

**SCHOOL ETHOS AS INFLUENCED BY SCHOOL CATEGORISATION:
PERSPECTIVES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS FROM FIVE
SCHOOLS IN UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT**

BY

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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I, Dr S. E. MTHIYANE,

As the candidate's Supervisor I agree/do not agree to the submission of this dissertation.

.....

Supervisor's signature

.....

Date

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DEDICATION

To my late parents Douglas Mkhaliseni Thisha Nzuzwa who passed on when I had first taken step to this journey and my mother Ethel Lindeni Nzuzwa.

ABSTRACT

Several attempts have been made to understand the nature and quality of school education over the two past decades in response to the continuing poor performance of learners in public schools within South Africa. These attempts include a curriculum focus, school leadership and management focus, policy focus, teacher development focus, infrastructure focus and resource focus. Despite interventions in these areas, little improvement has been noted in the learner performance. In this study the researcher brings another perspective to the understanding of school or learner performance, that of the influence of school ethos to school categorisations. School categorisation within our education system seems to be quite ingrained with categorisation in terms of, amongst others funding (quintile rankings); user fees (fee-paying and no-fee paying); geography (rural, urban, township); poverty (feeding scheme); performance (national strategy for learner attainment and non- national strategy for learner attainment). Given this synopsis the question is asked: How does school categorisation influence school ethos and what are the implications of this on leadership, teaching and learning in public schools? Conceptualised within interpretivism and employing a qualitative, case study approach, this study explored the perspectives, experiences and practices of school principals and teachers at five schools about school ethos and its influenced on school categorisation and implications for this on school leadership, teaching and learning practices at researched schools. One education district in KwaZulu-Natal, namely: uMgungundlovu was conveniently selected for the study. Data generation methods which were used were semi-structured interviews, observations and document review. All ethical issues were observed. This study found that only school principals of the study schools were able to respond to the understandings of school categorisation as classification, clustering, grouping and demarcation of schooling system for the purpose of allocating funding. The findings on school ethos suggest that the participants understand what is meant to by school ethos, but in some schools the practise was incompatible with their knowledge. The findings also suggest that there were challenges regarding how schools were categorised and the impact of this on the school finances where most of the school funds were used to pay high amounts of utility bills and schools were left with less money to sustain their functionality. Furthermore, the fees charging schools had challenges in that fees were not paid even by those parents who supposed to pay which also impacted on the schools budgets. The findings also showed that the biggest, impediment, in running the schools was the autocratic and top-down approach the Department of Education applied to schools.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCING THE INQUIRY

1.1 Introduction

For some learners, their home life will provide them with an ethos and culture that values education and educational success but, for others, this is not the case. Hence, in these circumstances, a school needs to create an ethos and culture that values education as the first step to addressing educational inequality (Teach First, p.17, 2010).

This extract sets the scene of the purpose of this study as it explored school ethos as influenced by school categorisation. In order to present a sound argument, this chapter aims to provide the reader with a synopsis and orientation to the study. The chapter commences with the introductory remarks of the study, followed logically by the background to the study and the statement of the problem. The next section discusses the purpose of the study, the rationale for the study, significance of the study, research aims and key research questions, clarification of key concepts and delimitations of the study. In the final section, an outline is provided on how the dissertation is organised and lastly the summary of the chapter is presented.

1.2 Background to the study

During the apartheid era there were eighteen Departments of Education in South Africa that resembled the different demarcations of race, provinces and homelands (Sayed, 2002). The new Government of National Unity (GNU) after 1994 amalgamated these into one national and nine provincial, non-discriminatory departments of education for the non-racial South Africa (Sayed, 2002). Since 1994, all public schools in South Africa have been legally opened to all South Africans irrespective of race and other factors. Hence access to schools is no longer denied to learners based on racial backgrounds. That resulted in the GNU immediately introducing laws and policies aimed at transforming the education system to meet the new challenges. Some of these were the *Constitution of South Africa Act, 108 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa, 1996 a), the *South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996* (Republic

of South Africa, 1996 b) and the *White paper on Education and Training of 1995* (Republic of South Africa, 1995) which laid the foundations for the integration of schools in South Africa. These policies resulted in two types of schools in South Africa, namely independent and public schools. The category of private schools falls under the umbrella term “independent schools”, whereas all government schools fall under public schools. School categorisation in South African education system appears to be entrenched with categorisation in terms of issues like learner performance, geographical demarcation, quintile rankings, fee and non-fee paying schools, section 21 and section 20 schools, functional and dysfunctional schools, township or urban schools, rural schools which resulted in generating particular identities for schools (Armsterdam, Nkomo & Weber, 2012). Given the above background, this study focused on how the school ethos has been influenced by school categorisations in the five schools in uMgungundlovu district.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The aim of the South African government in desegregating schools that is both independent schools as well as public schools was to bring about integration among learners from different racial backgrounds so as to provide equal education opportunities for all learners (Vandeyar, 2010). The new era and the policies which were enacted by GNU promised among other things to transform education system by ensuring that all South African children would have access to a school of their choice. Likewise, that no child would be turned away from a public school on the grounds of ethnicity, race, religion or class, even financial position of parents. These policies created what Vandeyar (2010) postulates as opportunities for South African learners from diverse cultural backgrounds to attend public schools of their choice. She further states that such policies also resulted in learner migration where black learners flocked to historically White, Coloured and Indian schools in search of quality education, while Indian learners migrated to former white schools. I concur with Vandeyar (2010) when stating that the best thermometer of what would influence parental choice of schooling is the special character of a school or the school ethos because every parent wants the best education for his or her child. Echoing a similar sentiment is Hunt (2011) who suggests that schooling context shapes the identities of the learners in different ways such as the agency of individuals and groups as well as social relations of schools.

Looking at the categorisation of the school system, one would deduce that it deals with the aspects of the school integration process which ponders on the demographics of the school staff and learners (Amsterdam, Nkomo & Weber, 2012). School integration involves using the content from diverse groups during teaching skills and concepts, assisting learners to develop positive intergroup behaviours and attitudes, helping learners to understand how knowledge in various disciplines is constructed, modifying the strategies of teaching and learning so that the learners from different cultural, language, racial and the social class groups experience equal status in the life and culture of the school (Hunt, 2011). If one analyses how schools have been desegregated when they were categorised, one would expect that social integration would refer to more than just the number of whites and black learners but would include changing the school as a whole to meet the needs of all learners. This would also mean fostering meaningful interaction amongst learners in the classroom, on the playground, during extra-mural, cultural activities as well as instilling a human rights culture (Amsterdam, *et al*, 2012). Therefore, in exploring school ethos as influenced by categorisation I have interrogated the setting of the five study schools through the behaviour of learners and teachers and how such practice impact on the schools ethos.

