selected from a population of 120 parents of the 60 learners represented in the first learner sample (60). They qualified for inclusion into the sample because they were the parents of the learners selected in the sub-group of 12 learners. There were no guardians or single parents in this sample. These parents were selected because as parents, they are the people who pay for the services that the KMEC offers their children. It is assumed that they would not spend their money if they were not getting any gains out of this type of investment. Having had their children at the KMEC for six months or more implied that they were benefiting from the organization, or else they would not be making use of its services. Therefore their input is vital to the study.

c) The 12 schoolteachers of the sub-group of 12 learners were selected because of their informed knowledge of the learner before and after attending classes at the KMEC. The 12 schoolteachers were selected out of a population of 65 schoolteachers who teach the 65 current KMEC learners. In this study there were 12 different schoolteachers who taught the sub-group of 12 learners who attend at the Newholmes KMEC. Input from these 12 schoolteachers provided data related to these learners' progress before and after attending classes at the organization.

d) The Newholmes KMEC tutors.

The sample consisted of four tutors who were drawn from the junior primary, senior primary and the high school phases. These four tutors were chosen out of a population of five tutors. These four tutors were chosen because they worked closely with and monitored the developments of the sub-group of 12 learners selected above. Therefore their feedback in relation to the 12 learners' overall progress at the KMEC was deemed vital in informing the study of how and why the organization was rendering an effective service.

This group of educational stakeholders therefore included: the learners (60 + 12), their parents (12 x 2), school teachers(12) and tutors (4) = 112 subjects. The total sample for educational stakeholders was 112 subjects.

**Group B - organizational stakeholders**

These stakeholders were able to provide information on the Newholmes KMEC as a business organization. They were selected because of their involvement either directly or indirectly, with the organization. The reason for their inclusion into the sample is provided below:

- a) The managing director of the organization was chosen because of his informed knowledge of how the organization was operating and doing business within the Newholmes community. His input into the growth, acceptance, sustainability, profitability and resource acquisition and usage of the Newholmes KMEC was vital to the effectiveness of the organization.
- b) The chairperson of the local rotary club in Pietermaritzburg was chosen because of his association with the organization and the active role he played in the community. Being the chairperson of the local rotary club allowed him to represent his organization in providing a perspective on how the Newholmes KMEC was viewed in the community.

- c) The secretary of the Parish Council in Raisethorpe was chosen because she was able to represent the large number of people who attend religious services there. As such, she was in an influential position since her perception of the organization was useful in ascertaining how the organization was viewed from a moral point of view. The role she played in the organization was therefore one of moral policing since via her association with the organization, she could provide her recommendation to the parishioners about the organization and the services it offered. Input from such a source informed the study of whether people saw the KMEC as a business where honesty and integrity were in operation or whether it was only there for the money.
- d) The psychologist whom the organization deals with was chosen because of her association with the organization. Since she has knowledge of the Newholmes KMEC and contact with other professionals who are rendering a similar service, her views on the organization were very valuable. Her input informed the study on how the other organization viewed the Newholmes KMEC.
- e) The financial manager at the bank where the Newholmes KMEC trades was chosen because of his association with the organization. He was in a position to verify the growth and profitability of the organization in financial terms. This input is valuable for ascertaining the effectiveness of the organization in terms of profitability.
- f) Ten housewives were chosen because they represent 50% of the average monthly clients who enroll their children at the organization. This means that on average, the organization attracts 20 clients on a monthly basis. Therefore these ten housewives were selected from a population of 20 housewives. How they regard the organization has an influence on the community because if they see that the KMEC is rendering an effective service, they will make use of it, should they be in need of it. This directly influences the organization's effectiveness because its effectiveness is also determined by whether it has enough clients to sustain it.

g) Ten school leavers were chosen because they represent 50% of the average monthly enrollments at the organization. These ten school leavers were chosen from a population of 20 school leavers. Being ex-scholars, these ten school leavers were able to provide input into the need for additional educational services and how such organizations that render these services are viewed. Acceptance of such an organization signals support of that organization and which would lead to more clients for the organization to continue its function in the community.

This sample therefore comprised:

- the managing director of the organization;
- the chairperson of the local rotary club in Pietermaritzburg;
- the secretary of the Parish Council in Raisethorpe;
- the psychologist whom the organization deals with;
- the financial manager at the bank where the organization trade;
- ten housewives from the community;
- ten school leavers from the community.

The total sample of stakeholders representing the organizational aspects of the Newholmes KMEC comprised 25 subjects.

### **Summary on sample selection**

This sample was crucial to the research and input from the various stakeholders above, was deemed vital in gauging perceptions about the perceived effectiveness of the organization under study. Lussier (1997:85) looked at the stakeholders' approach to human relations where one tries to create a win-win situation so that all parties benefit from the interactions within the organization.

In an attempt to involve all the major stakeholders from the Newholmes community, this study incorporated 112 educational stakeholders and 25 organizational stakeholders, making the total number of stakeholders comprise 137 subjects.

### **3.4 Research paradigms**

This study made use of the Newholmes KMEC as a single case study to explore what was contributing to the effectiveness of the Kip McGrath Education Centres in South Africa. The Newholmes KMEC represents one of the thirty-five similar organizations that are operating within the country, as indicated earlier in chapter one. The main source of data informing this study was perceptions from stakeholders. The study made use of both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms for gathering data. The choice of these paradigms is expanded below:

#### **3.4.1 The qualitative paradigm**

The current trend in research related to perception, focuses more on qualitative methods for data gathering (Cassell and Symons (1994); Croll and Hastings (1996). This qualitative focus is useful for process oriented research, whereby opinions of people within the organization are of significance in determining the major goals of the research. The opinion expressed by Roux (1998) was that there are many factors that may influence people's perceptions on any new education model, which have direct implications on its survival. In this study it was felt that by using qualitative methods such as interviews, the researcher would be able to gain more perceptions from the stakeholders than from quantitative methods only. According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:100), some properties of objects, persons or events cannot be quantified, especially in areas of social reality. Therefore using qualitative research is often the most suitable method of investigation. This proved to be the case for this study.

Likewise, Gummesson (1991:2) is of the opinion that qualitative methodology provides powerful tools for research in management and business administration because by using qualitative methods the borderline between the *academic researcher* and the *management consultant* becomes blurred. By using qualitative methods in business administration, there would be an improvement in the quality and usefulness of academic research. At the Newholmes KMEC, the data gathered from stakeholders, using qualitative measures proved adequate and useful in answering the research questions posed in this study.

In this study the qualitative method was useful for providing information to questions such as the following:

What makes the stakeholders support the organization? Are there certain reasons close to their heart that make these stakeholders come to this organization and stay on? These personal responses cannot be adequately captured in a questionnaire.

Similarly, the question on why do clients support the organization over different periods of the year? Those stakeholders who associate with the organization and have knowledge of the type of service that it offers, would be in a position to provide reasons why they dealt with the organization throughout the year. This support and association was crucial to the sustainability of the organization.

### **3.4.2 The quantitative paradigm**

The general opinion that exists is that the quantitative paradigm has more merits than the qualitative paradigm in organizational research (Bless and Higson-Smith:1995:100). The quantifiable data that it yields are important for many reasons. According to Hall (1982), these quantifiable data provide tangible measures of the effectiveness of an organization. For example, by looking at data on growth figures over a specific time period, one can read and interpret from these figures how the organization is doing. In the case of the Newholmes KMEC there seems to be clearly visible signs in terms of business growth and profit. Such data are best captured through quantitative methods.

In this study the quantitative method was useful for providing information to the questions such as the following: The question related to growth of the organization needs

data such as figures (numerical evidence) to justify the organization's ability to grow in a significant way since its inception. Similarly, to gain answers to the profitability of the organization, figures pertaining to income, expenses and profits are needed to justify the organization's profit.

In the case of the improvement of the students' scholastic ability, the symbols and marks from the report cards are needed to justify such scholastic improvement. Furthermore, with regard to the question on resources, the stakeholders' responses to the resource provisioning could be quantified so that a consensus could be arrived at to determine the general perception of the stakeholders to this provisioning.

While acknowledging the value, use and limitations of the qualitative and quantitative methods, this study combined both methods for gathering data related to the different research questions. The combination of these methods proved effective in addressing the research questions posed in this study.

### **3.5 Research Techniques and Tools**

The following research tools and techniques were used in this study:

#### **3.5.1 Research Techniques**

In most social science research, the researcher is dependent on the researched individual for primarily gathering information pertaining to a situation. In order to gather this information effectively the researcher needs to know which tools to use and how to administer them so as to gain the most appropriate data. The techniques employed in this study included interviewing, questioning and observing. These are presented below:



### **3.5.1.1 Interviewing**

Much of the information required to address specific research questions was predominantly of a descriptive nature e.g., the questions concerning the organizational environment, organizational resources, views related to the learners' progress and the stakeholders' recommendation of the organization. Such data are of a qualitative nature and a technique such as interviewing is useful in gathering such information.

Using interviewing as a research technique has immense value in gathering first-hand information on the perceptions that stakeholders hold on the organization. Fletcher (1996) indicates that the effective interview is able to capture much more than the word, since the tone and feelings associated with what is being said are also vital clues towards how people perceive something or someone. Similarly, Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:100) note that those interviewed are free to expand on the topic and to relate their own experiences as they see fit. This is particularly important in gathering data related to perceptions, as is the case in this study.

The disadvantage of interviewing is that the researcher needs to be very skilled in applying this technique so that the required responses may be elicited from the respondents. Another disadvantage is that the respondents may say things to impress the researcher, which may deviate from the reality of the situation. However, to guard against this tendency, the researcher can use other techniques or tools to gather data to validate the respondents' claims.

Having interviewed participants before for similar feedback, the researcher felt that the first disadvantage mentioned above did not seriously affect the results of the study. Neither did the second disadvantage pose a problem because of the other techniques used in this study to collect similar data. For example, in the case at the Newholmes KMEC,

documentation was used as a measure of triangulation to substantiate the director's claims on the organization's ability to grow over the years.

### **3.5.2.2 Questioning**

The use of questioning in research is very valuable in data gathering. Questionnaires are often used in research settings because it is very easy to collect a lot of information related to specific questions within a relatively short space of time. Kisko and Iversun (1989) provide a comprehensive guide to questioning. They see questioning as an art, which, when implemented well, can result in very desirable effects. A carefully phrased question can elicit a lot of information from the participants and provide precise answers to the research questions. The strength of questioning therefore lies in implementing it properly. In this study questioning was used quite frequently, mainly because of the nature of the research, that is, to elicit responses from the stakeholders regarding their views on the organization under study.

### **3.5.2.3 Observing**

Observing can be seen as an inappropriate technique where the participants in the setting are mindful of an outsider. Knowledge of the fact that they are being watched can result in the participants manifesting behaviour that deviates from their normal behaviour. This manifested behaviour can seriously hamper the results of any research. Measor and Woods (1991) made much use of site observation in their research. They found that in educational settings, such as in this study, after repeated contact with the children, they become immune to the researchers' presence and go about their daily tasks as if there is no one there. This seemed to be the case in this study because prior to site observation, the researcher was on site perusing documentation. This had given the children enough time to get used to and accept the researcher's presence there.

### **3.5.2 Research Tools**

The construction of a research tool needs great skill in order for the researcher to be able to administer it effectively and gather sufficient data to proceed with the study. For the purpose of this study, interview schedules, questionnaires and observation schedules were used. These are expanded on below:

#### **3.5.2.1 Interview schedules**

In the study, semi-structured interview schedules with open-ended questions were used. This tool was used because it is the most structured way of getting information directly from respondents. Fletcher (1996:19) says that the interviewer's main instrument of investigation and control is the carefully phrased question. This is so because the person asking the most questions, not only controls the exchange but also learns the most from it. Therefore the data from these tools were able to provide precise answers to the research questions while still preserving the rich qualitative content that interviews lend themselves to. In this way it was able to enhance the value of the study.

In this study semi-structured interview schedules were used to gather data from:

- the managing director:- regarding the growth of the organization, the resource selection and use, the community's perception of the organization and his perception of the organization as a profitable business venture;
- the sub-group of 12 learners:- regarding their stay at the organization, how they were benefiting from attending classes there, how the tuition was impacting on their scholastic achievement and whether they would recommend the organization to their friends;
- local community members such as the chairman of the local rotary club, the secretary of the local parish, the local educational psychologist and the local bank manager:

They were asked questions related to their knowledge of the organization, their opinions of it, how other members viewed the organization, and their relationship with the organization.

By using this tool, the researcher felt that the information gathered was of such a rich descriptive nature that the questionnaire could not have done justice to the deep insights that were gained from the interviewing process. In total there were 17 interviewees.

### **3.5.2.2 Questionnaires**

Structured questionnaires were used in this study. This type of questionnaire served the purpose of collecting large amounts of information from the respondents in a relatively quick and objective measure. In this study questionnaires were used for the larger samples where the number of participants were 10 and more. The one exception was in the case of the 4 tutors who were asked to fill in a questionnaire. These tutors were also observed in the research setting. However, although no formal interview took place, there was an exchange of conversation between the tutors and the researcher.

Questionnaires also have the added advantages of being quick and easy to administer. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:122) note that questionnaires tend to restrict the number of possible answers. Data offer easy comparison and quantification. In this study most of the questions were compiled using the 5-point Likert scale. This scale was used because of the wide range of possible answers that a rating scale offers and the ease in interpreting respondent answers.

The questionnaires were administered to the following participants to gather the following data:

- the first learner sample of 60 participants were asked questions related to the resources of the organization and how they were benefiting from it;

- the 24 parent participants were asked questions related to the organization, resources and support;
- the 12 school teacher participants were asked questions related to the organization, the learners' performance, service delivery and support by the community;
- the 4 tutor participants were asked questions related to the organization, resources, and community support;
- the 10 school leaver participants were asked questions related to the organization, service delivery and support by the community;
- the 10 housewife participants were asked questions related to the organization, service delivery and support by the community.

The researcher chose to use questionnaires to gather information from the above group as opposed to using interview schedules or any other tool, because of the inherent advantages to be gained from gathering data within a relatively short time from a large group. In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, there were 120 participants who completed questionnaires.

### **3.5.2.3 Observation schedules**

In this study, the site observation was conducted over a period of two weeks. Simple non-participant observation was used to record events at the Newholmes KMEC. The researcher kept a journal of the classroom resources and interactions. This classroom resource information as well as the interactions served to enrich the researcher's understanding of the organization and how it operates.

The researcher acknowledges the inherent bias in using this method, i.e. the fact that participants were aware of the fact that they were being observed, could have influenced their normal behaviour in that setting. However, especially in the case of the learners, the fact that the researcher was in the setting for two weeks allowed them to see her as part of

the group. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995: 105) state that to avoid the interference with the observed person, the researcher can join the group as one of its members. In this study the researcher tried to assimilate the culture of the observed group by becoming indirectly involved with the activities in the organization, such as helping the MD with certain administrative forms.

Since the research question related to how the resources available were being used to make the organization effective, the classroom observation schedule therefore focused on the way in which the sessions were conducted, how interactions took place and what kinds of interactions took place. The results from this classroom observation schedule gave the researcher an impression of the general teaching and learning atmosphere at the organization as some factors contributing towards the organization's perceived effectiveness.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedures**

#### **3.6.1 Negotiating access and collecting data from the research site**

Gaining access into a potential research site is not simply confined to the drafting and forwarding of a permission letter to the proposed research site. It requires permeating the ethos and culture of that site. This is by no means an easy task. Measor and Woods (1991:64) state that gaining access is not confined to the physical access only, it involves the issue of building trust and developing relationships.

The researcher needs to permeate the culture of the organization and be seen as part of it, because according to Apple (1996), educational research is a theoretical social practice to find the truth about the workings of educational institutions. Similarly, Giddens (1991), add that sociological research tries to contribute to our understanding of why events happen as they do, rather than simply accepting them at face value.

In this study the researcher sought answers to what factors contributes to the perceived effectiveness of the Newholmes KMEC since the researcher was a tutor at another centre where it was observed that the KMEC as an organization appeared to be rendering an effective service. The fact that the researcher was aware of this organization, does not affect the results because the focus of this study was on stakeholders' views which were supported by documentation. Informants were not aware of the researchers' position within the organization and therefore their responses could not have been adversely affected the purpose of the research.