Amongst the policies the GNU also introduced were measures to redress and equalise funding in all schools. This was done through establishing a policy through the *South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa, 1996 b) called the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (Department of Education, 1998). This policy was later amended in 2006 to Amended National Norms and Standards for School Funding policy (Department of Education, 2006). This policy focused on three main issues. Firstly the national funding norms and minimum standards for each learner were established. Thus the National Department of Education identified the amount each province should allocate to each learner. Secondly, the system of quintiles was established. This means schools were divided into five categories or quintiles, with the poorest schools in quintile 1 and the least poor in quintile 5. This kind of categorisation is based on schools' poverty status which is determined nationally on the basis of national data on levels of income, literacy rate and dependency ratios in the community in which the school is physically located. Thirdly, the policy divides public schools into fee-paying and no-fee schools which interpret that in the poorest two quintiles (quintile 1 and quintile 2) would have been declared as no-fee schools and are no longer allowed to charge school fees. These schools are allocated a larger amount of funding per learner to make up for loss of income from school fees (Sayed & Motala,

2012). This system of categorisation and quintile methods have posed a major impact on managing and leading schools and to carry on with daily functioning and activities of the school.

Alluding to school activities, Munn, Cullen, Johnstone and Lloyd (2001) define school ethos as underpinning all practices touching an all aspects of a school's operation and also reflecting a collective understanding of how things are done in school. In addition school ethos is constructed through an interaction between the culture mix of learners, teachers, parents, local community, school's official value system including the qualities of learning environment, values, beliefs and principles that are conveyed through the actions and behaviours (Smith, 2003). Other scholars have drawn attention to the idea of school ethos as learning, arguing that how the school is organised and run, offers important lessons for young people about citizenship, the nature of society, and their place and agency in it (Rodríguez-Sedano, Rumayor & Costa Paris, 2011). In contrast Vos, van der Westhuizen, Mentz and Ellis (2012) suggest that unhealthy ethos in a school can lead to a collapse in school activities and possible could also cause the school to become dysfunctional. Given this scenario, there was a dire need to explore the school ethos and how it is influenced by school categorisations in the five schools within uMgungundlovu district.

1.4 Purpose and rationale for the study

I was educated and qualified for the teaching profession during the apartheid era, segregation was heavily reinforced and authoritarian rule was the norm. I was then taught not to question the information that was cascaded to me and being a victim of corporal punishment are just some of my experiences of schooling. Seeing the advent of democracy two main policies emerged with two broad categories of schools; namely: public and independent schools (Weber, Nkomo & Amsterdam, 2009). These changes were brought through mainly by two pieces of policies which are the *National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996* and *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) which were developed to encourage the process and formalised desegregation of South African schooling system thus creating the opportunity for learners from diverse cultural backgrounds to attend schools of their choice (Vandeyar & Killen, 2007). The categorisation of schools into public and private schools opened my eyes as if I have been in two different worlds. Hence the purpose of this

study sought to explore the potential influence that the school categorisation have on the school ethos in the five schools within uMgungundlovu district.

As an educator in a school within uMgungundlovu district who has taught in the school for the past twelve years and now a deputy principal, I have observed with great interest the changes that have taken place in the education sector around the country. Attending circuit meetings I have witnessed schools managed by my professional colleagues in the same geographic area put under National Strategy for Learner Attainment (NSLA) programme because of their schools poor matric results. NSLA is an intervention programme by the Department of Basic Education which is intending to turn around the schools that are underperforming. However, this programme is also intended for the development of various aspects of education system with the purpose of school improvement and subsequently learner performance (Taylor & Prinsloo, 2005; Guest, 2008). Given this one example of learner performance it also gives a picture of an impact caused by the way schools have been categorised. This alludes to the fact that for successful or better achievement in a school the ethos has a role to play. In support of this notion is Graham (2012) who purports that a positive school ethos is considered as a key factor that also contributes to learner achievement as well as successful school improvement.

Despite the large amount of money spent on education in South Africa, researchers have noted that South African schools are still seen at the bottom in terms of learner attainment compared to other countries of the world (Carnoy, Chisholm, Addy, Arends, Baloyi, Irving, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Van der Berg, Burger, Burger, de Vos, du Rand, Gustafsson, Moses, Shepherd, Spaul, Taylor, Broekhuizen & Fintel, 2011 & Spaul, 2012). One of the assessments that a lot of money is spent on it is the Annual National Assessments (ANA) which rank schools in terms of performance but does not yield any good results for the country. Categorisations of schools have resulted in creating particular identities for schools. Furthermore, categorisation has generated a particular social reality for the schools which shape teaching and learning in unique ways (Nasir & Cooks, 2009). I have also observed that due to categorisation schools in the same geographical area are treated and recognised differently and unevenly by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education in a sense that for example, one school is a fee paying school and the other is a non-fee paying school in the same area.

I would like to thank National Research Foundation for availing funds for me to engage into this study. This research is worth doing because few studies (Van der Berg, 2001; Vandeyar & Killen, 2007; Nkomo & Vandeyar, 2007; Nasir & Cooks, 2009) have been conducted in the country on school categorisation especially on school ethos as influenced by school categorisation. This justified the study's focus on the perspectives of school principals and teachers in the study schools. Thus this study was significant because its findings may add to body of knowledge on school ethos as influenced by school categorisation.

1.5 Significance of the study

Given the purpose and rationale above, this study explored the school ethos as influenced by categorisation through the voices of school principals and teachers in the researched schools. Thus the study was significant because its findings may assist the school leaders, school governance and the community in managing the school ethos surrounding the issues of school categorisation. Researchers have hence failed to grasp the full extent to which school categorisation and ethos determine how identities are developed, how there are formed, how people relate to one another, as well as their perceptions and how they live (Weber, Nkomo & Amsterdam, 2009). In this study, I am of the view that the findings of this research may have significant implications for school practice, improvement, effectiveness and policy. The significance of this research may further inform education authorities of the incongruence between the policy of school categorisation and the real practices at the schools. Above all the findings of this research may also add to scholarly research and literature in the field of education.

1.6 Aims of the study

Given the preceding background and rationale the objectives of this study are:

- To understand what is school ethos and how it is influenced by school categorisation.
- To explore what do participants understand to be school categorisation and school ethos.
- To explore how do participants live and practice their school ethos on a regular basis.
- To explore how and why school categorisation influences school ethos.

1.7 Key research questions

This study seeks to answer the following key questions:

Main research question

- What is school ethos and how is it influenced by school categorisation?
- Sub-research questions
 - What do participants understand to be school categorisation and school ethos?
 - How do the participants live and practice their school ethos on a regular basis?
 - How and why does school categorisation influence school ethos?