Since most of the research was done at the organization under study, this meant that those within the Newholmes KMEC had to share their space with the researcher. Especially in the case of the learners, this meant accepting the researcher as a part of the group. To this end the researcher outlined the purpose of her stay and tried to win the confidence of the learners by showing interest in their work, etc,. Fortunately, there appeared to be no visible signs of fear or invasion of privacy on the part of the children. The one factor beyond the researcher's control was in the case of the tutors who were conscious of the researcher's presence and intentions. Their responses to the inquiry could create an unavoidable bias in the study. However, the researcher had fully explained to the tutors that the purpose of the study was on organizational effectiveness rather than the evaluation of the tutors or their teaching. Therefore there appeared to be an acceptance from the tutors side as well.

Collecting data from the research site took two weeks. The researcher focused on available resources and how they were being used to promote the organization's effectiveness. In addition, the way in which the participants within the organization interacted with each other and with the resources provided the researcher with data related to how an organization that is sufficiently resourced is able to undertake its task and fulfill its functions.

### **3.6.2 Gathering data from documentation**

With regard to handling an organization's documentation Cassell and Symon (1994) advocate quantitative methods in organizational research. They state that these varied documentary records constitute a rich source of insights into different individual and group interpretation of organizational life. These quantitative data are often more comprehensive than data from either interviews or questionnaires. Furthermore, this information is already collected and therefore makes the researcher's task easier.

The data gathered from the Newholmes KMEC were collected from the organization's database. These data related to growth and profits within the organization and were analyzed in terms of student enrollments and profit margins. These data are represented in graphs in chapter four.

### **3.6.3 Collecting data from interviews**

The data from the interviews with the 17 stakeholders indicated earlier in this chapter, were relatively easy to collect because the researcher did all the interviewing. The researcher had some guiding questions for the interviewees (as found in the Appendix J to O) and also took notes during the interview process. These qualitative data were later made into transcripts and used to answer the research questions.

### **3.6.4 Collecting data from questionnaires**

The questionnaires were administered to the 120 educational stakeholders at the research site, the schools and parent's homes as indicated earlier in this chapter. The parents, tutors and schoolteachers were given one week to fill in the questionnaires.

Many of the respondents were able to fill in the questionnaires with relative ease and handed them back to the Newholmes KMEC timeously. These questionnaires were



handed to the researcher. Only one parent failed to hand in the questionnaire on time. The reason given was that he was busy studying for his examinations and could therefore not complete it timeously. However, he later made a concerted effort to hand in the completed questionnaire to the researcher.

In the case of the schoolteachers, seven out of twelve questionnaires were handed to the researcher a week later. These schoolteachers indicated that they had many pressing commitments to meet, most of them school related, while some included ill health and other personal commitment.

In the case of the 60 learners, most of them were in the primary school and some were too young to fill in a written questionnaire. Therefore the researcher administered the questionnaire to them verbally at the research site. This was done on an individual basis and took two weeks to complete.

The questionnaires handed to the school leavers were favourably received. Most of the school leavers came from a social club. The non-club participants were living close to the Newholmes KMEC and were in a position to comment on the organization under study. Collecting the questionnaires from the social club members was easy because they all meet regularly at the club. Similarly, the non-club members were living close the Newholmes KMEC and at the time of completing the questionnaire, most of them were at home and had the information ready for the researcher.

The questionnaires handed to the housewives were favourably received. Most of the housewives came from a woman's group and the researcher administered these questionnaires to the group. The other housewives participants were living close to the Newholmes KMEC and all respondents returned the questionnaires to the organization where the researcher collected them.

All the questionnaires were returned to the researcher and the full sample was represented in the findings.

### 3.7 Data analysis

#### 3.7.1 Background information on stakeholders

For Cassell and Symon (1994:187) stakeholder analysis can be described as a research approach to any phenomenon of interest where a number of 'stakeholders' affect or are affected by experience conceptualized in it. Stakeholder analysis proceeds by identifying some, many or all of these stakeholders and collects data about their actions, perceptions, behaviours, experiences and thoughts in relation to the phenomenon. This was the case in the Newholmes KMEC where all the stakeholders' views, experiences and thoughts about the organization were captured through relevant tools and techniques.

The background information of these stakeholders was gathered from part one (personal details) of the questionnaires and interview schedules that the respondents had to complete. These are presented below:

##### Learner profiles (a)

1. gender	Female = 24      Male =36
2. age category	6-9yrs = 16; 10-12yrs = 26; 13-15yrs=9; 16-18yrs=9
3. grades	G1-3 = 16; G 4-7 =26; G8-9 =9; G10 =9
4.subject/s	English =24; Maths = 19; English+Maths= 17
5.school	private = 3; urban = 35; peri-urban = 20; rural = 2

- a) The first sample comprising the annual average of the learners from the Newholmes KMEC was made up of sixty learners. From all the learners selected in this sample, there were 52 Indian learners and 8 Black learners. From the above, there were more boys (36) than girls (24) who were attending classes at the Newholmes KMEC; most of them were in the senior primary phase of school and were experiencing problems

in English. Most of these learners were Indian and came from in and around the Newholmes community.

The second group of learners comprise the sub-group of 12 learners. All were Indian because one of the selection criteria included learners who were at the organization for longer than 6 months. This indicates that there were no Black learners who were at the organization for longer than six months during the time of the research. The table below provides further insight into these learners.

#### **Learner profiles (b)**

1. gender	3 males and 9 females
2. age	7 years to 16 years
3. grade	grade 1 to grade 10
4. subject/s done at KMEC	7 English and 5 Maths

There are more females (9) than males (3) in the second learner sample. In the selection of this sample there were more females who were on the programme for over 6 months than males. This indicated that more girls came for tuition than boys in both subjects. There were more English students (7) than Maths students (5). This is a possible indicator that there appears to be a greater demand for English tutoring than Maths.

#### **Parent Profiles**

1. Marital status	married = 24	divorced = 0	widowed = 0	single = 0
2 No of children	one = 6	two = 1	three = 4	four = 1
3. Age category	21-30yrs = 1	31-40 yrs = 20	41-50 yrs = 3	51-60 yrs = 0

Of the twenty-four parents (two for each learner) of the twelve learners included in the sample there were no divorced, widowed or single parents. The majority of the parents were young (31 to 40 years) and most of them had only one child. All the 12 fathers were formally employed and while 11 mothers were formally employed, one was informally employed.

This background information informs the study that the most of the parents were working at the time of the research and were in a position to send their children for extra tuition. Furthermore, the fact that all these learners have both parents living together, seems to indicate that they come from a relatively stable family background.

### **School teacher profiles**

	Primary school	Primary school	High school	High school
1. gender	7 Females	2 Males	2 Females	1 Male
2. age category	21-30yrs=2; 31-40 =5	31-40yrs=1; 41-50yrs =1	31-40yrs=2	21-30yrs =1
3.grade taught	Jun Primary =2 Sen Primary=5	Sen Primary=2	Jun Sec = 2	Jun Sec = 1
4.subject taught	English=5; Maths=2	Maths = 2	English = 2	Maths = 1

There were nine female teachers and three male teachers in the sample. These twelve teachers teach the twelve learners selected in the sample. The average age of the teachers was between 31 to 40 years. More female teachers (7) taught at primary school than at high school (2). More female teachers taught English (7) while more male teachers taught Maths (3). From this sample it appears that more males teach Maths than English and more females are likely to be found at primary school.

## Tutor Profiles

<i>Category</i>	<i>Tutor one</i>	<i>Tutor two</i>	<i>Tutor three</i>	<i>Tutor four</i>
1. gender	Female	Male	Female	Male
2. age category	51+yrs	51+yrs	21-30yrs	51+yrs
3. phase/s tutored	Junior	Sen. Prim	Jun.Sec	Sen Sec
4.subject/s tutored	English	English+Maths	English	Maths
5. qualification	M4	M4	BA, Hed	NtcSped BA,BSc,BEd
6.teaching experience	32 years	37 years	8 years	32 years

Of the four tutors in the sample, 2 were males and 2 were females. Three tutors were aged above 51 years and one was aged between 21 to 30 years. Two tutors tutored English, one tutored Maths and one tutored both subjects. These tutors were selected because they teach the twelve learners selected in the second learner sample. From the academic records of the tutors, all were both professionally and academically qualified. The average teaching experience was 28 years.

## School leaver profiles

Gender	Females = 6	Males = 4
Age group	18-21yrs=4; 22-25 yrs =2	18-21 yrs = 1; 22-25 yrs =3
Std completed	Matric = 6	Matric = 4
Current status	Student=4;employed=1;unemployed= 1	Student=2;employed=0;unemployed = 2

For the sample of school leavers the 10 selected were all matriculants between the ages of 18 and 25 years. There were more females (6) than males (4) in this sample. There were more females studying or working than males.

### **Housewives' profiles**

Age group	20+ = 1	30+=4	40+= 3	50+=2
Average number of children	1	2	3	4
Children's average age	3	9	14	23

The 10 housewives selected in the sample were between the ages of 20 and 60. The majority (70%) were aged between 30 and 40 years. The average number of children that each housewife had was three, with the average age of the child being 12 years. This indicated that the housewives were relatively young and had small families.

### **Managing Director**

The managing director (MD) was involved in the organization since 1999 as a tutor and in April 2000 took over as the MD. He had a wealth of experience in teaching and management from his previous employment. He was also a resident of the local community, had taught at one of the local high school and was an active member in his religious organization. He therefore knew the community well. This gave him the added benefit of working in a community where he was also a member. Therefore it seems that the way in which he deals with the community will have a significant effect on the perception that community members have of the Newholmes KMEC.

### **Chairman of the local rotary club**

The chairman of the rotary club was selected because his organization comprises the professionals within the Newholmes community. Therefore his views on the Newholmes KMEC could be representative of the professional body within Newholmes.

### **Secretary of the local parish**

The secretary of the local parish was chosen because the parish is the biggest church gathering in the community. Therefore input from the parish secretary could be representative of how the parishioners at Newholmes view the organization.

### **Local psychologist**

The local psychologist was selected because she deals with the Newholmes KMEC and other related professionals. Her views on the Newholmes KMEC as an educational centre are important in providing the study with a perspective on the organization from other related professional organizations.

### **Bank manager**

The bank manager was selected because his knowledge of the organization from a business perspective was able to provide data on the profitability of the Newholmes KMEC.

All these stakeholders above were crucial to the general perception of the Newholmes KMEC as an organization that appears to be functioning effectively and efficiently.

## **3. 7.2 Data analysis of the indicators of effectiveness**

The responses to the five indicators of effectiveness mentioned earlier in chapter one were captured and analyzed thus:

Responses to the question on the ability of the organization to function and grow were collected from the managing director of the Newholmes KMEC, using an interview

schedule. Data gathered were put into a transcript and used to answer the research question related to growth of the organization. The data yielded significant results on what contributed to the growth of the organization. . These are expanded on in the next chapter. Similarly, the growth figures in terms of student enrollments indicated growth. These are represented in a graph in the next chapter. There were no known limitations of using the interview schedule with the managing director and the data proved sufficient to answer the research question on the growth of the organization.

Responses to the question on resources were collected from the managing director, the learners, their parents, the tutors and an observation schedule. Data from the managing director were collected using an interview schedule, data from the learners were collected using a questionnaire, and data from the tutors were collected using a questionnaire. The observation schedule was used to collect data on the resources of the organization and how they influenced the interactions that took place within it. The data yielded that the organization had sufficient resources that were being used adequately to maximize the students' learning. There were no limitations in using the tools and techniques to acquire the data from these sources. The data were sufficient to answer the research question related to resources.

Responses to the question on sustainability of the organization were collected from the learners and their parents, the tutors and schoolteachers and documentation. Such data were collected through the use of questionnaires. Data collected from documentary sources were through existing records in the organization as well as school reports from learners. Data were also collected from the sample of twelve learners through interview schedules. The data yielded that the organization was able to sustain itself because of a combination of the various organizational structures that were in place at the Newholmes KMEC. These are expanded on in the next chapter. There were no major limitations in gathering data. The data collected were adequate to analyze and answer the research question based on the sustainability of the organization.



Responses to the question on the acceptance and support of the organization were collected from the various members from the community which included the social club representative, the religious organization representative, the psychologist, as well as representatives from the school leavers and the local housewives. Data from the social club representative, the religious organization representative and the psychologist were collected through the use of interview schedules. Data from the school leavers and the local housewives were collected through the use of questionnaires. There were no major limitations in administering these tools, except for the fact that these stakeholders handed the completed questionnaires, in sealed envelopes to the organization where the researcher collected them from the director. The data yielded sufficient information to analyze and answer the research question related to the acceptance and support of the organization.

Responses to the question on the profit making ability of the organization were collected from the managing director, the bank manager with whom the organization trades and through documentation. Data were collected from the two stakeholders above using interview schedules. Documentation related to profits was collected from the organization's database. There were no limitations using the tools and techniques to gather the data. The data were analyzed to answer the research question on the profitability of the organization and is represented in a graph in the next chapter.

The data analysis yielded adequate answers to the various research questions posed in chapter one of this study, indicating that the methodology employed was adequate for the study.

### **3.8 Summary**

The research methodology used in this study made use of the qualitative and qualitative paradigms. This was so because both paradigms were useful in informing and enriching the study. The techniques and tools used incorporated interviews, questionnaires, site

observation and documentary reviews. These were found to be adequate in providing the researcher with answers to the research questions.

The data collection procedures included collecting data from the interviewees in their various locations, collecting data from site observations within the research setting and collecting questionnaires from the research site, the schools and parent's homes. It also involved collecting information from the organization's database regarding the growth of the organization in terms of student enrollments for determining profit margins.

Although the collection of data was relatively smooth, one limiting factor was the time period: not all questionnaires were returned to the organization within the indicated time frames. This is to be expected especially when administering questionnaires. The collection of data from the other sources was did not handicap the research in any way.

The data analysis procedures used included: transcribing and selecting relevant information from the interview transcripts and questionnaires based on the research questions; formulating graphs and charts based on the organization's resources: sorting out growth and profit figures gathered from documentation and site observation. From the data analysis, the researcher was able to confidently answer the various research questions posed in chapter one of this study. The next chapter presents the results of the findings from this study.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Presentation of Results**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents results of the data analyzed. While this study draws on the perception of various stakeholders ranging from educational representatives to non-educational representatives, it does not attempt to undertake an evaluation of the organization or to compare it with other similar organizations. It simply examines the perceptions that key informants have on the Newholmes KMEC in their community.

As Bertram (1999:5) points out that to embark on any evaluative study will be presumptuous because the impact of any organization can only be evaluated against the specific aims that it sets out for itself. Therefore this study is useful in providing perceptions of the Newholmes KMEC as an organization that appears to be effective, rather than embarking on an evaluation of the organization per se.

This chapter provides the meaning of these data as pertaining to perceptions on the Newholmes KMEC, based on the indicators of effectiveness as outlined in chapter one. These are presented below:

#### **4.2 Indicators of effectiveness**

The five indicators of effectiveness used in this study are presented below:

##### **4.2.1 The ability of an organization to function and grow as an indicator of organizational effectiveness.**

The ability of an organization to function and grow is an indicator of organizational effectiveness. Accordingly, the managing director (MD) was asked to verify assumptions

on this indicator. His response was verified with documentary sources. These are presented below:

***a) The managing director's response to the growth of the organization***

When asked to explain the growth of the organization in terms of enrollments, the MD provided the following background information:

He said that since establishing the organization in January 1999, there had been a steady increase in enrollments from primary and high school learners. There was an average monthly enrollment of 40 learners for 1999 and 2000. (These figures are later verified with the organization's documentary sources.) The MD indicated that in April 2000, the management changed hands because the first MD set up another centre in the neighbouring district. The MD indicated that he saw this geographical expansion as a response to the community's increased confidence in the organization.