1.8 Clarification of key concepts

Since the purpose of this study sought to illuminate understanding of school ethos as influenced by school categorisation through the perspectives of principals and teachers in five schools in uMgungundlovu district this section explains the two concepts that are framed in this study.

1.8.1 School ethos

Munn, Cullen, Johnstone and Lloyd (2001) describe school ethos as underpinning all practices, touching on all aspects of the school's operation and reflecting a collective understanding of how things are done in a particular school. Similarly, McLaughlin (2005) defines school ethos as the prevalent or characteristics tone, spirit or sentiment informing an identifiable entity involving human life and interaction. This definition embraces the factors that contribute to the smooth running of the school such as activities and human relations within the school to mention a few which are performed under the umbrella of school ethos. Smith (2003) proposes that school ethos embraces all aspects of school culture, climate and philosophy that impinge directly on pupils' affective and cognitive learning and are perceived by all school's stakeholders. School ethos is constructed through an interaction between the culture mix of teachers, pupils, parents, the local community and the school's official values system mediated through organisational structures and processes and also by staff culture, climate and competence.

1.8.2 School categorisation

Durand and Paoletta (2013) define categorisations as socio-cultural perspectives that explicitly consider the role of audiences and the classification systems, whereas, Albert and Whetten (1985) define categorisation as the treatment of a group of entities as equivalent where entities belong. Smith (1989) refers to categorisation as a set of entities that are grouped together. I understand these definitions as a matter of grouping, clustering or classification of things or items together for the certain purpose. As it is stated that categorisation is similar to classification, Dittmar, Mendelsohn and Ward (2002) define school classification as a group of schools that are geographically as close and accessible to each other as possible. In the same vein Media in Education Trust (2004) sees a school cluster as an organisational tool comprising schools that are grouped together for the purpose of service delivery.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

This study was confined to the study of school ethos as influenced by school categorisation at five schools in uMgungundlovu district in the province of KwaZulu-Natal and cannot be generalised to other schools in other districts. As school categorisation has come with the *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996* (Republic of South Africa, 1996 b), I am of the view that some aspects of this study could have some significance to other public schools in KwaZulu-Natal as well as for the other eight provinces of South Africa even though that was not the intention of this study.

1.10 Organisation of the study

The research study is divided into six chapters which are as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction to inquiry. This introductory chapter orientates the reader to the study. It commences by setting the scene with a quotation, followed by the background to the study and statement of the problem. In the next section of chapter one, I discuss the purpose and rationale for the study followed by the significance of the study. Aims of the study as well as key research questions underpinning the study are highlighted. The two key concepts

utilised in the study are defined. What follow next are the delimitations and the organisation of the study. I conclude this chapter by providing the summary of the chapter.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Frameworks. This chapter reviews the body of literature and theoretical frameworks pertinent to the study.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology. The key focus areas of this chapter are paradigmatic position of the study; description of the research design methodology; target population; data generation methods; data analysis; issues of trustworthiness; ethical consideration and limitations of the study.

Chapter Four and Five: Data Presentation and Discussion. This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study which are presented thematically.

Chapter Six: Study Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations. This chapter presents the summary of the study, the conclusions reached as well as suggest recommendations based on findings. The chapter concludes with the implications of the study, suggestions for future research and chapter conclusion.

1.11 Chapter Summary

An introductory overview of the chapter and the study was presented. It was then followed by a background and statement of the problem. The historical South African context in relation to education system during apartheid period to democratic government was highlighted. This was followed by purpose, rationale and significance of the study. Aims of the study and key research questions for the study were highlighted. The definition of the key concepts utilised in the study and delimitations of the study were elucidated. Finally, the organisation of the study and chapter summary were presented. In the next chapter a review of the related literature and the theoretical frameworks that underpin this study are presented.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the introduction and background to the study. In this chapter, literature that foregrounds and supports the study is reviewed together with theoretical frameworks. The aim is to review the available and relevant literature and highlight findings from various studies internationally, continentally and nationally. This chapter commences by conceptualising the school ethos and concepts related to it, and to present studies on school ethos, school categorisation and theoretical frameworks that underpin this study. The chapter concludes with a chapter summary.

2.2 Literature review

Literature review is the conceptual or theoretical writing in an area and the empirical data based research studies in which someone has gone out and generated and analysed data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The purpose of literature review in this study is to present issues in the literature relating to school ethos and school categorisation. I engaged in a comprehensive search of various literatures from international, continental and national in order to elicit relevant information pertaining to the study.

2.2.1 Origin of school ethos

The term school ethos is credited to the work of Rutter, Maughan and Ouston (1979) who, in their study of school effectiveness found that some schools provided more positive experiences of their learners than might otherwise have been expected. When Rutter, *et al.*, (1979) were unable to link the phenomenon of school effectiveness to the usual factors such as: the social organisation of the school, characteristics of the learners, behaviour of learners and interactions between the school and its environment they introduced the notion of school ethos. The literature then identifies a link between school ethos, school effectiveness and school improvement (Glover & Law, 2004; McInerney, 1992; Mortimore, 1988). School

ethos is associated with concepts such as school culture, school climate and school atmosphere and embrace some aspects of school environment and relationships between those within it (Manchester & Bragg, 2013; Glover & Coleman, 2005). The origins of the use of the term 'culture' to describe life inside schools began with Waller (1932), who noted that schools have an identity of their own, with complex rituals of personal relationships, a set of folkways, moral codes, customs and irrational sanctions (Maslowski, 2006).

Thus the school culture is understood to be the unwritten assumptions or rules, the collection of symbols and artefacts, combination of rituals and traditions, the special language and terminology that learners and staff use and the expectations about change and learning that embrace the school "world" (Deal & Peterson, 2009, p. 5). Maslowski (2001, p. 8) also defines school culture as "cultural artefacts, the basic assumptions, norms and values shared by school members influencing their functioning at school. This is similar to the definition by McLaughlin (2005, p.312) who defines school ethos as "the characteristic or prevalent tone, sentiment or spirit informing an identifiable entity involving human life and interaction". Other scholars suggest that ethos or culture is able to mediate the effects of other educational characteristics or practices such as ability grouping and school size (Opdenakker & Van Damme, 2009; Hallam, Ireson & Davies, 2004). Culture is defined as the way people do things in an organisation and also the way of life of a particular group (Fink, 2000; Bush & Anderson, 2003). Moloji (2005) and Fink (2000) suggest that culture is equivocal and is easy to define and can be observed through behavioural indicators. These indicators, according to Deal and Peterson (2009), are symbols, tribes, rituals language and stories. In a sound or unsound school culture there are sub-cultures that make up a culture for a school. Hence each school has its own norms, beliefs and values that form its culture and it is the same culture that makes each school unique. School ethos is formulated by the people within its organisation and it is left entirely up to them to sustain it or let it fade.

In addition, school climate refers to characteristics of psychosocial environment, which simply refers to interpersonal relationships between teacher-learner relationship, peer relationships, teachers' beliefs and behaviours, teachers' communication styles and classroom management (Allodi, 2010). The indicators of school climate according to Grayson and Alvarez (2008) are: learner behaviour values, parent / community relations and administration. Adding to these components of school climate is Kantarova (2009) who also mentions: school rules and discipline in class, the solidarity of the class as a social group, the overall attitude to school and motivation to study and the architectural and hygienic aspect of

the school. It is thus clear that for the school to embrace its ethos there must be collaboration within its community. With that said, ethos must resonate with the wider community which the school serves and from which it can draw its strength Kantarova (2009). Only when all involved within the school community have ownership of ethos can it become a lived reality. If a school fails to engage in dialogue and has no communication channels it makes it impossible to subscribe to an ethos which is imposed (Allodi, 2010). Sociologist, Gay (1996) identifies school ethos and school culture as a contributor to organisational success and as a practical solution to improve performance. Elaborating on this is Tech First (2010) who states that a focus on school ethos can provide huge benefits for very little financial cost and thus offers a way of improving schools even in an era of severity.

Likewise, many scholars have also linked the terms school culture, school climate or organisational culture to school effectiveness or school improvement with an aim to find out the performance of learners in their school setting (Deal & Peterson, 2009; Schoen & Teddlie, 2008; Muijs, Harris, Chapman, Stoll & Russ, 2004). According to Hargreaves (2001), school effectiveness is concerned with the school's structure and culture and how these are expressed in its policies and practices and specifically how they relate to and promote the overall goals of the school as well as the teacher effectiveness at classroom level. He further states that school improvement is concerned with enhancing and realising the school's capacity to achieve its goals and promote teacher effectiveness at classroom level. Macbeath and Mortimore (2001) postulate that the concept school effectiveness is associated with learner attainment and the traditional views of how the school operates. In Northern Ireland the policy document, *Every School a Good School* (Department of Education, Northern Ireland, 2009) promotes effective leadership and ethos of aspiration and high achievement as one of six key principles for improving schools.

2.2.2 Effectiveness of school ethos

Similarly, in England, the Department of Education (2011) states that a positive school ethos is paramount in obtaining a successful learning environment. In the same vein, South Africa has moved along the road of enhancing school effectiveness and improvement by implementing the whole-school approach to effectiveness and improvement (Department of Education, 2001). Schools as formal organisations are purposeful and have a vested interest in achieving educational goals (Van der Westhuizen, 2013). However, the latter broadens the

discourse by contextualising school effectiveness within the school's organisational culture and concludes that school and their effectiveness lie in the effectiveness of parents, learners and teachers. School ethos speaks to the manner in which the school is organised and it is critical to its effectiveness and furthermore, the school that sets realistic educational goals is likely to be effective. Such schools have aims that are enshrined in their vision and mission statements within the context of highly organised educational settings. Supporting this view is Msila (2011) who found that utilising vision and mission statements is crucial in guiding the school and it should be communicated to all staff members and learners all the time. Realistic goals ensure that the school is managed with a vision in mind which then enhances its effectiveness for that to happen there should be commitment in the school. As the schools primary objective is learning, teachers must commit to that, also to ensure that their school ethos is not left out but is always enhanced even when it comes to delivering of the curriculum. Day, Elliot and Kington (2005) suggest that teacher commitment is an ingredient of quality education determined by school culture, personal and policy contexts. Reasoning from these authors' thoughts, I argue that once the school has developed good policies and has united culture in which every teacher has buy-in to it, that teacher would be able to commit himself or herself to the profession. Thus quality education would be the order of the day. The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (2001) define teacher professionalism as relating to the inculcated behaviour of teachers who commit themselves to the act of teaching by demonstrating the values that the profession is meant to uphold. Msila (2011) posits that many failing schools have low pass rates because among other things, there is no commitment among teachers. In a school where teachers display and implement commitment, Teddlie and Reynolds (2000) state that such teachers are effective when they generate a positive school culture that is collaborative, collegial and consistent which yields better results for the learners.

A study was conducted by Graham (2012) in United Kingdom to elicit the views of final year learners on what they attribute to their experiences of school and from this to draw an understanding of the phenomenon of school ethos. Graham (2012) positioned this study with much investigative work conducted into school improvement from the perspectives of learners' voices, which has been linked to helping schools to grow and develop in new directions. Central to the findings were the acts of solicitude which was linked to issues of trust and suspicion thus influencing the behaviour of learners, the mood of social group and to the overall atmosphere in the school. Acts of solicitude are credited to the Heidegger

(2005) analysis of concern for other people with our concern for things in the world. Heidegger (2005) posits that both concern and solicitude are indicators of the phenomenon of care. This philosopher holds that the totality of being in the world as a structural whole is care. Hence the act of solicitude which takes away others' care by leaping in for the other, curtails limits and perhaps even partially destroys the structural whole of the others' being in the world. This implies other person is frequently dominated by or becomes dependent upon the person who has invaded his or her space.

The notion of trust is found within the wider literature on ethos (Brahnam, 2009; Smith, 2004; Halloran, 1982). These scholars express that the classical interpretation of ethos focuses on the public expression of a speaker's words, actions and the extent to which the speaker can be thought of as trustworthy and credible. Another finding by Graham (2012) was the structure and organisation of the school determined where and when learners could meet which in turn had an impact on the ethos as experienced by the learners. Teachers are also cited in the findings of the study as the negative acts of solicitude in a sense that they would punish the entire class in response to the actions of a few lawbreakers. This finding is compatible with the views held by Alder (1993) in her articulation of relationship between the school environment, organisation, structures and school ethos. It also aligns with the claims made by Eisner (1994) that highlights the impact of the structure and organisation of the school on its ethos. Dias and Menezes (2013) also report how space and time for informal and formal opportunities for creating dialogue between staff and learners has been at the heart of school ethos and school improvement activities. Deducing from the above findings, it is clear that the human resource together with infrastructure can contribute positively or negatively to the ethos of the school. It is not only people within the school who should contribute in building a better school ethos but the places where these people meet, socialise and utilise should also be considered. For example, in other schools staffrooms are demarcated in such a way that cliques of certain people have their own space where they meet and socialise and as such have created their own culture within the school. The same applies to learners on the ground where a certain group of learners have their own space to sit.