When asked to explain what is contributing to this growth, the MD indicated that the primary purpose of the organization was on getting the 'basics' right for the learners. His opinion was that this was a significant factor that drew parents to the organization. The MD said:

*Parents who come to us say that they are very disillusioned with what is happening in their schools. When these parents enroll their children at our centres, they can see progress within a very short space of time. They spread the word to other parents in the community and as a result we get many parent referrals (MD, p2,2000).*

Literature informed this study that there is a significant correlation between effective delivery of service and response from clients. Is the organization's focus on getting the 'basics' right that is attracting clients to the organization? Owens (1987:31) is of the opinion that, of the five basic assumptions of effective schools, the primary one is 'to teach'. He says that success is measured by the students' progress in knowledge, skills

and attitudes (Ibid: 31). The implication is that if an organization is able to fulfill its primary goal i.e. to get the basics right, then it will have support from its clients. This element of client support is vital to the growth and development of any organization. At the Newholmes KMEC, the MD's perception is that the organization is doing something to enable learners to get the basics right. This perception is verified by other stakeholders later on in this chapter.

When asked on the public's perception of the organization, the MD indicated that this group's perception of the organization was very positive. The reason given was the numerical growth within the organization. This growth means that clients are happy with what is being done and are therefore supporting the organization. The MD did however, express the opinion that the affordability factor is a barrier for some potential clients. He did not see this barrier as impacting negatively on the organization because the organization is still enjoying a steady growth rate.

When asked whether he thought that the public support is a significant factor contributing to Newholmes KMEC growth in the community, the MD said that with regard to the learners, they appear to be very happy to come to the sessions. He said that there are many cases where thank you notes were sent in to the tutors from the parents (see Appendix c).

The MD also indicated that the schoolteachers who have had KMEC learners in their classes had acknowledged via notes and personal calls that there is a big boost in the KMEC learners' self-confidence. This perception is verified later in this chapter by the schoolteachers themselves.

When asked about the community's response to the services that the Newholmes KMEC offer, the MD indicated that there had also been numerous requests from the Newholmes community for assistance in other subjects as well, especially in the high school phase.

The MD said:

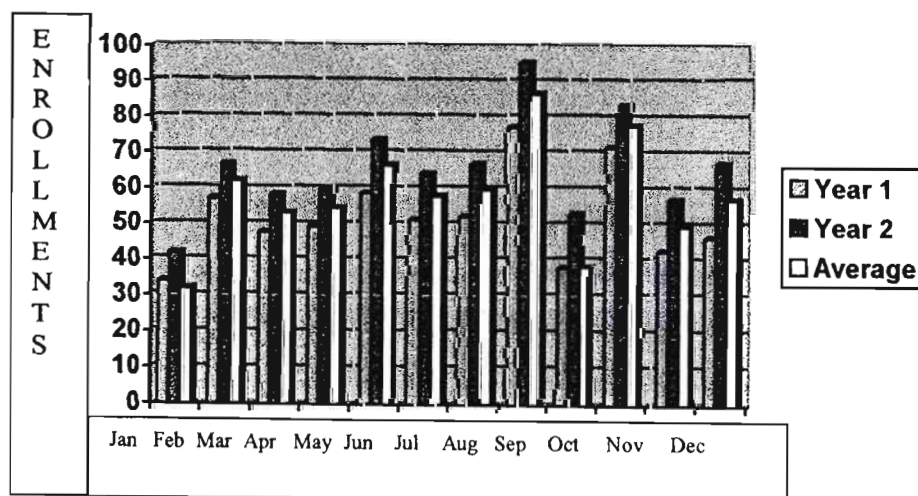
*This for me implies that the community values what we do and would like to see us extend our services to meet other needs that their children have. I have also had requests to assist children with special needs. They come to us because they see that we have the resources to offer such services (MD, p2, 2000).*

The image that an organization creates within the community is an indicator of its effectiveness. Tsang and Wheeler (1993) cited in Harber and Davies (1997: 126), report that school effectiveness is all about being accountable, providing value for money and using human and material resources to maximum effect. This indicates that if an organization is perceived to be doing these vital things, it will also be perceived to be effective. If the Newholmes public perceive that they are getting their 'value for money', then they will associate the organization as effective and therefore want to use the services of the Newholmes KMEC. This appears to be the case at the Newholmes KMEC as the client base shows growth over time.

### Documentary sources related to growth

Documentation from the organization related to growth in terms of student enrollments for the period January 1999 to January 2001 are represented in the graph below in terms of the average monthly enrollment and is depicted as percentages.

**Fig 1: Growth in terms of enrollment figures at the Newholmes KMEC**



The steady growth depicted on the graph reached a peak in the eighth month and dropped in the ninth month. The explanation given by the MD was the third term holiday period. This indicates that most learners attend classes from January through to August and then have a break before the beginning of the fourth term at the Newholmes KMEC.

The quiet periods are during the December and January period, which the MD explained is also a holiday period. The Newholmes KMEC closes for the December/January holidays for three weeks and again for the July holidays, for one week. The MD said that this did not adversely affect the organization's operations as learners normally do make up lessons for these holiday periods.

On average, the organization appeared to be enjoying a relatively good growth as depicted by the positively skewed distribution of this graph. This means that the way in which the organization is developing is in line with the way in which businesses operate and grow. The quiet periods are made up for by allowing learners to do catch-up lesson. This strategy allows the Newholmes KMEC to sustain itself financially.

## **Summary**

Based on the critical research question of organizational growth, there exists a strong correlation between what the MD said and the documentary sources. Both confirm that the Newholmes KMEC is growing steadily while appearing to be functioning effectively.

### **4.2.2 The ability of an organization to acquire and utilize resources contributes to its effectiveness**

The ability of an organization to acquire and utilize resources can be seen as a factor that contributes to its effectiveness. The stakeholders whose responses were sought after were: the managing director, the tutors, the learners and their parents. Perceptions from these subjects are documented below. The findings from site observation are also discussed in this section.

## **Perceptions from the managing director regarding resources**

The questions posed to the MD were whether it was relatively easy for the organization to acquire and use resources, how these resources were acquired and whether these resources contribute to the effectiveness of the organization. His responses are presented below:

### **Acquisition**

In response to the question on the acquisition of resources such as physical and human resources, the MD said that it is very easy to acquire these resources:

*I would say that the resources are just a phone call away and because of the abundance of resources, there is no problem in using them. This helps us to do our job very effectively (MD,p4, 2000).*

This indicates that the Newholmes KMEC did not have any problems in acquiring resources, thus enabling the organization to carry out its tasks effectively.

### **Physical resources**

In response to the question of how the physical resources were acquired, the MD said that all the physical resources were acquired locally from the community. In response to the question of the extent to which the MD enlisted the services of the local community, the MD said that all the fittings, fixtures alarm system etc. were installed by members of the local community. The MD said:

*We feel that we ought to support our local community. The advantage for us is that if there needs to be repairs, then we can rely on the support of these people as well. This makes for good business sense and is excellent for brand building (MD, p4,2000).*



This indicates that the members of the local community were instrumental in helping the Newholmes KMEC acquire physical resources to establish its centre.

### **Human resources**

In response to the question on the ways in which the human resources have contributed towards the growth and profitability of the organization, the MD said that he attributes the community's confidence in the organization largely to the human resources that come from the local community. For example, with regard to the tutors, 85% of them are retired teachers who are actively employed in the community.

The MD also indicated that there were numerous success stories from parents about the tutors' excellent work. He indicated that by utilizing the human resources from the local community, the organization benefits because the community's perception of these resources is good. The MD indicated that the positive perception that the community has of the organization is largely due to the delivery of service that these tutors render. This builds the community's confidence in the organization's effectiveness.

Literature (Ford,1998; Lussier, 1997; Paisey; 1981 et al.) informed this study that resources can be categorized as internal and external resources. The internal resources are acquired through ownership (such as material resources) while the external resources constitute the relationship counterparts. Ford (1998) expressed the view regarding the relationship between resources and the organization in the following way:

*The better the organization's view of its relationships and the ways it manages them, the better are its chances of accessing and mobilizing resources that are outside the direct control of the company. These external resources are a major factor in a company's effectiveness and efficiency (p.94).*

In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, the human resources appear to be influencing the effectiveness of the organization.

### **Material resources**

In response to the question on the material resources at Newholmes KMEC, the MD was asked whether he saw it as a significant factor contributing towards the sustainability and growth of the organization. The MD responded by saying:

*Because of the materials that we have, our organization can do the job properly. Tutors are trained on how to use these materials effectively. We also have testing materials that are very reliable and valid. There are parents who go to other organizations and/or individuals for second and even third opinions and are happy with our results. They do not hesitate to enroll their children (MD,p5, 2000).*

Adequate material resources seem to enhance the effectiveness of the organization. However, while comparative effectiveness studies in developing countries showed that there is no agreement on factors pertaining to effectiveness, Reynolds (1994), cited in Harberand Davies, (1997:34) reported that the highest consensus related to effectiveness was around 'specific material inputs'. This means that when there are specific and essential material resources that are put to adequate usage, then the organization is able to perform effectively. This finding indicates that learning materials do play an important role in organizational effectiveness.

Where an organization makes use of teaching and learning resources with an updated technological focus, clients tend to show an attraction to it. The main reason for this attraction according to Reynolds (ibid:34), is that clients want to participate in an organization that is providing them with material that is not obsolete but current and relevant. The Newholmes KMEC appears to be doing this by providing the clients with materials resources that are regularly updated. This ensures the organization of a constant

client base. At the Newholmes KMEC, this appears to be the case.

According to the MD, the Newholmes KMEC has the capacity in terms of resources, to adequately meet the demands of the clients for technologically superior material resources, adequately skilled human resources and quality physical resources. These combined resources seem to enable the organization to provide effective services that in turn enhance its growth and sustainability.

### **Perceptions from the tutors regarding resources**

Tutors were asked to comment on their perception of how the Newholmes KMEC's ability to acquire and utilize resources influences its effectiveness. The tutors attributed the following basic features to the effectiveness of the organization:- the computers, the learning materials and the customized furniture such as the desks and chairs. They indicated that all enhance the environment, making it very conducive to learning.

Other features also listed by the tutors include the neat, clean classrooms and the colourful charts on the walls as well as having a reception area with games and puzzles to constructively engage the children. These help to create a relaxed and friendly atmosphere in which the learners and the tutors can interact meaningfully.

Regarding the classroom design of the organization, one of the tutors had the following comments:

*They are very suitable and conducive to learning. The classroom is designed and enhanced with bright pictures and other positive learning resources which is very different from the normal school classrooms. Learners here work within a colourful and mind-setting atmosphere which prepares them for constructive and creative work (T1,p1, 2000).*

Another tutor saw the classrooms as constructive. He said:

*They are refreshing because they deviate from the monotonous 'norm' in*

*the school classrooms which many learners see as very stressful .*

*The creation of a totally different environment stimulates relaxation which can only have a positive effect on progress. (T2,p1,2000).*

This indicates that factors such as classroom design and stimulating environments appear to enhance student learning at the Newholmes KMEC.

Results from international case studies on effective schools reveal similar findings. One study worthy of note is the Columbia New School programme (Colbert et al., 1993 cited in Harber and Davies, 1997: 55) where the expressed goals of the school were to promote active learning. The curriculum aimed at promoting 'active and reflective learning, the ability to think, analyze, investigate, create, apply knowledge and improve children's self esteem'. It was found that with such a curriculum, the working climate of both staff and students was better and more constructive than the previous curriculum that did not cater for such active and reflective learning to take place.

These studies point towards creating a conducive learning environment to develop positive relationships in the classroom and to promote active and reflective learning. The tutors at Newholmes KMEC seem to think that the conducive learning environment, coupled with the quality learning resources is a factor that is promoting students' learning and consequently popularity of the organization.

### **Perceptions from the learners regarding resources**

The Newholmes KMEC's services are aimed at the learners. The learners' inputs are therefore vital because they are the main users of the resources that the organization has. These learners were asked questions on their perception of the resources of the organization. The results are examined below:

When asked about what they liked about the Newholmes KMEC, all the learners mentioned the following resources as the best and most enjoyable: computers, games and

worksheets. Many learners (45%) indicated that the tutors were also very good and effective because they were readily available to help as soon as there was a problem. This indicates that help was readily available to the learners.

From what learners said, it seems that they like learning at this organization, possibly because of the quality and quantity of the resources that the organization has to offer them.

The link between motivation and enjoyment is a close knit. According to Croll and Hastings (1996), if a learner enjoys doing something, the motivation to carry out that task will be high. This has a significant effect on the quality of the completed task as well as the cognitive skills that go into the learning and understanding process of that task.

It would therefore imply that the learners at the Newholmes KMEC are benefiting in this way due to the availability of learning and human resources.

When asked what they liked best at the Newholmes KMEC, all the learners indicated that they enjoy the games on the computer. These games, according to the KMEC Manual, (1996-2001), are of an educational nature and are designed to develop the learners' skills in speed, accuracy, visual and auditory discrimination. Thus it seems that learners are learning even while playing.

Knox (1995) mentions the aspect of holistic development within the child from an early age so that s/he can grow and develop into a well-integrated and balanced young person. Learning ought not to be a cognitive activity alone because all the other dimensions of the human being need to be awaked in order for the process of meaningful learning to take place.

From the responses of learners, it appears that the motivation to successfully complete a task, which is both non-competitive and non-threatening in nature, has a great reward in itself. Thus, learners at the Newholmes KMEC appear to be benefiting from the quality and quantity of resources made available to them. These resources appear to be put to

maximum use in order to facilitate learners' academic progress while simultaneously heightening their aesthetic awareness and enjoyment.

### **Perceptions from the parents regarding resources**

Parents were asked their opinions regarding the resources of the organization. Their responses are presented below:

With regard to the physical resources, parents were impressed with the layout of the organization. Of particular note was the reception area and the spacious classrooms. Parents indicated that their children enjoyed playing games and puzzles in these surroundings so much so that they were reluctant to leave after lessons.

With regard to the learning materials, parents were impressed with its variety and quality on offer to their children. Parents were particularly impressed with the modern technology that the organization was making use of. As indicated earlier, the Newholmes KMEC claims to use state of the art computer programmes, workbooks and worksheets that are carefully graded to ensure that learners progress well academically. This was a factor mentioned by the MD as contributing to parents' confidence in sending their children to the Newholmes KMEC.

With regard to the human resources, many of the parents felt that the tutors were one of the biggest assets for the organization because of the success stories that they had heard. Parental expectation appeared to be high and experiences that other parents had had at the organization were quickly transmitted to the rest of the community.

It seems that information about the quality and quantity of resources at the Newholmes KMEC, was spread amongst the parents of the community. This seems to attract clients to the organization.

## **Site observation**

To verify the above perceptions related to the acquisition and use of resources, the researcher noted that during site observation that interactions within the organization were generally very relaxed and friendly. Not only were learners benefiting from the physical and material resources of the organization, but from the human resources as well. Most of the tutors were highly experienced (as found in their curriculum vitas). These tutors appear to have a wealth of knowledge in handling learners with specific learning problems.

According to the researcher's subjective measures, i.e. from observing the work that learners produced, the quality of learners' work was worthy of praise. Aspects such as the structure, handwriting, neatness and accuracy were well attended to by these tutors. Learners were also motivated to work at an accelerated pace, not against other learners but against themselves so that they could better their own performance.

Carpenter, Ashdown and Bovair (1996) speak about the inherent gains where learners are motivated correctly to produce work that is of a high standard. This motivation is closely related to the child's self esteem. It would appear from these findings at the Newholmes KMEC that learners are gaining cognitively and emotionally/affectively as well.

From site observation the researcher was able to comment on the profile of the organization. The researcher noted that the classroom layout was different from that of a traditional classroom. There were wide-open spaces in the centre with tables arranged neatly against the wall. One section of the class was reserved for computer-based learning. The photos that follow indicate what the Newholmes KMEC classroom layout looks like.