2.2.3 Practice of school ethos

A mixed method study conducted by Brown, Busfield, O'Shea and Sibthorpe (2011) within a London district school explored the extent to which the school ethos and good practices informed the delivery of personal and social health education. The findings of the study showed that the study schools have a mission statement with clear defined sets of aims and values but staff members were not familiar with them. However, they were able to articulate the less formal school ethos relatively comfortably. The mission statement, according to Daft (2000), connects and clarifies principles and values of the organisation. Daft (2000, p. 394) further states that a good mission statement often "brings out the best in people by enlightening important values, speaking to people's hearts and letting them be part of something bigger than themselves". Other scholars share a similar perspective and posit that mission is a symbolic expression of the organisation's interest and reason for being, state its purpose, direction, focus and convey its identity (Deal & Peterson, 2009; Robinson, Lloyd & Rowe, 2008). Contrary to Brown, *et al.*, (2011), a study by Jurasaitė-Harbison and Rex (2010) report on their study that schools referred to their mission statement frequently and their mission statements also correspond to their countries different histories. It can be reason that all stakeholders in these schools are loyal to their countries hence it would be easy to create a mission statement that everyone buys into it.

The above simply means the school with a vision and mission statement displayed on the walls for easy visibility shows commitment and its norms as well as values of the school. Thus, I concur with this idea in a sense that once the mission statement is visible not just hanging in the principal's office, it give all teachers to glance at it consciously thus reminds him or her what the school stands for where is it heading. Also parents coming to school to enrol their children will have snap shot of the schools objectives and its future. It is for such reason that the vision and mission of the school is essential to be known by everybody who has an interest in the school. Thus vision and mission are symbol statements which explains to people out there what the school stands for, where is it going and what it wants to achieve. If the vision and mission statement of the school is clearly spelt out, it can easily market the school. Some scholars on schools' vision and mission state that the latter is related to school leadership (Robinson, *et al.*, (2008); Murphy, 2005; Mulford & Silins, 2003). There is a notable difference in the manner in which scholars in transformational leadership and instructional leadership consider the use of vision and mission in school improvement.

Transformational leadership scholars posit that the values inherent in the vision and mission statement should be followed (Mulford & Silins, 2003) while the scholars in instructional leadership domain assert that schools' vision and mission goals should contain an academic focus (Robinson, *et al.*, 2008); Murphy, 2005). Thus the transformational leadership scholars posit that the academic focus is not sufficient therefore schools success should move beyond academic achievement and those values built in the vision and mission are equally important. I agree with the notion of transformational leadership in a sense that vision and mission statement apart from including academic focus should incorporate the core values of life such as having a moral character in order to articulate a vision and make followers buy into it. As a transformational leader is it important that you articulate a vision of the future and influence followers to own it so that it can be interpreted as the school ethos. Whilst instructional leadership is more of disseminating information to the followers and monitor it being carried out. Hence in a school ethos that is vibrant, the school community must be influenced by its ethos, groomed and transformed to be the wealthy citizens.

Brown *et al.*, 's (2011) study also shows that there is a strong relationship between all members of the school community because of the open dialogue and role play that involved all stakeholders of the school. This is reflected in a form of learners involved in shaping the school policies through school council. Parents are kept informed and they are regular invited to evening school meetings through newsletter, direct communications and consent forms. Mager and Nowak (2012) claim that listening to learners, encourages them to participate and giving them more responsibilities is an important way to create a better functioning school. The findings of the study by Koross, Peter, Ngware, Sang and Anthony (2009); Ishabangu (2012) indicate that parental participation has a positive impact on school culture and on the teaching and learning process when there is active and frequent contacts between parents and school administration in improving schools' financial accountability. Walker (2012) proclaims that educational improvement is only possible if those closest to the point at which decisions are enacted become the architects of those decisions. This is line with Kumar and Khadir (2012); Dykstra and Kucita (2008); Caldwell (2005) which highlight that decentralisation gives schools more power in decision making and has proven to impact positively in improving school effectiveness and performance thus resulting in positive school culture.

Contrary, a study by Gillard (2011) in Malaysia found that the rigidity of top-down school administration system became a major constraint for parents to air their ideas and thoughts as

well as to be one of the important parts in school management affairs. In such a case it is clear that the school ethos is not conducive if other important stakeholders such as parents have no voice in the running of the school. Given the definition of school ethos as defined by Smith (2003) in chapter one of this study who alludes to the fact that school ethos embraces all stakeholders. Elaborating on this Mncube (2009) points out that democratic school governance implies that all the stakeholders, including parents, decide on school policies which affect the education of their children.

Striepe, Clarke and O'Donoghue (2014) conducted a study at three faith-based schools in Australia and found that school ethos was characterised by the following features: respect, trust, continuous empowerment, serving others, collegiality, shared values, caring and teamwork. It was also found that the principle of good academic performance was the responsibility of each staff member for the success of every learner. Furthermore, the schools in the above mentioned study value and believe that learning is for everyone in the school, hence staff members search for innovations which lead to good academic performance for learners. Lumby (2003) highlights the importance of meeting and identifying development needs of teachers in schools. He points out that since education is changing rapidly, staff must demonstrate the importance of lifelong learning by their own involvement in on-going self-development. This kind of innovation must be driven by the leader of the school so as to have an effective school. Msila (2011) argues that when leaders learn innovations about the aspect of organisational culture, they learn to craft a vision which subsequently leads to effective organisations. He further states that the failing schools usually have leaders who are not lifelong learners and visionaries. Simultaneously, knowledge and friendly school culture should be established so as to allow school members to have positive ideas of knowledge, not exclude knowledge sharing, and make knowledge management correspond to existing culture of school organisation (Zhao, 2010). Adding to this discussion is Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace and Thomas (2006) who highlight that professional learning communities as a social construct, expect three things: first, collaboration as a key to school culture; second, an impact on student learning; and third, and more recently, as a school improvement strategy. As my study seeks to explore school ethos as influenced by school categorisation these three aspects are considered very important and the study will seek to investigate whether they exist in the study schools and to explore in what manner these phenomena are enacted in these schools. If such does not exist, what is it that they call school ethos in their viewpoints?

Furthermore, the study will explore the implications of categorisations in the study schools in terms of how they are managed and functioning in the current era.

Concurring with the Striepe, *et al.*,’s (2014) study are the findings by Hatton (2013) study conducted in North England involving primary and junior schools from both rural and urban areas where the mixed method approach (as triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data) was utilised. Hatton (2013) found that respect and teamwork was the order of the day in these schools. Teachers in these schools treat learners with great respect and learners views are always taken into consideration. This indicates the importance of learner participation in school matters by the management and teachers as a means to nurture the school ethos as learner body views are important in the smooth running of the school and for the school to prosper. In support of this participation is Mncube (2009) who suggest that listening to learners, encouraging their participation and giving them more responsibility and power leads to a better functioning school.