## Classroom resource profile





Site observation at the Newholmes KMEC also included observation of available resources. In order to arrive at some qualitative and quantitative indicators of the resources available at the organization, a checklist was used. Presence and state of the resources was noted and comments were made besides each. The results from the observation schedule are presented below:

Indicators	Yes	No	Qualitative comments
1. Learners have adequate seating space	Y	-	Leather-bound, customized yellow and blue chairs, sufficient for each learner and tutor.
2. Adequate writing surface for learners	Y	-	Long, white built-in tables with a 70 cm depth and 1.2 m length for each child
3. Adequate space for movement around the classroom	Y	-	The area for each class is 6m x 9m =54m <sup>2</sup> This indicates that each learner has an area of 1m x 1.5m for adequate movement.
4. Walls and fixtures in good condition and displays stimulating to learners	Y	-	Adequate stimulation from displays on walls Attractive charts, puzzles and learning material such as audiotapes and mazes. Well ventilated classrooms.

**Table 1: Indicators for describing the KMEC classroom resources**

With regard to the resources, the researcher found that learners had adequate seating space as well as adequate writing surface to work on. Walls and fixtures appeared to be in good condition and there were interesting displays of educational materials to stimulate learners. There were adequate resources and they appeared to be well utilized. These findings are significant, considering the state of normal government schools in South Africa, based on the register of School Needs Survey of 1997.

## **Summary**

Using the indicators of quality and quantity of resources, those at the Newholmes KMEC appear to be good. This seems to enable the Newholmes KMEC to function effectively and efficiently, thus portraying a good image to the community who appear to support it.

### **4.2.3 The ability of an organization to sustain itself as an indicator of its effectiveness**

Organizations are created for specific purposes. Some grow and expand cost-effectively while others barely survive year after year. Not many organizational studies focus on those types of organizations that expand cost-effectively. Instead, studies tend to focus on those organizations that succeed or those that fail. In this study it was felt that having a steady client-base is vital for the growth and sustainability of an organization. Perceptions from the MD, parents, learners, tutors and schoolteachers were sought, regarding this factor.

#### **Perceptions from the MD related to sustainability**

The MD mentioned that one of the reasons why the Newholmes KMEC is able to grow is because of its ability to sustain itself through networking. He said that there is a strong referral system in place, which come mainly from the local school principals. Amongst other reasons, the MD attributed the main reason for school referrals to the fact that the MD and other staff members from the organization had been able to visit all the schools in their area and had fostered a working relationship with these schools.

Managing relationships outside the organization is a factor influencing how the organization grows and develops within the community. Ford (1998) speaks about managing business relationships to promote the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. He sees relationships as assets because the effectiveness and efficiency of a company's operation will be dependent on the nature of its relationships and its resources. He states:

*A company's relationships are a heritage from the past and a base for possible future developments... the company's customer and supplier relationships can be its main asset because they can be exploited in various ways to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency (p.93).*

In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, the networks especially with the schools, seem to be exploited to the advantage of the organization. This seems to be helping the organization provide an effective and efficient service.

The MD said that the KMEC also deals with various other organizations and individuals such as the Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) support group, psychologists, occupational therapist, etc. These organizations and individuals refer learners to the KMEC. The MD said:

*I would say that they associate with us because they can see that we are a reputable organization that is rendering an effective service to the community (MD, p3, 2000).*

The networking system that the organization establishes is vital to its effectiveness as it helps the organization to extend its services even further. Ford (1998) look at a view of markets and networks:

*A business network is not something that is imposed on the companies in it, nor is it something that can be designed or managed by any one of them. No one manages the network, but many have to try to manage in it. Its characteristics are determined by what happens in and between the relationships that comprise it (p.270)*

If relationships within organizations are conducive to growth and development, the implication is that such organizations ought to flourish under such conducive

environments. At the Newholmes KMEC this appears to be the case as the organization seems able to network effectively with schools and other related businesses in order to sustain itself.

### **Perceptions from the parents regarding sustainability**

The parents are the clients who pay for the services that their children make use of. The researcher assumes that these parents make use of the organization because of what it has to offer them. Their perceptions in this regard are vital to their continued support of the organization. Parents were therefore asked what they knew about the organization in terms of what it offered, support, client satisfaction and issues related to service delivery. Their responses are presented below under different sub-headings:

#### **Parent' knowledge of the organization**

Most (80%) of the 24 parents came to know about the organization through an advertisement, while others heard from their friends (10%) and family(10%). The idea that most parents had of the organization was that it was a private, after-school tuition facility.

#### **Parental support of organization**

All 24 parent respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the organization. They took their children to the organization because they wanted their children to do better at school. One parent indicated that her child needed enrichment work and was pleased to find out that the organization could assist her in this request.

## **Client satisfaction**

All the parent respondents indicated that their children were happy to attend classes at the organization and that it was helping their children improve their academic performance at school.

One parent commented thus:

*His spelling has improved, we have seen that he gets individual attention... At KMEC they do not take more children in a class than they can help (P7, p1, 2000).*

Another parent was thankful for the child's achievement after attending at the organization. She said that the enrichment lessons helped her child obtain a silver certificate in the KZN Maths Challenge.

## **Service delivery to clients**

All the parents in the sample said that they were happy with the service they were getting from the organization. Some reasons for their satisfaction are presented below:

*I am happy with the service they are providing because I can always contact the tutor who is willing to aid me in any way possible to benefit my child (P1,p1,2000).*

Another parent was impressed with the attitudes and behaviour of the staff and the director. He said:

*The tutors are experts in their field and the director is accommodating and approachable (P15,p1,2000).*

There was one parent who mentioned that her child was enjoying the programme so much that she did not want to leave even though she was doing well at school. She said that she felt the personal response to her problems gave her child enough confidence for the future.

From these excerpts, the general perception appears to be that if the learners are happy and the parents can see progress, then the parents are also happy to send their children to the organization. Of particular note to this study are the rewards emanating from effective service delivery. These are presented below:

### **Improvement noted by parents in their child's scholastic performance**

All parent respondents indicated that they had seen improvement in their children. Some comments are presented below:

*His English grammar and spelling have definitely improved (P21,p1,2000).*

*Her marks have improved and she is more confident. She now has a brighter outlook towards life (P23,p1,2000).*

*The love for the subject has been restored (P 6,p1,2000).*

From the above extracts, the perceptions indicate that client satisfaction appears to be high on the list. The researcher feels that in order to justify and qualify these parent perceptions, the academic achievements of the learners need to be brought in and compared with what the parents have to say about their children. Hence, the academic reports of these learners are presented later in this chapter as quantitative measures to determine the extent of these learners progress.

### **Self confidence boost in children**

All the parent respondents indicated that their children felt much more confident about the subject they were tutored in at the Newholmes KMEC. Reasons for this confidence as perceived by the parents are presented below:

*If he has an English problem, he takes it up with his tutor at KMEC. The environment there has made him more confident (P12,p1,2000).*

*My child teaches her friends the work she has learnt at KMEC (P6,p1,2000).*

The boost in self-confidence that these learners received as indicated above, seems to be an indication of the effects of the programme on their lives. McLeod and Adams (1989) refer to the role of the affective domain in learning: when the affective domain has been sufficiently strengthened, the resultant gains include skill and mastery in many areas of learning. Learners feel confident about themselves and are more ready and willing to tackle problem areas in their lives. This willingness to explore and self-confidence influences their academic ability and has a positive effect on their academic performance. This seems to be the case with the learners who come to the Newholmes KMEC.

### **Parental role**

All parent respondents felt that the role that they play in the organization is no different from what they play in school. Most of the parents assisted their children by supervising their work, testing them and offering advice and support. Parental involvement was seen as important to them.

Reynolds (1994) note that academic capital is the guaranteed product of the combined effects of cultural transmission by the family and the cultural transmission by the school. Similarly, Coleman (1987, cited in Reynolds, 1994:26) suggests that: the outputs of education result from the interaction of the qualities the child brings from

home – which can be loosely characterized as attitudes, effort and conception of self, with qualities of the school (Ibid.: 29). This seems to be the case with the parents at the Newholmes KMEC.

Rocher (1989) found in her study of children who were not coping at school, that where parental support was at its minimal, learners displayed a feeling of learned helplessness in their schoolwork. In her study, those parents who showed interest in their children's academic affairs appeared to have motivated their children to perform at their optimal level. This also seems to be the case with the Newholmes KMEC parents and learners.

### **Financial factors**

Parents in this study indicated that they did not mind spending extra money on their children's education. Some of their comments are presented below:

*We would spend our money on our children to get the best for them and we are happy with this type of investment because we can see the difference (P1p2,2000).*

*We would consider it as an investment in their future (P15,p6,2000).*

Overall, parents are happy to assist their children improve their academic performance at school. This seems to be in contrast to parents' views on state education across the country. A parent's response to the parents' forum on the education website of the national newspaper indicated the perception held about the current education situation:

*How many parents have to pay very expensively for their children's education and supplement the educational diet with extra lessons? These lessons are expensive and prove an inadequacy on the side of the school to educate your child... You pay the school to do the job and it should give you a guarantee of good workmanship (The Sunday Times, Read Right, March 18, 2001: 8).*



At the Newholmes KMEC parents have indicated that they don't mind paying the extra money as long as they see improvement in their children. This improvement factor seems to be an indicator of why the organization seems to attract and sustain clients.

### **Parents' recommendation**

All parent respondents stated that they would recommend that other parents bring their children to the organization. Some of their comments are presented below:

*I am completely satisfied with the service at the KMEC as I have tried in vain different methods to teach my son the techniques to spell (P21,p8,2000).*

*I am totally satisfied. It compares favorably. We were paying R150 per hour for private tuition which is more than twice the price at KMEC but receiving half the service and progress (P5,p4,2000).*

Parents rated the Newholmes KMEC as a very effective organization that was geared primarily towards providing an effective delivery of service while simultaneously ensuring client satisfaction. Their satisfaction with the services offered at the Newholmes KMEC is possibly illustrated by their continued support of the organization.

### **Perceptions from the learners regarding sustainability**

All the learners who attend at the Newholmes KMEC were asked how they regarded the organization in terms of its service delivery. Their responses to the various questions are presented below:

In response to the question of how they first heard about the organization, 80% learners indicated that they heard about it from their parents. There were 13% learners who

indicated that they heard from their friends and 7% learners who heard from their teachers at school.

In response to the question of how they first felt when they came to the organization, 30% of the learners said that they were nervous, 27% felt scared and 43% felt happy. The reason they came to the organization was to improve (48%), to learn (43%) and to get help (8%).

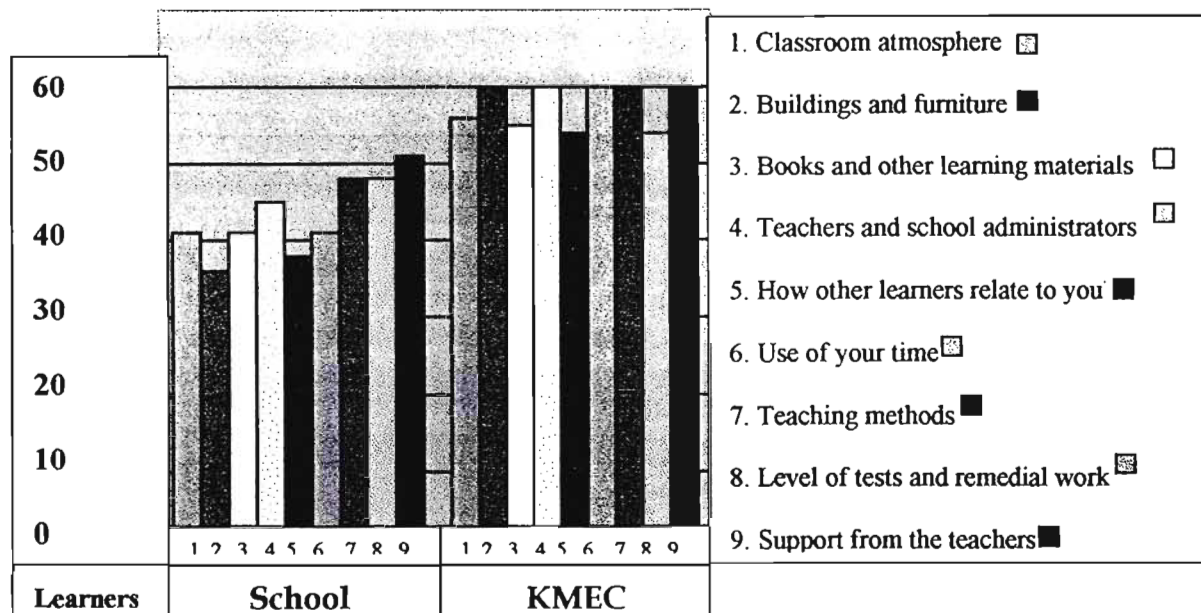
In response to their opinion of the organization, all 60 respondents indicated that it was a nice place. The reason given was that it was fun (46%), they learnt a lot (20%), there was a good atmosphere (7%), individualized learning was catered for (23%) and it was well organized (3%).

In response to the money that their parents spend on them to attend classes at the organization, all 60 learners felt that it was worth it because they learnt a lot (80%) and were doing better at school (20%). In response to the things they liked most about the organization, 75% of the learners said that it was the computers, 15% learners said it was the individualized instruction and 10% said they liked everything. Learners said that there was nothing negative about the organization.

Learners were asked to compare their schools with KMEC in terms of the following:

Classroom atmosphere, buildings and furniture, books and other learning materials, teachers and school administrators, how learners relate to each other, use of time, teaching methods, level of tests and remedial work and support from the teachers/tutors. These are represented on the graph below:

Below is a comparative analysis of learners' perceptions of school and KMEC:



**Figure 2: Comparative analysis of learners' perceptions of school and KMEC**

The figure above provides a visual representation of the perception that KMEC learners have of their school and the organization. The overall impressions were that the organization had more to offer them than their schools. Learners were asked whether they felt more confident about doing Maths/English since attending classes at KMEC. All the learners indicated that they felt very confident since attending at the KMEC. Regarding what had brought about this confidence, 28% of the learners indicated that it was the programme, 17% learners indicated that it was the tutors, 40% learners mentioned improved understanding and 15% learners indicated an increase in self-confidence.

With regard to the learners' opinion of whether the organization helped learners who were having problems at school in Maths/ English, all learners indicated that it definitely helped. When asked about the personal areas where the KMEC had helped them, 87% of

the learners indicated success in school while 13% of the learners indicated a confidence boost.

When asked whether there were other children whom they knew who had done better and/or passed at school after learning at KMEC, 80% of the learners said yes, while 20% of the learners said they did not know. This seems to indicate that those learners who come to Newholmes KMEC inform their friends about the organization. This is probably because they see that the Newholmes KMEC is helping them achieve better grades at school and they feel happy about their achievement and consequently refer their friends to the organization.

When asked whether they would tell their friends to come to KMEC if they had problems at school, all learners indicated that they would. The reason given for their answers was according to 95% of the learners, to help them, while 5% indicated that they also needed a confidence boost.

Learners perceived the organization as a nice place (57%), a fun place (23%) and a helpful place (20%). This perception, as compared to the learners' initial nervous perceptions on entering the organization, seems to indicate that their preconceived ideas of learning were being challenged by an organization that seems to make learning appear as a fun-filled activity.

### **Summary on responses from the first KMEC learner sample**

Learners came to the Newholmes KMEC because they had specific needs which they felt could be addressed at this organization. Their motivation to come to the organization and to stay on is a possible indicator of their faith and confidence in the organization. According to Holms and Wynne (1989), where the values of the school (organization) and the home intertwine, they serve to become an effective factor that produces effective results. At the KMEC, this is possibly one answer to the improved performance of the learners.