2.2.4 Significance of school ethos to school performance

In another study conducted in Kenya by Jelagat (2014) to explore the influence of school culture on performance of public schools demonstrated that school ceremonies have a significant effect of schools’ academic performance. In these schools the ceremonies that were recognised were prize giving days and closing ceremonies. According to Rud and Garrison (2010), ceremonies formalise embodied actions that raise attitudes and feelings about values, beliefs and norms of conduct in those who perform them with commitment. A ceremony is defined by Woodruff (2001, p. 50) as “ceremony is like a language, you cannot simply invent it and you cannot do it all by yourself, it must be part of the texture of a shared culture”. Elaborating on school ceremonies, Deal and Peterson (2009) describe ceremonies as cultural events in which organisations celebrate success, communicate values and recognise the special contributions of employees. Given the role of ceremonies as the schools recognise such events, the whole school community has a role to reinvent and recover ceremonies to shape a school ethos. Such events mould the school together and it defines how unique the school is in a way it does things. In support of this culture are Herzberg’s (2005) theory which highlights those intrinsic factors like achievement and recognition that motivate and brings job satisfaction to members in an organisation.

Furthermore, a study by Jelagat (2014) in Kenya also found that there was a significant influence of school rituals on Kenya certificate of secondary education performance. According to Boyer and Lienard (2006), rituals represent an essential part of everyday life in the context of social enhancement and are used to establish collective representations and community identity. School rituals are daily comings and goings that create the sealant that binds people and activities and as a result they provide behavioural glue that holds a school together (Deal & Peterson, 2009). School rituals motivate learners, teachers, parents and the community around the school which result in schools being taken seriously by these organs and the school becomes a safe place thus the performance of learners improve. Furthermore, business organisations are keen to support schools that are active and thus lead to them offering bursaries to high performing learners. Another finding that has a significant influence on performance, according to Jelagat (2014), are school values that are embedded with the members of the schools thus makes them perform their duties as expected of them which in turn improves academic performance of the schools. Similarly, Halstead and Taylor (2000) describe the concept of values as ideals or beliefs for which people strive and broad standards by which particular practices are regarded as desirable or good. Values are principles, standard or quality that are considered desirable or undesirable, good or bad and worthwhile (Muller, 2004). Given these definitions of values, there is a consensus that values can be seen as practices or standards that people regard as desirable, that also guide their behaviour in a positive or negative manner. Once the values are embedded within members, they will be able to perform their duties as expected of them. In United Kingdom, Glover and Law (2004) conducted a study with three thousand three hundred learners in eleven secondary schools found that the most successful schools, as judged by the learners outcome and stakeholders support, are those that have a clearly stated set of values that are monitored to ensure that they are fundamental to policy and practice. According Herzberg's (2005) two-factor theory, extrinsic factor causes dissatisfaction. If the school values are recognised it will thus reduce dissatisfaction that will in turn result to improving academic performance of the school.

Furthermore, Jelagat's (2014) study demonstrates the effects of school artefacts on academic performance in a sense that as the learners, teachers and management visually look at artefacts, they are motivated to work harder than before. School artefacts are described by Schein (2010) as visible or tangible, anything that one can see, feel, hear in the organisation and often things noticeable about an organisation, especially when someone enters that

organisation. Artefacts are key in establishing cultural cohesion and pride of the school and help in maintaining core values of the school (Deal & Peterson, 2009). In a school ethos that recognises artefacts, the classrooms display the work of learners that have worked well so as to motivate those that have not worked to the best of their ability to do so. Also the hallways of those schools display learners and teachers accomplishments, motivating messages, awards and school sport mottoes. Deal and Peterson (2009) further posit that artefacts that recognise the accomplishments of learners, teachers and community members, focus attention on core values, motivate effort and shout out that the school has done great, if not excellent things.

Another qualitative study similar to Jelagat (2014) that was conducted in Lesotho by Rampai (2009) explored school cultures associated with high learner performance in two primary schools. This study showed that high performance in these schools was facilitated by good time management. Balduf (2009) defined time management as an active process of coordinating planning, directing and controlling the amount of the time devoted for specific activities, programmes tasks in order to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the organisation, such which will bring about effective goal achievements of such organisation. Elaborating on this are the findings of the study by Abimiku (2014) in Nigeria, which shows that for effective learner academic performance to be enhanced, both the learners and the staff need to commit themselves towards effective management of the allocated time, utilisation of such time towards enhancing administrative effectiveness in such a school organisation. This is in line with *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998) which states that all teachers should be in school no less than seven hours per day. Studies of dysfunctional schools found that teaching and learning does not start when learners enter school due to unnecessary staggering that prevails from both teachers and learners which interprets to disregard of time management (Bergman, Bergman & Gravett, 2011; Maree, 2010; Fleisch, 2008; Kamper, 2008; O'Sullivan, 2005).

Rampai's (2009) study also shows that the rituals and ceremonies form part of the schools culture. What is different from Jelagat's (2014) study is that during ceremonies, not only learners are recognised but teachers as well are recognised in a form of certificates. During these activities parents and school advisory committee members are expected to attend and be part of the gathering. Furthermore, teachers are also praised during staff meetings for whatever contribution they have put to the school. When teachers receive rewards, they tend to view them as validation that they are valued. An example of such school ethos can be demonstrated by teachers who go the extra mile to work hard with learners to achieve awards

through participating in activities such as drama, music, cultural, scouting, and sports. Teachers themselves can motivate learners by taking part in activities like the Comrades Marathon and Two Oceans Marathon. By doing so the school will build ethos of extra-curricular activities in the broad educational programmes. In another study by Osei-Owusu, Osei-Owusu and Effah (2014), explored factors that lead to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction of Senior High School teachers in Ghana and the results showed that teachers were comfortable with reward of doing a good job and that motivated them more to work harder. Evans (1999) elaborates on this, suggesting that teachers are motivated by the recognition of their talents or efforts which results to a model of job fulfilment hence it built self-esteem but they are demotivated by lack of being undervalued. In a school that embraces its ethos by recognising teachers that go the extra mile and give their full potential is when such teachers who are for example good in a particular activity would impart those skills to the learners. Such teachers could excelling in drama, music, sports and cultural activities and they would do these activities after hours and weekends also go as far as sacrificing their holiday and take learners to compete with other schools.

Rampai's (2009) study also showed that there is good relationship among learners and teacher which suggest positive climate in schools. Similarly, Allodi (2010) posits that interpersonal relationships, learner and teacher relationship, peer relationships, teachers' beliefs and behaviours, teachers' communication style and classroom management are essential in social climate of learning environments. Sharing the same sentiments are Murray-Harvey and Slee's (2010) study that shows that the quality of learners' experience of school is most accurately represented by the inter-relations of both social and academic outcomes which are influenced in large part by the quality of the relationships among learners, not only with peers but also with teachers who exert stronger influence on learners well-being. In such an atmosphere learners are free to report to teachers any form of bullying and victimisation that they might experience within the school, even outside the school parameters.