## **Benefits of being a KMEC Learner**

The researcher asked the twelve learners their perceptions of the organization. These are presented below under different sub-headings:

### **Learner motivation**

The primary reason why learners (L) made use of the organization was to learn and improve at school. The motivation to learn at this organization was mainly because the learners saw it as being conducive to meeting their needs. Some responses are presented below:

*You learn new things in different ways and it is taught in a better way so it makes you understand better (L1,p1,2000).*

*It is nice and quiet and you get to learn more (L3,p1,2000).*

### **Effective learning**

All the learners felt that it was a worthwhile investment for their parents. Some of their reasons are presented below:

*You get what you need, the explanations are good and therefore schoolwork becomes simpler to understand (L11,p3,2000).*

*They teach you bit by bit so you get to learn more (L3,p1,2000).*

### **Confidence boost**

All the learners said that they felt more confident about doing the subject that they received tuition in at the Newholmes KMEC. Their reasons for this boost in confidence are presented below:

*The tutors pay more attention because there are few learners in the class (L13,p3,2000).*

*I think I am fine now because I can apply the skills I learnt there, to my schoolwork (L12,p3,2000).*

*I can work nicely at school without the teacher's help (L 4,p1,2000).*

### **Being a KMEC learner**

The general feeling was that the learners felt proud of being KMEC learners. They were happy to come to classes and do additional work. Their responses are presented below:

*It is easier at KMEC because of what they do - they test constantly, have lots of worksheets and help you to work on your own (L5,p1,2000).*

*I am very happy at KMEC and will use them later if problems come up (L8,p2,2000).*

*I like more work because it keeps me busy and makes me clever (L15,p3,2000).*

*I like to work hard because it will make me get good marks because I want to be a doctor (L11,p3,2000).*

The above perceptions indicate that learners seem happy to learn at the organization and believe they are benefiting from the classes.

### **Additional benefits for the KMEC learner**

All the learners felt that the organization had helped them with their problems. Some ways in which they had personally benefited from the tuition are presented below:

*Spelling, reading and comprehension is now better and easier (L7,p3,2000).*

*Fractions are taught in a different ways so that you can understand better (L2,p2,2000).*

*My phonics, spelling and reading is now better (L10,p3,2000).*

These specific areas where learners have benefited in their academic work, seems to have given them the necessary skills and ability to tackle related problems at school, as will be seen in their school reports presented later in this chapter.

### **Learners' recommendation**

All the learners said that they would inform their friends of the organization and ask them to come for tuition if they needed it. One learner said that she helps her friends at school with their problems and if they came to KMEC, they could solve their own problems. She felt that they could then work together and learn more.

### **Summary on the 12 learners**

All learners appeared positive about the organization and seem to have experienced success in the programme and at school. They appeared motivated to attend classes at the organization as they could see visible signs of improvement in their schoolwork. This indicates that they seem to have benefited from attending classes at the Newholmes KMEC.

### **Perceptions from the schoolteachers**

The schoolteachers who have KMEC learners in their class were in a position to comment on these learners' progress before and after attending classes there. This was useful in determining how the organization has impacted on the KMEC learners' academic progress. The schoolteachers (St) responses to the various questions are presented below:

### **Knowledge of the Newholmes KMEC**

Most of the schoolteachers first came to know about the organization through an advertisement. Their knowledge of the service of the KMEC was that it offered remedial and extra tuition for struggling pupils. They saw it as an institution that assist pupils in exploring their full potential by boosting the children's confidence and self-esteem.

### **Perception of learner achievement**

Most of these schoolteachers felt confident about the organization and could see tangible results in the learners within a relatively short space of time. Some comments are listed below:

*She is excited to go to these classes and eager to show what she has done. She has improved academically. She approaches tasks with more enthusiasm and confidence (St3,p1,2000).*

*I have seen a definite improvement in the learner's work as well as a boost in her confidence and interaction with others. She seems to be more secure in her understanding and has the self-confidence to see a task to fruition (St4,p1,2000).*

The schoolteachers indicated that they did not see such marked improvement in the other learners who do not attend KMEC because of various factors which, amongst others,



include factors such as lack of resources, bigger class size and less commitment from parents.

### **A good investment for parents**

Most of the schoolteachers thought the extra tuition was a good investment for the parents. One teacher was not sure because the learner he had was doing enrichment work at the organization and in his opinion did not really need additional lessons since she appeared to be bright in school even before attending at the KMEC. However, as indicated earlier, the parents' opinion was that they wanted their child to excel in school and had enrolled her at the Newholmes KMEC because she had entered for the KZN Maths Challenge.

### **Effective service to the community**

Most of the schoolteachers felt that the organization was providing an effective service. They felt positive about having such an organization in their community. They felt that perhaps the cost factor was a major deterrent for many parents who would love to enroll their children at such an organization.

### **Recommendations from the schoolteachers**

Most of the subjects (90%) said they would recommend that other teachers send their learners to this organization because they could see that the organization was rendering an effective service. Many had heard about the organization and its use of computers and individualized instruction. They felt that for those parents who could afford it, they could use the services of the organization.

### **Summary on schoolteachers**

The schoolteachers indicated that the organization appeared to be offering a much-needed service, especially to those learners who were marginalized at school. Some schoolteachers felt that the cost of these extra classes might not suite the pockets of all

members of the community. In their opinion, those who need the extra tuition the most were being short changed by the Education Department because there was a shortage of remedial facilities and many of these children might not be able to afford private tuition.

### **Perceptions from the tutors**

The tutors at the Newholmes KMEC seem to have first hand experience with the learners who attend classes there. Their informed knowledge of the organization and what goes on in it is vital to this study. Their responses are dealt with under different sub-headings below:

### **Knowledge of the Newholmes KMEC**

Most of the tutors (T) first heard about the organization from a friend. The researcher assumes that since all the tutors are educators within the Newholmes community, they ought to have heard about a new education centre. They knew that the organization was offering individualized, computer based- learning and that it was a franchise.

### **Tutors' work experiences at KMEC**

When asked on their experiences of the workplace, one tutor who was looking for employment commented on her experience.

*Initially I needed the extra income, but now I find that to a large extent I enjoy working with two or three learners at a time. I also find it very rewarding to see them make significant progress, which is very difficult to see in a normal school situation due to the large number of learners the educator has to deal with (T2,p1,2000).*

All the tutors seemed happy about the relatively 'stress-free' work environment that is due in part, to the organization being well organized. Tutors responded thus:

*Working in a very relaxed stress-free environment, I can concentrate solely on the learner rather than worry about tedious record keeping and administrative duties (T1,p1,2000).*

*I like using the professional worksheets that have been compiled by curriculum experts at KMEC International. Materials are graded for learners at all levels and the worksheets are sequential, thus making our job easier (T3,p1,2000).*

### **A good investment for parents!**

When asked whether they thought that KMEC is a good investment for parents, the tutors responded thus:

*It is an excellent investment considering the country's education situation of overcrowded classes and unfair staffing ratio formula whereby slow learners are at a disadvantage (T1,p1,2000).*

*KMEC is a system that definitely works because children receive and benefit from the kind of guidance and individual attention that is not possible in a normal school (T2,p1,2000).*

*The children definitely show excellent results. The children work without fear of reproach (T3,p1,2000).*

*They work with confidence and become independent if it can be shown that there is an improvement in their work (T4,p1,2000).*

All tutors saw it as a good investment for their children because of the visible progress that learners were making after attending classes at KMEC.

### **Types of difficulties learners have**

When asked about their perceptions of the type of difficulties learners have, tutors responded thus:

*Poor phonic knowledge, incorrect letter formation, bad posture, wrong angle of books and incorrect pencil grip (T1,p1,2000).*

*Spelling difficulties, cannot write grammatically correct sentences, lack of self-esteem and self-confidence (T2,p1,2000).*

*Poor spelling expression, limited vocabulary, insufficient knowledge of mathematical language, learners are withdrawn (T3,p1,2000).*

*Conceptual difficulties and comprehension difficulties (T4,p1,2000).*

Tutors indicated that these difficulties, in most cases requires one-to-one intervention. Not all schools, they indicated, are in a position to offer these learners this type of individualized attention, primarily because of the high pupil:teacher ratios at schools, as already indicated.

### **How the KMEC is helping the learners**

When asked about their perceptions on how the organization is helping the learner, tutors responded thus:

*We constantly check and correct all of the learners' manifested problems (T1,p2,2000).*

*We get feedback from their schools. Learners have excelled in the tests and examinations conducted at their schools. Parents are happy to send their children because they see progress (T3,p2,2000).*

Feedback appears to be the dominant factor running through all the perceptions that the tutors have related to how the organization is helping the learners. Pollard and Bourne (1994) stressed the importance of teamwork in teaching learners in the primary school. When all parties work together for the common good of the child, there are tangible results. This seems to be the case at the Newholmes KMEC.

When asked about their opinions on the KMEC learners' confidence, tutors responded thus:

*The learners themselves can see the progress they have made when they flip back pages. Encouragement, praise and rewards build their confidence (T1,p2,2000).*

*They want to come back for more lessons (T4,p2,2000).*

There appears to be many factors influencing learners' confidence. The ability of the organization to create and foster an environment that boosts learners' confidence is a further indicator of its ability to render an effective service. Tutors tend to think that the motivation received at KMEC is contributing to learners' boost in academic performance.

### **Improvements seen in the KMEC learners**

When asked about the improvements seen in the KMEC learners, tutors responded thus:

*They are more confident because of constant revision and repetition. They work a little faster and the eraser is not used so often (T1,p3,2000).*

*They are able to work at their own pace. Their horizon of knowledge has widened, they work independently and work becomes more meaningful and resourceful (T3,p3,2000).*

These visible signs of improvements that tutors cite seem to indicate that learners are being helped at this organization. These findings correspond well with evidence from the learners themselves.

The Newholmes KMEC appears to be offering a wide variety of skills to those learners who are not coping with their problems at school as well as to those who are in search of enrichment work. In this regard its functions appear to extend beyond remediation services.

### **Summary on the tutors**

The tutors seemed very confident that the organization and its programme, with its focus on individualized learning and computer-based instruction, was having a positive effect on the learners who attend there. They felt that their learners were doing well at school because the organization had impacted positively on other aspects of their lives as well.

### **Site observation**

Site observation was done to collect data on how interactions between the tutors, learners and learning materials take place to promote optimal learning. Four classes were observed for a duration of two weeks. The findings were that on average, there were four learners per class who were constructively occupied for a duration of one hour and 20 minutes, alternating between the computer, tutor and workbooks.

The following table summarizes findings on observation of these classes:

No of learners per class: 4

Duration of the lesson: 1 hour 20 minutes

Indicator	Not at all	Sometimes	Several times	All the time
1. Learning is activity-based				Yes
2. Tutor asks questions			Yes	
3. Learners ask questions		Yes		
4. Tutor provides learners with individual feedback			Yes	
5. Learners given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn			Yes	
6. Tutor makes maximum use of instructional time				Yes
7. Learners comment actively in the lesson		Yes		
8. Learners make maximum use of activity session				Yes

**Table 2: Classroom observation schedule**

On a scale of 1 -4, where 4 indicates the highest positive factor, learning at the Newholmes KMEC appears to be generally learner-centred. The researcher noted the following:- learning was activity-based; both tutor and learner asked questions and the tutor provided the learner with individual feedback rather than group feedback; the learners were given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learnt in every lesson and learners participated actively throughout the lesson. The results from this observation schedule indicate that the organization is directed at learner-centred learning and teaching.

This observation confirms responses from tutors and learners on the didactic aspects of the KMEC programme. Learners are active participants in their own learning and meaningful integration of knowledge seems to be taking place for these learners.

## Documentation

In order to verify responses made by teachers and learners on progress of KMEC learners once back at school, document analysis was done. The twelve learners who were interviewed, all appeared to be doing well at school. Four of the learners' assessment scores and exam results were examined and are represented below as case studies.

### Case 1

The school reports summary and KMEC assessment results on learner one (L1) as represented below indicate that the learner who was in grade 7 in 1999 was just able to pass English with a score of 40%. This learner was assessed at the organization in the forth term and was found to be reading at the age of 10 years and 4 months and comprehending at the age of 7 years and 4 months. The learner was 11 years and 9 months old at the time. This meant that he had a scholastic backlog of 1 year and 5 months in his reading ability. After six months within the organization, the learner had gained 1 year and 6 months in his reading age (R.A.) and had improved by 3 years and 6 months in his comprehension age (C.A.). His school report indicated a 57% pass at the end of June 2000. For his year-end 2000 report he scored 64% for English. These scores indicate that he had made phenomenal progress at school after attending at the Newholmes KMEC.

The school report and the KMEC assessment scores are depicted below:

<i>School report -</i>			<i>KMEC assessment results</i>		
Mark/symbol					
4th term - Dec 1999	English	40	Date	R.A.	C.A.
2nd term - June 2000	English	57	27/9/99	10.4	7.4
4th term - Dec 2000	English	64	18/4/00	11.10	10.10
			4/12/00	13.6	12.9

Although no causal connection can be made, the results above serve as quantifiable indicators of the organization's ability to deliver an effective service. There was marked improvement in the learner's academic performance as can be seen above, from 40% to



64% within four school terms. This indicates that there is some relationship between study at KMEC and school performance.

### Case 2

The school reports on learner two (L2) indicate that the learner who was in grade 8 in 1999 was performing poorly in Maths ( 44%) by the end of the year. The learner was assessed at the KMEC in January 2000. He scored 32% for his end of grade (E.O.G.) 8 test. After being on the programme for 6 months, he scored 95% for the E.O.G 8 test. In the mid year 2000 exam he scored 81% for his Maths.

The school report and the KMEC assessment scores are depicted below:

<i>School reports summary</i>				<i>KMEC assessment results</i>			
4th term - December 2000	Maths	44		Date	E.O.G.7	E.O.G.8	
2nd term - June 2000	Maths	81		26/1/00	50%	32%	
				23/6/00	100%	95%	

These scores indicate that the learner has progressed well in Maths at school and at the Newholmes KMEC.

### Case 3

The school reports summary and KMEC assessment results on learner three (L3) as represented below indicate that the learner who was in grade 3 in 1999 was able to gain a C symbol for Maths by the end of the year. The learner was assessed at the organization at the end of the forth term in 1999. She scored 52% for E.O.G 3 test. She was enrolled on the programme and after being on the programme for 6 months, she scored 95% for the E.O.G 3 test. In the 2000 second term at school, she scored B+ for her Maths.

School reports summary on L3

4th term - Dec 1999	Maths	C
2nd term - June 2000	Maths	B+

KMEC assessment results on L3

Date	E.O.G. 3
10/12/99	52%
6/7/00	95%

These results indicate that the KMEC programme has had a positive effect on the learner's academic performance.

**Case 4**

The school reports summary and KMEC assessment results on learner four (L4) as represented below indicate that the learner who was in grade 1 in 1999 was average in English. The learner was assessed at the Newholmes KMEC at the end of the first term and her reading was at the level of 5 years and 11 months while her comprehension was found to be too low to assess (TLTA). After six months within the organization, her reading age was 7 years and 4 months. The learner gained 1 year and 5 months in her reading age. Her school report for June 2000 indicated a B+ symbol for English.

The school report and the KMEC assessment scores are depicted below:

<i>School reports summary</i>			<i>KMEC assessment results</i>		
4th term - Dec 1999	English	D	Date	R.A.	C.A.
2nd term - June 2000	English	B+	4/12/99	5.11	TLTA
			26/9/00	7.4	6.7

These results indicate that the KMEC learner above has made significant progress in English since attending classes there.

**Summary on findings from document analysis**

From the above case studies the results indicate that the learners are progressing well and performing within and sometimes beyond their parents' expectations. This seems to be an indicator of why the learners continue to attend classes at the Newholmes KMEC and also why parents continue to send their children there. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, schools refer children to the Newholmes KMEC because they see progress in the learners after attending classes there. Thus documentation from learners' school reports as well as

from re-assessment results within the organization seems to indicate that the Newholmes KMEC is having a positive effect on their academic performance.

#### **4.2.3. The ability of an organization to be accepted by its stakeholders as an indicator of its effectiveness**

An organization that gains acceptance within the community is in most cases, assured of its support. From the Newholmes community the following stakeholders were asked their views of the Newholmes KMEC:- the local Rotary Club chairperson, the secretary of the local parish, the educational psychologist, the local housewives and the local school leavers. The responses of these stakeholders are presented below.

##### **Perceptions from the social club representative**

The social club representative's responses to questions pertaining to his perception of the organization are examined below:

When asked about what knowledge he had of the Newholmes KMEC, the local Rotary Club chairperson (RCC) said that he saw it as an educational organization that offers tuition to schoolchildren. He saw it as a support group to the schools.

When asked about his personal perception regarding the organization, the local Rotary Club chairperson indicated that it appears to be a well-organized institution that has evolved from rendering educational help to a business that seems to be well controlled.

The idea of the organisation being a franchise had great appeal to the local Rotary Club chairperson. He felt that this is probably the reason why the organisation was able to project such a professional and well-organised image. This factor was probably drawing potential clients to the organisation instead of private individuals who were offering similar services in their homes. He said:

*Having such an organisation in our community also gives parents the confidence that their children will be able to receive help to overcome their problems. I say this because I know that this organisation is responsible and accountable to a higher body. Being a franchise, there is a hierarchy that protects the members within the organisation as well as the clients whom they serve. This factor adds to the effectiveness of such an organisation. In this regard, the private individuals who are offering services at their homes can't compare with this organisation ( RCC,p2,2000).*

When asked about how other club members viewed the Newholmes KMEC, the local Rotary Club chairperson felt that the perceptions of the club members would be similar to his perceptions. He said that they would see the Newholmes KMEC as serving an educational purpose because invariably the organization helps lots of children who need assistance.

When asked about his relationship with the organization, the local Rotary Club chairperson mentioned that the KMEC has assisted his club through a sponsored congratulatory advertisement in the event of the Rotary Club's anniversary. This seems to be an indicator that the Newholmes KMEC does network with and participate in the social activities of the community.

When asked on any further comments related to the organization, the local Rotary Club chairperson indicated that he was inclined to think that the fees of the KMEC, was somehow directed towards a certain class. He felt that only those who can afford to pay for these services could make use of them. He indicated that he knew how much lessons cost at the organization because of his association with the Newholmes KMEC.

### **Summary on the local Rotary Club chairperson**

Based on what the social club representative said, there appears to be support for the organization and its activities within the community from the local rotary club. The one

factor that was seen as a drawback for the local Rotary Club chairperson, was the cost factor. However, he mentioned that he knows of many children who are attending classes at the Newholmes KMEC. This indicates that although the fees may appear as a barrier to some, many parents still make use of the organization because they seem to think that it has the capacity to assist their children who are in need of additional educational services.

### **Perceptions from the religious organization representative**

The religious organization representative's responses to questions pertaining to her perception of the organization are presented below:

When asked about what knowledge she had on the Newholmes KMEC, the secretary of the local parish said that she knows that the Newholmes KMEC is an educational organization that is rendering additional help to school-going children. She indicated that she had seen adverts in the local newspaper and had received flyers in her postbox. She also saw the billboard attached to the premises where the organization operates. This seems to indicate that the Newholmes KMEC is a visible presence in the Newholmes community.

When asked on her personal perception regarding the organization, the secretary of the local parish indicated that besides the visible presence of the organization in the community as expressed above, on a personal level she does not make use of its services because her children do not require it. However, she mentioned that she has not heard anything negative about the organization either. This indicates that the Newholmes KMEC is not causing a disturbance by operating a business within a residential area.

When asked about the congregation's perceptions of the organization the secretary of the local parish she indicated that there were approximately 1000 members in the local parish congregation and as yet she personally has not met anyone who had spoken about the organization in a negative way. This indicates that amongst the Newholmes community

parishioners, there does not appear to be any objection to the Newholmes KMEC operating there.

When asked for further comments on the Newholmes KMEC, the secretary of the local parish said that she saw it as a good service, but she felt that it is expensive because the organization made use of computers and offered individualized learning.

### **Summary on the religious organization representative**

Although she was not personally involved with the organization, the secretary of the local parish felt that the organization was making a visible presence in the community through its advertising strategies and its services.

### **Perceptions from the educational psychologist in the community**

The educational psychologist's responses to the various questions are examined below:

When asked on what knowledge she has on the Newholmes KMEC, the educational psychologist (EP) said that she sees the Newholmes KMEC as a supplementary educational centre that offers tuition for various age groups and subjects. She indicated that she saw an advert in the newspaper in 1998 and thereafter she approached the director who informed her of the background and the services of the KMEC. She saw the focus of the KMEC as falling on teaching content and skill that allows the learners to develop confidence, which enabled them to achieve at school. She added that the organization also allowed parents to take a role in order to assist their children.

When asked about her personal perceptions of the Newholmes KMEC, the educational psychologist said that she felt that overall, the organization was doing a good job in the community and was capable of meeting the needs of the community. She said:

*It presents a professional image that is very attractive for lots of parents because that is what they want to see. They want to win at the end of the day. The only*

*drawback is the cost factor and therefore many parents seek private individuals who are cheaper, especially when their child has a problem with more than one subject. Therefore although it is a good organization, it is not accessible to the majority of parents (EP,p1, 2000).*

When asked about what views the other psychologists and therapists within the community had about the Newholmes KMEC, she said that there were mixed feelings within this group. This was due to the reasons listed below:

Some see it as an important service that one should use. Some see it as very expensive and therefore not for the community at large. Some find that there is merit in it but it is not an integral service because there are other individuals that can offer cheaper services. Some said that there are also private schools that have built-in auxiliary services that are related to the syllabus. Some felt that there is an organization out there and if anyone wants to use the services, why not!

This reaction indicates that the organization is not threatened for its survival but is viewed like any new organization that seeks to penetrate a new community. The fact that the Newholmes KMEC is growing in terms of enrollments (as pointed out in the first indicator of effectiveness) seems to be a reflection that there is support from the community for what it is doing.

When asked for further comments regarding the organization, the educational psychologist said that overall, she was positive about the organization and what it is doing in the community. She did offer some suggestions to the organization, which she felt would be beneficial to both the organization and the community. These suggestions are:

*Have group work rather than individual work; going out and rendering the service at the schools; etc., because the need definitely exists, especially since the Department of Education has taken away remedial and specialized services. The numbers of pupils have also increased in the classes and there are more inter-*

*racial classes with their own sets of problems. Perhaps if the Education Department works with the KMEC and negotiates for deserving pupils to be subsidized by the Department so that the poorer learners who sometimes need these services the most, can be reached (EP,p2, 2000).*

Since the purpose of this study is not to evaluate the organization or how it operations, the researcher merely presents these suggestions from the educational psychologist.

According to the educational psychologist there are some disturbing trends that are emerging within the community which could be influencing the perception of people regarding the cost factor of the organization under study. The following statements provide some insight into this trend:

*Many parents go to occupational therapists to sort out their child's educational problem because of medical aid. Sometimes they use such services because they are ignorant of the services of the KMEC. They therefore need to be empowered so that they do not fall prey to some occupational therapists who abuse the medical aid system (EP,p3, 2000).*

This is possibly one reason why not all parents make use of the services that the Newholmes KMEC has to offer and why they feel that the fees are high for them.

### **Summary on the educational psychologist**

Overall, it appears that the educational psychologist was happy about having an educational service provider in the community. She was very appreciative of the fact that she was able to network with the organization. From her association with them, she was impressed with the professionalism with which the Newholmes KMEC was delivering its services. This augurs well for an organization that is seeking to establish a name for itself in the community where it operates.



### **Perceptions from the local school leavers**

The school leavers were asked their opinion on the Newholmes KMEC and how it is impacting on their community. All the respondents were favourable of its existence and indicated that they saw the Newholmes KMEC as something good in their community.

When asked about how they came to know about the Newholmes KMEC, the respondents indicated that they were informed mainly through family members (50%), friends (25%) and newspaper advertisements (25%).

When asked about their knowledge of the organization, all the respondents indicated that they had heard about the organization. Most respondents said that they know that the organization offers service to school going children, makes use of computers, and provides individualized learning. Asked about fees, 50% of the respondents indicated that clients pay relatively high fees for services while the other 50% felt that the fees were reasonable.

When asked about the idea of individualized learning, all the respondents indicated that it was an excellent idea. Asked about the use of computers for learning, all respondents viewed the use of computers very positively and liked the idea of individualized tutoring.

When asked about whether they would support the Newholmes KMEC, if they were still scholars, all the respondents said that they would support the organization because they view it in a positive light. They indicated that if they were still scholars, they would make use of its service because they felt that they would benefit from it. Similarly all respondents expressed the view that their fellow students viewed the organization in a positive light and would use its service if they needed help.

### **Summary on the local school leavers**

Overall, the school leavers were happy about having an educational service provider in their community. They felt that if they had such services available while they were at school, they would certainly have made use of these services because it would have helped them boost their academic performance at school.

### **Perceptions from the local housewives**

The housewives were asked how they regarded the organization. Their responses to the various questions are presented below:

When asked about their response to having an educational centre in their community, all of the respondents felt that it was an excellent idea. There was no negative response to the organization's existence.

When asked about how they came to know about the Newholmes KMEC, the respondents indicated that they came to know about the organization through a family member (50%), through an advertisement (20%), through a friend (10%), through a flyer in the mail (10%) or through billboards (10%).

When asked about their knowledge of the organization and what it offers, all housewives subjects indicated that they had heard about the organization. Most respondents said that they know that the organization offers service to school going children, makes use of computers, and offers individualized tutoring. There was no negative response to the idea of individualized learning. Regarding fees, most of the respondents (70%) indicated that clients pay relatively high fees for services that the organization offers while a small percentage (30%) said that the fees are reasonable.

When asked about how they viewed the Newholmes KMEC, all respondents felt that it was a good thing to have the KMEC in their community. The majority of the

respondents (75%) said that if their children needed educational services they would make use of the Newholmes KMEC. The remaining 25% felt that while the organization was offering a worthy service, the fees were too high for them. This seems to indicate that fees do not present a major barrier for most housewife respondents.

When asked about how other housewives view the Newholmes KMEC, all respondents indicated that other housewives, whom they knew, viewed the organization in a positive light and they would use the services of the Newholmes KMEC if the needed to or if they could afford it. Overall, the housewives seemed happy about having an educational service provider in their community. They felt that if their children had a need for such services, they would make use of these services, provided it was within their means.

#### **Summary on the local housewives**

The results from the stakeholders above regarding the KMEC as an organization, indicates that they all felt positive about having an educational centre in their community. They were all favourable about how learning was taking place within the Newholmes KMEC, i.e., through computers and individualized programmes. The majority of these stakeholders indicated that their colleagues and friends also view the organization in a positive light and they would use the services of the Newholmes KMEC if they needed it.

#### **4.2.5 The ability of an organization to be seen as profitable as an indicator of its effectiveness**

The ability of an organization to be seen as profitable reflects its ability to render an effective service. The responses from the bank manager where the Newholmes KMEC trade, as well as the response from the MD provided evidence to this profit-making ability of the Newholmes KMEC. This is further verified with documentary sources from the Newholmes KMEC.

### **Perceptions from the bank manager**

The manager at the bank where the KMEC trades was asked about his knowledge of the organization. He felt that the organization had an interesting dimension to its intervention. By making use of computers and tutors to provide individualized learning for the child, he saw it as being very advantageous because it seemed a very effective way of getting the foundation right for the child with a specific learning problem.

When asked about the profitability of the organization, the bank manager indicated that everything seemed to be above board and there were no indications of there being a problem in terms of meeting financial obligations.

The fact that no negative reports had been brought to his attention, seems to be an indicator that there are no problems from the bank's point of view. According to Barrow (1993:70) bankers are looking for asset security to back their loans and the certainty of getting their money back. Bankers hope that the business will succeed and that they can lend more money in the future and provide more banking services to their loyal customer.

In the case of the KMEC, the bank manager was happy to associate with the Newholmes KMEC in terms of business relations and was also making use of their services for his child. This seems to be an indicator of his confidence in the organization. A person such as a bank manager is normally critical of organizations that are relatively new and have yet to make their mark in the business world. The fact that the bank manager at Newholmes appears satisfied with how the Newholmes KMEC operates, is an indicator of its effectiveness and its potential to become a profitable organization.

### **Perceptions from the managing director**

The MD gave his views of the organization from a business perspective and indicated what he thought was contributing to the profitability of the organization. In response to

what was contributing towards the growth and profitability of the organization, the MD said that in the Newholmes community, people are prepared to pay for services rendered. The MD said:

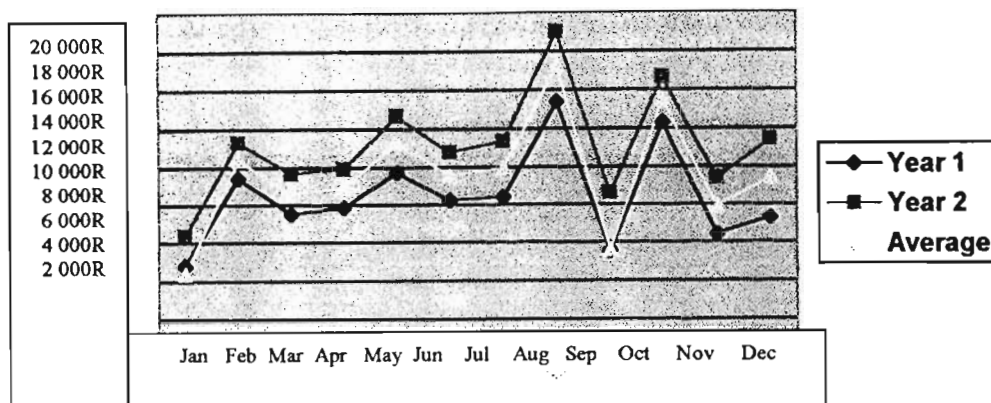
*At this centre, the primary focus is on helping the child rather than on making money. We do not wish to project ourselves as a 'money-making' organization. Profit comes after service. This can be seen as a factor that is contributing to the enrollment because there are genuine cases where parents do have financial problems and these cases are assessed on merit and reductions are given to deserving learners (MD, p5, 2000).*

The MD also mentioned that from the profits that are made, the organization tries to give back to the community by subsidizing children from the local schools, supporting school events such as Debs Balls, carnivals, and providing floating trophies, etc. He mentioned that part of the profit was used for workshops run by the ADHD support group, etc.

There seems to be a contradictory principle at work here. While from a business perspective, the organization is bent on making profits, some of these profits are sown directly back into the community to provide a service to the community. The fact that the Newholmes KMEC is able to operate in a dual capacity as a business organization and a service provider, creates an inherent tension, when compared to similar non-profit educational organizations. In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, this tension appears to be working in its favour in projecting the organization as effective in providing an educational service, while at the same time it appears to be able to make a profit.

### **Profit indicators of the organization from documentary sources**

From documentary sources related to monthly income and expenses, the researcher was able to summarize the data depicting the financial status of the Newholmes KMEC for the period January 1999 to January 2001. These are represented in the graph that follows:



**Figure 3: Income figures of the Newholmes KMEC for January 1999 to January 2001**

The figure above indicates the steady growth of the organization over the two year period since its establishment in the community. From the graph, it seems evident that the organization is able to sustain itself during its 'dry' periods because it seems to have developed the potential to acquire adequate profits during its peak periods. These indicators point towards a healthy and profitable business. The Newholmes KMEC seems to show the potential to grow into an effective educational business that is capable of making profits to sustain itself over time, thus making it a sound financial investment.

The aim of this study was to verify the assumptions that the Newholmes KMEC was perceived to combine profit making with quality of service, and that this was the reason for its growth. In his dual capacity as the bank manager and parent of the Newholmes KMEC learner, the bank manager was able to verify this assumption of the organization as an effective and consequently profitable organization. Similarly, the MD, in his dual capacity as businessman and educator appeared able to merge the two roles to produce an effective and profitable organization as reflected in the documentation presented above.

## Summary

This chapter presented the findings from data obtained from all the subjects in the sample as well as from site observation and relevant documentation. The critical questions underpinning this study were to determine effectiveness of the Newholmes KMEC in terms of growth, resources, sustainability, support and profit.

Views shared by the respondents were documented in order to provide significant facts and insights from the Newholmes community regarding the Newholmes KMEC. The stakeholders' perceptions on the effectiveness of the organization varied slightly over different issues. The common trend running through almost all respondents was that the organization under study was perceived as something good and worth-while, but access was restricted to the those who could afford it or who made the sacrifice to afford it.

Site observation revealed a well-organized and well-resourced organization that was able to meet the demands of its clients in rendering an adequate service. Similarly, documentation from the organization revealed that the organization was rendering an effective and efficient service, producing good results and in the process, growing in numbers and generating profit.