Teachers, according to Rampai's (2009) study findings, indicated that they practised subject specialisation, grouping methods which are the tools they use to bring about good academic performance. According to Teddlie and Reynolds (2000), teachers are effective when they generate a positive school culture that is, collaboration, collegiality and consistency. Adding to this is MacBeath and Mortimore (2001) who state that teachers must encourage collaborative learning among learners through peer tutoring, group work and cooperative learning. Elaborating on this is Fullan (2001) who posits that effective schools establish

professionally collaborative cultures and argues that attention should shift from focusing on individuals to developing schools as professional learning communities. In a school with culture of collaboration, teachers are able to meet together to discuss and share issues related to the curriculum delivery and come up with strategies to improve learner outcomes. During those discussions a teacher may ask for assistance in subject that he or she teaches and the solution might be formulated by other staff members. Perhaps a school can invite an expert teacher on a particular subject to come and assist them in finding solutions to enhance the learner performance.

In Australia, Andrews and Lewis (2007) also found that where teachers developed professional learning communities, it not only enhanced their knowledge base, but also had a significant impact on their classroom work and the school culture. A school that has an ethos and which ensures that in its school there is effective teaching and learning, would ensure that teachers set time to learn on their own and reflect on their teaching practices. Such is captured in the schools year planner, where different learning areas meet and discuss. Heck (2007) studied the impact of ‘the No Child left Behind Act’ in United States of America mandated teacher qualifications on elementary school reading and mathematics achievement levels and growth rates. In his models, he also included a composite index of six measures related to school climate and culture in order to control for differences across schools, in what he referred to as school quality. He found both the school quality composite and the collective qualifications of teachers to have positive and significant independent effects on reading and mathematics levels. In addition, he found improvements in teacher qualifications to have a significant positive impact on learners’ performance. In South Africa such is done in a form of Annual National Assessment which attempts to assess the effectiveness of the education system. Interesting enough, the Rampai (2009) study further found that learners have a routine of pre-classes before school starts where they progress with their school work on their own in the absence of the class teacher. In addition, Thomas and Brown (2011) show on what they term to be a new culture of learning that enables learners to learn from one another. They make the point that a traditional educational approach, where everything new must be taught at a specific place and time, is ineffective as knowledge changes constantly and quickly. Therefore, education must shift from a teaching focus, in which the instructor transfers knowledge to the pupil, to an emphasis on student learning. This resonates with a school that has a culture where learners do not wait for the teacher to give information but they would go out there to find information and find means to solve their academic problems

and be able to think critically. Furthermore, learners would create a culture of working with their peers and compete among themselves for excellence.

One of the South African scholars, Moloï (2005), in her study on schools as learning organisations suggests that school culture is a significant factor in the performance of a school. Similarly, Saunders (2014) conducted a study in four secondary school in Worcester to explore the perceptions and experiences that grade 12 learners have of the culture in their particular schools. This study showed that there was a high rate of drop out among grade 12 learners due to alcohol or drugs which compromised safety in schools another issue is a large number of girls who fell pregnant. Masita (2011), for instance, cites drug abuse, high drop-out rate, vandalism, gangsterism, poor academic performance, and demotivated learners as observable features of a poor culture of learning in schools. Several studies (Mchunu, Peltzer, Tutshana & Seutlwadi, 2012; Basch, 2011; James, Van Rooyen & Strümpher, 2011; Bhana, Morrell, Shefer & Ngabaza, 2010; Macleod & Tracey, 2010) indicate that pregnancy disrupts the schooling of pregnant learners, and most of them drop out, resulting in difficulty when getting decent jobs in future. These scholars furthermore state that pregnancy has a negative impact on a pregnant learner's performance. Saunder's (2014) study also found that there was a good balance between sports and studying. A school that has a culture of co-curricular activities is able to keep learners discipline and teachers bond with their learners cause such that teachers understand their learners on the field and off the field. The glue that is created due to co-curricular activities also leads to teachers knowing the parents of learners and the communication between school and home is enhanced. Participating in co-curricular activities compels the school to have ceremonies to acknowledge those teachers who are involved in such activities as well as learners who take part. Such culture makes the school known in the area as other schools will be able to compete with such school. According to Vaughn, Bos and Schumm (2007), it is through involvement in extra-curricular activities that learners can further develop and utilise intelligence as defined by Gardner's (1992) theory of multiple intelligence. In the same line of thought Helfgot's (2005) study of high achieving schools prioritise learner achievement which is attained through provision of well-planned curricular and extra-curricular programmes that ultimately create school culture that is desirable for all stakeholders. It can be reasoned that a school that has programmes of extra-curricular activities are able to motivate learners and teachers and bind them together to create a school culture that leads to healthy environment within it. Extra-curricular activities

have the potential to draw business organisations to be part of the school either by offering sponsors as well as bringing in parents and the community to know the school more.

2.2.5 Leadership role in school ethos

Bush, Duku, Glover, Kiggundu, Kola, Msila and Moorosi (2009) report about the importance of school culture in determining leadership and found that culture is among the determinants of effective and ineffective schools. Confirming the preceding suggestions by these scholars is the study by Ramovha (2009) who explored leadership and productive school culture at three secondary schools in the Nzhelele West circuit in the Limpopo province. Ramovha's (2009) findings showed that as a means to ensure that teaching and learning in the study schools was their priority, there was a structure to monitor teachers in each class and that responsibility was assigned to class prefects. Furthermore, the attendance lesson register had to be signed by the teacher at the end of each period and the deputy principal has a responsibility to check it every day. Amongst the things that Southworth (2008) mentions on instructional leadership is monitoring which involves the principal looking at teachers' performance, class and school levels of performance, progress as well as observing the implementation of school policies and reviewing what is happening in a school and intervening when necessary.

In a school that prioritise the culture of teaching and learning its principal ensures that teachers and learners are effectively working and he or she ensures that school is managed by walking around than sitting in the office. Another study conducted in Golf Council Cooperation States Barber and Mourshed (2007) argue that some of the things that matter most in terms of the top performing schools systems is to ensure that the system is able to deliver the best possible instruction for every learner. The hindrances to performing schools are mentioned by Bergman, Bergman and Gravett (2011) who assert that the most dominant cause of dysfunctional schools is rule- breaking or bending which relates to monitored school norms such as teachers' chronic unpunctuality in class. This can be curbed by the principal who ensure that the school has a time book where all staff members including himself or herself signs in the morning and afternoon. When the time book is in place it the duty of the principal to monitor it and address those who come late to school. Trying to improve the quality of life among citizens, the South African government spends big sums of money on Department of Education hoping that such expenditure will enable schools to be effective.

The notion of effective schooling is also supported by the *2025 Schooling Action Plan for Improving Basic Education*. This schooling plan is intending to instil confidence in the citizens that the South African government has a plan to deal with poor quality schooling and that effective school culture can be established and entrenched (Department of Basic Education, 2010).