According to Watson (1994:1) a business can be defined as 'an activity conducted for the purpose of making a profit'. Irrespective of the size of the business, in order to make a profit it needs to be sustainable. The International Institute for Sustainable Development has developed a definition for sustainable development relating to business. As Ford (1998) state:

*For the business enterprise, sustainable development means adopting business strategies and activities that meet the needs of the enterprise and its stakeholders today, while protecting, sustaining and enhancing the human and natural resources that will be needed in the future (p.11).*

From the findings in this study, the indicators used to determine effective organizations, point towards a sustainable business that is able to grow into a profitable organization in the future.

The purpose of this chapter was to present the results of the data collected from various sources related to the organization's perceived effectiveness. The research findings revealed stakeholders' perceptions of the Newholmes KMEC. These were supported with documentation and site observation. The data points towards an effective organization that was well resourced, accepted and found to be sustainable, thus attracting more clients and generating more profits. The implications of these findings are discussed in the next chapter.



## **Chapter 5**

### **Interpretation and Discussion of the Findings**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter consolidates the various results presented in the previous chapter. The discussion of these results revolves around the underlying indicators of effectiveness in organizations. These were outlined in the research questions found in chapter one. The results are compared with those from other studies on aspects related to effectiveness in schools and in organizations.

Based on the theoretical framework, in the business world the operating premise holds that if an organization appears to be in a position to offer a quality product through the adequate accumulation and utilization of resources, then its product will be seen as a valued and sought after commodity. This premise is expanded on in this chapter.

#### **5.2 External factors influencing the organization**

##### **Political climate**

The need amongst parents to provide a quality education for their children appears to be gaining momentum. To ensure that this type of education becomes a reality, many parents make sacrifices to ensure that their child gets a 'decent' education. The general perception amongst parents in particular is that the limitation or lack thereof with regard to key resources, brings along with it serious blockages that prevents their children from receiving a satisfactory delivery of educational services.

The parents who come to the Newholmes KMEC seem to want to assist their children in their academic performance at school by providing them with supplementary lessons.

They are therefore in many cases, willing to make the sacrifice to ensure that their children get the help they need to maximize their full academic potential (Appendix C- 2).

Furthermore, many respondents, especially tutors, felt that the political climate within which the schools are operating can be seen as factors contributing towards the assumed effectiveness of the Newholmes KMEC. Said one tutor:

*Parents are disillusioned with the increased teacher: pupil ratios at schools. This is further exacerbated by the racially integrated element for which the schoolteachers have not been adequately trained to handle (T2,p2,2000).*

Since the general feeling towards education in the country points towards a decline in service delivery, an organization that seems to be in a position to address the need for a quality education, will be supported by those who are in search of such an education. This appears to be the case of the Newholmes KMEC.

### **5.3 Adequate resources as a factor influencing effectiveness**

#### **Human resources**

The perception from parents is that there is an effective delivery of services at Newholmes KMEC. Both parents and learners mentioned that the tutors are doing a good job and they will recommend that others who are in need of supplementary educational services make use of the KMEC (Appendix C-1).

Watson (1994: 219) sees human resources as 'social capital'. An organization that is capable of utilizing its human resources effectively, can be assured of good returns. The fact that Newholmes KMEC seems to display the ability to attract and retain good staff to fulfill its functions indicates that it has the potential to offer an effective service.

In Govender's study (1989) on the relative effectiveness of the interactive model in promoting fluency, where human resources are adequate and are utilized well, success is sure to follow. The contrary is also true: where human resources are limited and under-utilized, failure is bound to follow. Govender (1989) found that the climate where teachers succeeded in promoting fluency in learners, was where there were small groups of homogenous learners. But in large, mixed classes, learners could not get much attention from the teacher and therefore struggled with their reading. This, he found was further exacerbated by racially mixed classes.

In most state schools today, the classes are heterogeneous and large, with teacher:pupil ratios going beyond 1:40. At the Newholmes KMEC, the average teacher: pupil ratio is 1:4. This seems to mean that the tutor is in a position to invest more time, resources and reserves on the learner, thus securing a quality education for the learner. This is possibly another factor that is drawing clients to the organization.

### **Computers as salient material resources**

Bennett (1991) looked at the effectiveness of computers in teaching mathematics. The classroom-based studies showed that using a computer to teach particular topics and general reasoning skills result in more rapid learning for pupils, more positive attitudes to subjects, and higher levels of achievement. They found that where reinforcement of skills takes place through a technological medium such as computers, much of the tension is diffused in learners (Bennett, 1991:34).

The reported gains in self confidence after success at learning via computer has brought on a whole new debate (Carpenter et al. 1996; Croll and Hastings. 1996; Tilston. 1991) in providing such a medium to learners who are on the fringe of intellectual stimulation and retention. From the responses of learners within Newholmes KMEC, there appears to be an overwhelming acknowledgment and appreciation for learning via the use of computers. Furthermore, parents, tutors and schoolteachers of these learners indicated

that there was an increase in the learners' self-confidence and their motivation to learn at school. The fact that the learners feel confident and competent in the area of their learning indicates that they seem to be stimulated at the Newholmes KMEC to produce better results. Furthermore, in the case of the Newholmes KMEC learners, their responses to the use of computers can be attributed, in part, to this positive change which appears to be reflected in their schoolwork.

For an organization to be seen as effective, it needs to reflect a futuristic image. The Newholmes KMEC is one such international organization that is making use of modern technological features to enhance its delivery of services, thus reflecting a futuristic image.

Fullan (1992) views change as 'resource hungry'. Change demands additional resources for training, new materials, new space, new ideas and time. Regular upgrading of resources is pivotal to promoting and facilitating change. The Newholmes KMEC therefore meets the demands for change by regularly upgrading its learning resources. For example, the computer programme at the KMEC was recently revamped in 2000 and was trialed amongst 360 centres internationally for cultural sensitivities, etc. The final version was launched in March 2001. This innovative move shows the organizations' commitment to be on track with global advancement in an attempt to provide a globally competitive product (KMEC Materials, 1996-2001).

### **Stimulating classrooms as physical resources**

Pillay (1995) looked at how classroom organization impacts on teaching and learning. Where strategic management of classrooms are undertaken, the interactions that take place within them are affected. This means that where teachers plan their environments for stimulating creativity and discussion, such expected behavioral outcomes are most likely to occur. An environment that is not conducive to stimulating thought will produce learners who are bored and disinterested in work and learning. Pillay (1995) found in his study that when classrooms are carefully structured for specific purposes, the learners

produced better results. Where the classrooms are under-resourced and not stimulating enough for learners, they became easily frustrated and bored. This impacted negatively on their class work and overall performance.

The environment within which the learners at the Newholmes KMEC learn is different from that of their classrooms in schools. The stimulating media and classroom layout, together with the games and puzzles in the reception area seem to be factors that attract learners' attention to the organization. The change in learning environments from school to the KMEC is another factor that attracts clients to the organization. An organization that has the capacity to attract clients succeeds in portraying a good image for itself, as appears to be the case for Newholmes KMEC.

#### **5.4 Learners' attitudes and educational outcomes**

Where learners felt happy, excited, motivated and secure, there seems to be a higher chance of them focusing more attention on the task on hand. Furthermore, where learning is viewed as fun, more meaningful integration of skills takes place. Williamson (1989) indicates that learning *can* be fun if it is presented well. The benefits for children include, amongst others, the reinforcement of concepts, exercises in prediction and problem solving and the development of a healthy self-concept.

From the learner responses, many of the Newholmes KMEC learners indicated that it was a fun place to be at. This attitude appears to be transferred onto their schoolwork. Schoolteachers, tutors and parents alike indicated that there were changes in learners' attitudes since attending classes at Newholmes KMEC, which have impacted positively on their academic performance at school. This seems to augur well for the organization in projecting itself as an effective organization.

### **Tangible indicators of progress**

The school reports of learners indicated that there were significant and meaningful changes in the learners' academic progress since attending classes at the KMEC. There are documented cases in the organization's records of learners who had received merit awards and progress certificates since attending classes at the KMEC. Notes and letters from parents to the MD and tutors seem to further indicate how stakeholders view the services of the organization.

### **5.5 Product brand and its influence on organizational effectiveness**

The general feeling many respondents have about the Newholmes KMEC is that it is effective because it is not a privately owned company. As a franchise, it is accountable to higher authorities and therefore needs to 'deliver' to avoid closure for mismanagement or misconduct. This brand name also seems to attract stakeholders and make them feel secure about the organization.

The success rate of franchises as indicated earlier by Reuvid and Priestner (1997) is relatively high and Newholmes KMEC appears to be amongst those successful organizations, probably because it is a franchise and it appears to have a quality product to offer to its clients.

### **5.6 Summary**

An organization's survival is dependent on its delivery of services. At the Newholmes KMEC services seem to be delivered using what is perceived to be quality resources as indicated above. If the general perception within the community is that the organization is delivering an effective service, then there will be support for that organization. Although there may be realistic and logical reasons for some members of the community not supporting the organization, this would not seriously jeopardize the organization's

existence. The significant factor is that the organization will be perceived to be effective if it does what it sets out to do.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This study was undertaken to highlight factors contributing to perceived organizational effectiveness within an educational organization. The study was conducted within a climate where there was an increase of supplementary education service providers in the country. The organization under study was one such service provider. The research was designed to capture the dominant perceptions of the stakeholders related to the effectiveness of the organization using literature-generated indicators of organizational effectiveness.

The study was guided by theories of organizational effectiveness that view inherent contradictions within the system as contributing towards this effectiveness. One major contradiction is that the organization serves the best interest of the community yet, by rendering service to the community, the organization is able to grow and sustain itself. The study made use of indicators of effectiveness to identify factors that appeared to be contributing to the perceived effectiveness of the Newholmes KMEC. This chapter provides a conclusion to the study and suggests recommendations for practice and policy as well as suggestions for further research.

#### **6.2 Conclusions**

The objective of this study was to determine what factors constitute organizational effectiveness within educational settings. From the different types of data collected in this study, the researcher was able to answer the research questions. These are summarized below:



The Newholmes KMEC is able to grow, as found in the various stakeholders' comments and in documentation. There are many new clients who enroll their children at the Newholmes KMEC in the hope that they will do better at school. This indicates that the Newholmes KMEC can be seen as effective in terms of growth.

The Newholmes KMEC is able to acquire and utilize its resources effectively and efficiently. Most of these resources come from the community where the organization is operating. This means that the community is aware of and contributes in some way towards these resources. Most of the perceptions that are contained in this study indicate a vote of confidence in the Newholmes KMEC primarily because the respondents seem to have faith in the way in which the resources are being used in the organization to improve learners' academic performances at school.

The Newholmes KMEC is able to gain acceptance within the community to continue rendering its services there. The fact that it can function effectively by gaining enough support from the community, indicates that the community finds a need for the service that the Newholmes KMEC offers them. This makes the Newholmes KMEC appear as a worthwhile organization that the community accepts and supports.

The Newholmes KMEC is able to sustain itself by rendering a service that is useful, professional and effective. The fact that public opinion rates the Newholmes KMEC as an honest, reputable organization, as alluded to by stakeholders such as the psychologist, chairperson of the local rotary club, secretary of the local parish and the bank manager, is an indicator that the Newholmes KMEC is establishing a name for itself within the Newholmes community. This is a further indicator of its effectiveness.

The Newholmes KMEC can be seen as profitable. Data from stakeholders' perceptions and documentation indicate that the Newholmes KMEC is profitable. Any organization that can generate profits while simultaneously offering a service, ought to be doing something worthwhile that makes clients want to support such an organization. This

reflects the ability of the organization to be seen as effective, as seems to be the case with Newholmes KMEC.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Based on stakeholder perceptions, observations and documentary sources, the recommendations for the Newholmes KMEC and other similar organizations are as follows:

1. The Newholmes KMEC and other similar organizations should continue to work closely with the community when acquiring further resources and make use of most of the resources from the community that it serves since the stakeholders view this in a very positive light. This has the benefit of greater involvement from the community as well as greater trust in the quality of the resources, if they are chosen well.
2. Knowledge of the activities of an organization, especially a service provider, ought to be disseminated well. This knowledge needs to be accurate and relayed through reliable sources to avoid the forming of misconceptions. Furthermore, not only must an organization be visible to the community, but the ethos under which it operates ought to permeate the community that it sets out to serve. Members of the community react to an organization by means of how it is 'perceived'. What an organization does and the manner in which its services are perceived, is vital to its growth and development.

In the case of the Newholmes KMEC, having established a name for itself within the community, it ought to protect this name by ensuring that the public perception remains good. This can be done by always providing a quality service that people can see and would want to make use of. Other similar organizations should also be mindful that public opinion weighs heavily in determining the growth and efficacy of the organization.

3. In order to grow and sustain itself, an effective organization ought to network effectively. Networking can be seen as the adherent that bonds the relationships together in the development of an effective organization. Therefore, an organization that wants to be effective ought to invest in building healthy and secure relationships with other similar and related organizations so that they can all work together towards the common good of the clients. Being a new organization, the Newholmes KMEC and other similar organizations ought to extend networks so that the organization can offer an even wider and better service.
4. Service excellence is a motto that many big companies pride themselves in. The ability of an organization to offer services to its clients that is beyond reproach is an indicator of its goal to establish itself as an effective organization. When clients see that they are getting a good service, they go out into the community and tell their friends and family about it. This sets off a chain reaction in favour of the organization and enables it to become a profitable enterprise. For the Newholmes KMEC, the added advantage it has is its internationally acclaimed status and programme. To ensure that learners get the most from the programmes, there also needs to be quality staff to administer to learners' needs. The Newholmes KMEC and other similar organizations need to always strive to get the best human resources to carry out the functions of the organization.

Therefore, resources, ethos, networks and excellent service appear to be key factors in establishing and maintaining an organization that wishes to be seen as effective. While in this study these key factors seemed to have been in place, thus strengthening stakeholders' perceptions of the organization as an effective one, they need to be constantly monitored and maintained in order for stakeholders' perceptions of the organization to be favourable.

## 6.4 Further research

The way in which the stakeholders perceive the organization under study indicates that they are generally happy with how the organization is operating within their community. The contradiction model of organizational effectiveness as outlined in the theoretical framework, informed this study that perceptions could go either in a positive or negative direction depending on a vast number of conditions influencing it. Of particular interest in this study are the issues of the political factors and the time frames that directly and indirectly impact on the organization's ability to grow and sustain itself.

Further research in the two fields mentioned above is recommended as follows:

1. The political climate within which the organization is operating.

Further research is needed in establishing whether the political climate is making it conducive for the organization under study to be perceived as effective. As indicated earlier, many individuals are disillusioned with what is happening at schools. The reason for clients seeking out and supporting the organization under study could be linked to its establishment and growth within the community where the need for a quality education is being felt.

2. The time frame within which this research was conducted.

The organization under study has been in operation within the community for just over two years. As a new educational centre, it is subject to the novelty that such newness brings. Further research needs to be done on this organization and other similar new organizations to determine how well such new organizations have been able to establish themselves within the community and how they establish themselves over a longer period of time, such as after five or ten years.

Further research is also needed to see whether the indicators of effectiveness used in this study can be applied to other similar organizations where stakeholders perceptions are considered important to the organization's existence and survival. As Doyle and Hartle, 1985 (cited in Owens; 1991:47) state, an organization exists because of the people/

stakeholders within it and not for its own sake. It is these people who have the power to influence the behaviour within the organization in a very definite way, thus determining the survival of the organization in the short, medium and long term.

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## Appendix A: Letter requesting permission to research organization

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### *Letters*

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Negotiating access letter

The Kip McGrath Education Centres

The Master Franchiser

16 February 2000

Dear Sir

I am a studying towards the degree of Masters in Education at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I would like to research your organization in the Pietermaritzburg area. I request permission to use this centre as my case study and would like to make mention of the name of your organization.

In the event of your favourable response, I would like to make mention of the fact that all costs related to the research will be borne by myself and there will be minimal disruption to the activities within the organization.

I await your favourable reply

Linda Ramnath

M.Ed student

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Letter to parents informing them of the research to be done at the organization  
(attached)

Letters from parents to the organization  
(attached)



Appendix B: Letter informing parents of research



Dear parents

Please be informed that I have been approached by a University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg Master of education student to do some research on our organization. The focus of this research is on perceptions that major stakeholders have on the organization.

Unfortunately, not all of you can be selected for this research. But I do hope that those among you who will be selected for this research, will not feel threatened in any way because the researcher has assured me of the confidentiality of all candidates. The findings will be used for research purposes only and no names will be divulged. I therefore wish you all the best.

I will receive a written feedback from the researcher after the research is completed and I will inform you of these findings in time. I hope you will find the experience enlightening.

Thank you for your support thus far.

Yours faithfully

*S. Bhattacharya*  
Director

02/11/2000



Appendix C: Letters from parents to the organization (x2)

Mr & Mrs Ramphal  
55 Valda Road  
Northdale  
Pietermaritzburg  
3201  
16 February 2001

Mr Bharath  
Tutor  
Kip McGrath  
Raisethorpe  
Pietermaritzburg  
3201

Dear Sir,

**RE : RUMON & TERI RAMPHAL**

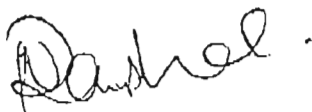
I write this letter out of a deep sense of gratitude to you . Firstly thank you very, very much for picking up the fact that Rumon has an eye problem. Having identified the source of Rumon's learning difficulties seems to make a huge difference to him.

Secondly I would like to thank you for your approach to Rumon & Teri, your kindness and patience helps them feel so comfortable about attending extra classes. Your ability to make learning an enjoyable experience makes all the difference to Rumon & Teri and they look forward to each lesson they have with you. In the short time they have attended your classes a gratifying improvement can be seen in their work.

Thank you once again for your positive input into Rumon's & Teri's life.

Yours sincerely

**MR & MRS RAMPHAL**



15 Baijoo Road  
Raisethorpe  
Pietermaritzburg  
3201

27/05/00

Mr. Ramnath  
Kip McGrath  
Education Centre  
Newholmes  
Pietermaritzburg

RE: Zeyn Shaik

Dear Sir

I wish to inform you that my son, Zeyn would no longer be attending the centre, after his 24th lesson assesment which should be on the 1/7/00.

My son has made exceptional progress since I sent him to you. He could not read simple books. Today he can't get enough of books. For that I am eternally grateful. Should I ever have a problem in the future, he will definitely be back.

Yours faithfully

Mrs. S. Shaik



## Appendix D: Questionnaire to learners

### Questionnaires

University of Natal – Pietermaritzburg  
School of Education

Learner Questionnaire

Official Use:

#### Confidential and Anonymous

- This questionnaire is confidential.
- The data will be used for research purposes only, and your name will not be disclosed.
- I would like to find out what you as a learner feel is contributing towards the effectiveness of the KMEC.

#### Section A

Please tick your answer in the appropriate column.

1. What is your gender?

Male

☐

Female

☐

2. What is your age?

6-9	10-12	13-15	16-18
-----	-------	-------	-------

Years

3. What grade are you in?

G1-3	G4-6	G7-9	G10
------	------	------	-----

4. What subject/s do you do at KMEC?

English:

☐

Maths:

☐

Both:

☐

5. Name the school you attend.

#### Section B

How did you first hear about KMEC?

Parent

☐

Teacher

☐

Friend

☐

How did you first feel when you came to KMEC?

Why do you think you come to the KMEC?

4. In your opinion is KMEC a nice place to learn in?

State why.

Yes

☐

No

☐

5. Your parents spend a lot of money to send you to KMEC. Do you think it is worth it? Explain why you say so.

6. Mention the things you like most about KMEC?

7. Mention the things you do not like about KMEC?

8. How do you find your school and KMEC in terms of the following:

	School		KMEC	
	Good	Bad	Good	Bad
• classroom atmosphere				
• buildings and furniture				
• books and other learning materials				
• teachers and school administrators				
• how other learners relate to you				
• use of your time				
• teaching methods				
• level of tests and remedial work				
• support from the teachers				

9. Are you more confident about doing Maths/English since attending classes at KMEC?  
Yes ☐ No ☐

What has brought about this?

10. In your opinion, does the KMEC help learners who are having problems at school in Maths/English? Yes ☐ No ☐

In what areas has KMEC helped you so far?

11. Are there other children that you know who have done better and/or passed at school after learning at KMEC? Yes ☐ No ☐

12. Would you tell your friends to come to KMEC if they had problems at school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Give a reason for your answer.

13. What final words do you have to say about the KMEC?

Thank you for your time and input.

Linda

M.Ed student

University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Appendix E: Questionnaire to parents

University of Natal  
Pietermaritzburg

Parent questionnaire

Official Use:

### Confidential and Anonymous

- This questionnaire is confidential.
- The data will be used for research purposes only, and your name will not be disclosed.
- It is intended to determine what you as the parent feel is contributing towards the effectiveness of the Kip McGrath Education Centres (KMEC).
- Most questions require you to tick your response in the appropriate column.

### Section A

Please tick your response in the appropriate box.

1. Gender

Male

☐

Female

☐

2. Age category

20-29 yrs

☐

30-39yrs

☐

40-49 yrs

☐

50+ yrs

☐

What grade is your child in?

Grade

☐

4. What subject/s does your child do at KMEC?

English

☐

Maths

☐

5. Name the school your child attends

school

### Section B

1. How did you first come to know about KMEC?

Advertisement	Friend	Family	Teacher	Psychologist	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Why did you take your child to the KMEC?

3. What ideas did you have of the KMEC initially?

Are you satisfied with the KMEC?

5. Some people say that private schools are just in for the money.

What is your views on KMEC?

6. Is your child happy to come and learn at KMEC? Expand.

7. Do you think that KMEC is helping your child?

What makes you hold this idea?

8. Does your child feel more confident about doing Maths/English since attending at KMEC?

What in your opinion has brought about this change?

3. Have you seen any improvements in your child since attending at the KMEC?

Expand

10. What role do you as a parent/guardian play at KMEC?

11. Is this role different from the role you play at school? Explain

12. Do you view sending your child to KMEC as a good investment? Expand

13. Are you happy with the service you are getting from KMEC? Expand

14. Would you recommend that other parents bring their children to the KMEC?

15. How would you rate the KMEC? eg. Excellent, good, satisfactory, average poor.

16. Further comments

Thank you for your time and input.

Linda

M.Ed student (University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg).

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Appendix F: Questionnaire to tutors

University of Natal  
Pietermaritzburg

Tutor's questionnaire

Official Use:

Confidential and Anonymous

- This questionnaire is confidential.
- The data will be used for research purposes only, and your name will not be disclosed. It is intended to determine what you as the tutor feel is contributing towards the effectiveness of the Kip McGrath Education Centres (KMEC).
- Most questions require you to tick your response in the appropriate column.

Section A

Please tick your response in the appropriate box.

1. What is your gender?

Male ☐ Female ☐

2. What is your age category

21-30yrs ☐ 31-40yrs ☐ 41-50yrs ☐ 51+yrs ☐ ☐

☐

3. What phase/s do you teach at KMEC?

4. What subject/s do you tutor at KMEC?

Maths



5. List your highest qualification i Professional M4/

ii) Academic

6. How many years of total teaching experience do you have?

Section B

1. How did you first come to know about KMEC?

Advertisement	Friend	Family	Teacher	Psychologist	Other (specify)

2. Why have you chosen to come to the KMEC?

3.1. How do you feel about working at the KMEC? Expand.

3.2. What do you like most about working at KMEC?

3.3. What do you like least about working at KMEC?

3.4. Do you as a tutor play any other role at the KMEC? Expand

3.5. Given the choice, would you continue working at the KMEC? Expand.

4. How do you think the classroom design and learning resources affect the interactions that take place in the KMEC classroom?

4.2. What features of the working environment contribute to the effectiveness of the KMEC?

5.1 What can you say about the parental involvement in this organization?

5.2. Do you think that it is a good investment for parents? Expand

6. What kind of difficulties do learners come with?

6.2. Do you think that the KMEC is helping the learner?

What makes you hold this idea?

6.3. In your opinion, do the learners feel more confident about doing the subject/s they enroll for after attending for at least one term at KMEC?

State what has brought about this?

6.4. What improvements do you see in these learners after at least one term?

Thank you for your time and input.

Linda

M.Ed student

University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

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Appendix G: Questionnaire to schoolteachers

University of Natal  
Pietermaritzburg

School teachers' questionnaire

Official Use:

Learner: \_\_\_\_\_

This questionnaire is confidential.

The data will be used for research purposes only, and your name will not be disclosed.

It is intended to determine what you as the schoolteacher feel is contributing towards the effectiveness of the Kip McGrath Education Centres (KMEC).

Most questions require you to tick your response in the appropriate column.

Section A

1. What is your gender? Male ☐ Female ☐

2. What is your age category 20-29yrs ☐ 30-39yrs ☐ 40-49yrs ☐ 50+yrs ☐

3. What grade/s do you teach?

Grade

4. What subject/s does the above learner do at KMEC? Maths ☐ English ☐

5. Name of your school

Section B

1. What do you know about the Kip McGrath Education Centres(KMEC)?
2. How did you come to know about KMEC?
3. You have learners from KMEC in your class, how do you view their performance in your class since they have been at KMEC? Expand.
4. How do you think your colleagues view the KMEC?
5. Do you deal with KMEC in any way? Expand on your response.
6. How do you feel about having such an organization in your community?
7. Further comments

Thank you for your time and input.

Linda

M.Ed student

University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

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## Appendix H: Questionnaire to school leavers

University of Natal  
Pietermaritzburg

School leavers' questionnaire

Official Use: No \_\_\_\_

### Confidential and Anonymous

- This questionnaire is confidential.
- The data will be used for research purposes only, and your name will not be disclosed.
- It is intended to determine what you as the school leaver feel is contributing towards the effectiveness of the Kip McGrath Education Centres (KMEC).
- Most questions require you to tick your response in the appropriate column.

Official Use:

### Section A

Please tick your response in the appropriate box.

#### A - Personal details

Gender: male ☐ female ☐

Age category: 18-20yrs ☐ 21-25 yrs ☐ 26+ yrs ☐

#### B - information on the organization

1. How would you rate the following:

- (a) having a supplementary educational centre in your community
- (b) the idea of individualized learning
- (c) learning through computers
- (d) learning with learners from other grades
- (e) learning with learners who are doing other subjects

Key:  
1= Excellent  
2= Good  
3= Satisfactory  
4= Poor  
5= Bad

2.1 Did you hear about the Kip McGrath Education Centres?

2.2. How did you come to know about the KMEC?

Tick the appropriate item

Advertisement	Friend	Family	Teacher	Psychologist	Other (specify)
---------------	--------	--------	---------	--------------	-----------------

3. Did you know the following about the Kip McGrath Educational Centre in your community?

Answer with a yes or no

- a) it offers tuition to school going children
- b) it makes use of computers
- c) it offers individualized learning
- c) clients pay high fees for services

4. Provide your comments on having the Kip McGrath Education Centres in your community?

5. If you were still a scholar, would you go for tuition to the KMEC? Give reasons for your answer.

6. In your opinion how do your fellow students view the KMEC as an educational service provider?

Tick the appropriate item

- a) positively
- b) negatively

7. Comment on the Kip McGrath Education Centres as an organization.

Thank you for your time and input.

Linda

M.Ed student

University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

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## Appendix 1: Questionnaire to housewives

University of Natal  
Pietermaritzburg

Housewives' questionnaire

Official Use: No \_\_\_\_

### Confidential and Anonymous

- This questionnaire is confidential.
- The data will be used for research purposes only, and your name will not be disclosed.
- It is intended to determine what you as the housewife feel is contributing towards the effectiveness of the Kip McGrath Education Centres (KMEC).
- Most questions require you to tick your response in the appropriate column.

### Section A

Please tick your response in the appropriate box.

Questionnaire based on the perceptions from the local housewives

#### A - Personal Details

Age group: 20s ☐ 30s ☐ 40s ☐ 50s ☐ 60s+ ☐

No of children

#### Key:

1= Excellent  
2= Good  
3= Satisfactory  
4= Poor  
5= Bad

#### B - Information on the organization

1. How would you rate the following:

- a) having a supplementary educational centre in your community
- b) the idea of individualized learning
- c) learning through computers
- d) learning with learners from other grades
- e) learning with learners who are doing other subjects

2.1 Did you hear about the Kip McGrath Education Centres?

2.2. How did you come to know about the KMEC?

Tick the appropriate response

Advertisement	Friend	Family	Teacher	Psychologist	Other (specify)
---------------	--------	--------	---------	--------------	-----------------

3. Did you know the following about the Kip McGrath Educational Centre in your community?

Answer with a yes or no

- a) it offers tuition to school going children
- d) it makes use of computers
- c) it offers individualized learning
- e) clients pay high fees for services

4. Provide your comments on having the Kip McGrath Education Centres in your community?

5. If you have children who need additional educational services, would you make use of the KMEC? Give reasons for your answer.

6. In your opinion how do the other housewives view the KMEC as an educational service provider?

Tick the appropriate box.

- a) positively
- b) negatively

7. Further comments on the KMEC as an organization.

Thank you for your time and input.

Linda

M.Ed student

University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

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***Interview Questions***

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**The Local Rotary club Chairperson**

1. What do you know about the Kip McGrath Education Centres (KMEC)?
2. How did you come to know about KMEC?
3. What are your opinions of the organization?
4. How do you think your club members' view the KMEC ?
5. Has your organization had any relationship (working or otherwise) with the KMEC? Expand.
6. Further comments

**The secretary of the local parish**

1. What do you know about the Kip McGrath Education Centres (KMEC)?
2. How did you come to know about KMEC?
3. What do you think about the KMEC?
4. How do you think your congregation view the KMEC?
5. Has your parish supported the KMEC in any way? Expand on your response.
6. Further comments

**The educational psychologist**

1. What do you know about the Kip McGrath Education Centres (KMEC)?

2. How did you come to know about KMEC?
3. From your relationship with the KMEC what do you think about the organisation?
4. How do you think your professional community view the KMEC?
5. Further comments

<b><i>Learners</i></b>
------------------------

1. Why have you come to KMEC?
2. Is KMEC helping you? In what ways are you being helped.
3. Do you like coming to KMEC? If yes, why do like coming to KMEC?  
If no, why do you dislike coming to KMEC?
4. How are you doing at school since attending classes at KMEC?
5. Would you ask your friends to come to KMEC?

<b>Managing Director</b>
--------------------------

A. Growth

- 1.1. How do you view the growth in terms of enrolments at your centre?
- 1.2. What in your opinion is contributing to this growth?
- 2.1. How do you view the public's perception of your centre?
- 2.2. Do you think that it is a significant factor contributing to their support of what you are doing in their community? Expand.

## B. Resources

- 3.1.' Is it relatively easy for you to acquire resources? · Expand.
- 3.2. Is it relatively easy for you to utilize these resources? Expand.
- 3.3. 1. How did you acquire your physical resources?
- 3.3.2. How much of these resources were acquired from the local community?
4. To what extent did you enlist the services of the local community in setting up your physical resources? Expand.
5. In what ways have the human resources contributed towards the growth and profitability of the your organization? Expand.
6. Would you say that your ability to acquire and utilize material resources is a significant factor contributing to your sustainability and growth? Expand.

## C. Profit

7. What do you think is contributing towards the growth and profitability of your organization?
8. Provide approximate figures of financial and enrolment growth in your organization.

<b>The financial manager at the bank</b>
--

1. What do you know about the Kip McGrath Education Centres(KMEC)?
2. What do you think about the KMEC?
4. How would you evaluate the KMEC as a business organisation? Expand.
5. Do you make use of the services that KMEC has to offer? Expand.
5. Further comments

## Appendix P: Site Observation Schedule

### ***Observation Schedule***

Classroom observation schedule

No of learners in class:

Duration of the lesson:

Indicator	Not at all	Sometimes	Several times	All the time
-----------	------------	-----------	---------------	--------------

1. Learning is activity-based				
2. Tutor asks questions				
3. Learners ask questions				
4. Tutor provides learners with individual feedback				
5. Learners given the opportunity to demonstrate what they learn				

6. Tutor makes maximum use of instructional time				
7. Learners comment actively on the lesson				
8. Learners make maximum use of activity session				