A study by Ramovha (2009) showed late arrival of learners was not tolerated as there was a disciplinary committee which deals with learners who contravene the school code of conduct. The *South African Schools Act 84 of 1986* (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) mandates school governing bodies to adopt a code of conduct for learners as a way of establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment, dedicated to improving the quality of the learning process in a disciplined environment. According to Rossouw (2012), a disciplined environment refers to an environment free of any disruptive behaviour, which mostly relates to action or behaviour by learners that may negatively affect their education or that may interfere adversely with the atmosphere conducive to learning in the school or classroom. When learners come late to school, firstly they lose quality education and they become counter-productive and secondly they disturb the lessons when they enter the class. As learners are allowed to attend school of their choice coming from different demographic areas, each school has its rules and policies that govern its smooth running, which among any culture is punctuality. So it is important that culture of punctuality is managed in each school and that should be taught to learners until they reach their adulthood.

In support of the above claims is the study by Moforah and Schulze (2012) conducted in thirty rural villages and townships in the North-West province to identify influence on the job satisfaction of previously disadvantaged principals. This study found among other findings such as organisational efficiency factors that affected the day-to-day running of the schools relating to problems with a number of learners who were ill-disciplined demonstrated by their repeated late arrival at class. Sedibe (2006) states that the attributes to school culture is the bringing about of the conditions and disciplines of compulsory schooling that allow learners and teachers regular attendance, punctuality and acceptance of authority. Grant, Jasson and Lawrence (2010) in a study conducted at eighteen KwaZulu-Natal schools found that the social context has a fundamental role to play. They contend that many schools located in disadvantaged communities have inherited a legacy of dysfunctionality, yet some have succeeded in achieving their core responsibilities of teaching and learning despite the odds. These scholars claim that the dysfunctionality in many of the schools, post-1994, has

continued despite government's attempts to restore a culture of teaching and learning. The success of those schools that succeed despite the negative broader community contextual conditions that exist is described by Grant *et al.* (2010) as being able to produce a context and sense of pride in neatness, good attendance, punctuality, and efficient use of insufficient resources. The school that shows pride in its self will create the climate of welcoming from the gate and the community of the school goes the extra mile to ensure that school is clean and taken care of despite the shortage of support staff. In such school ethos when the school time commences everybody knows what to do and where teaching and learning is taken very seriously by both learners and teachers. Teacher quality is measured by certification, teaching experience level of preparation, and academic background, is an indicator of student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Other significant findings emanating from the study by Ramovha (2009) are: the lack of adequate classrooms to develop the culture of teaching and learning, the late delivery of learners' support materials and the shortage of mathematics and physical science teachers. Some schools receive the resources from the department but what they receive is only provided at the commencement of the year or even at the end of each year. Things like exercise books and pens are received at the beginning of the year but during the year such resources are finished and the school then suffers to ensure that teaching and learning continues normally. Mji and Makgato (2006) assert that the basic education needs, outdated teaching practices and lack of basic content knowledge and teaching and learning materials have resulted in poor teaching standards in schools. They further emphasise that the poor standards have been exacerbated by among other things like, a large number of under-qualified or unqualified teachers who teach in overcrowded and non-equipped classrooms. Similar studies have supported these claims that the reasons for the poor performance of South African learners in mathematics include the poor socio-economic background of learners (little incentive to study at home), lack of appropriate learner support materials, general poverty of school environment, general poor quality of teachers and teaching (including poor subject knowledge and poor motivation), language of instruction (often not the same as learners' mother tongue) and an inadequate study orientation (Ndlovu, 2011; Van der Walt, Maree & Ellis, 2008).

In the Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality 111 study by Spaul (2012), textbooks are classified as essential classroom resources on the basis that effective teaching and learning cannot take place without them. They provide a minimum

standards of educational environment to which all learners are entitled. South African schools perform worse than any of the African countries in terms of educational outcomes in literacy and numeracy (Spaull, 2012). In considering the impact of textbook availability Spaull (2012) finds that learners with their own reading textbooks perform significantly better than learners who have to share their textbooks with more than one other learner. In line with the findings of Ramovha (2009) was the textbook crisis in the Limpopo province where learners' right to education was somehow compromised by the Education Department in 2012. Learner support materials were not delivered to schools up until the Non-profit organisation, Section 27 intervened and had to take government to court. The broad educational programme of the school is the curriculum and it automatically builds the culture of every school. If the delivery of curriculum is compromised because of logistical challenges it implies that the ethos of that school would diminish.

As my study explores the school ethos as influenced by school categorisation, the next section reviews literature on school categorisations.

2.3 School categorisation

Durand and Paoletta (2013) define categorisation as socio-cultural perspectives that explicitly consider the role of audiences and the classification systems. Taking from the definition of categorisation further, the grouping of schools within the same geographical location for economic, administrative, pedagogical and political purposes is known as school clusters and has arisen as one of the possible solutions to achieve in education system within the framework of financial austerity which is the similar system the South African government post-apartheid adopted when categorising schools (Bray, 1987). According to the *South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996* the state is required to fund all public schools and provides a quintile ranking mechanism to address equity in schools by disseminating progressive funding by classifying public schools into wealth quintiles where schools serving poorer communities should receive more funding than schools serving better-off communities (Mestry, 2014).

2.3.1 Tendencies in United States of America

The national policy (No Child Left Behind Act) announced by the former President George H. W. Bush (1993) in the United States of America aims to narrow racial disparities in academic performance in elementary (primary) and secondary education. The latter gave accountability provisions to govern Title 1 schools and non-Title 1 schools. These are schools that cater for socio economic disadvantaged population which include migrant students, students with limited English proficiency, homeless students, students with disabilities, neglected students, delinquent students, at-risk students or any student in need. In these schools, 40% of learners enrol for free and reduced lunch program (Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965). These schools were intended to close the achievement gap between high- and low-performing children, especially the achievement gaps between minority and non-minority learners, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers, No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001). By embracing the goals of NCLB (2001) requirements, it was envisaged that would be the central mechanism for improving school performance and the academic achievement of different subgroups of students. Another goal for NCLB (2001) was to promote charter schools, where funding will be provided to assist charter schools with start-up costs, facilities and other needs associated with creating high- quality schools.

Lubienski and Weitzel (2012, p. 1) define charter schools as schools that “are publicly funded but free of much of the traditional education bureaucracy that characterizes district run public schools”. According to Wohlstetter, Wenning and Briggs (1995), charter schools impressively have their autonomy that is they are out of the direct control of school districts although financial support of school districts is a big portion of each charter school’s budget. Charter schools are free from many regulations and guidelines of the government and can create curricula to show their unique characteristics to customers (Wohlstetter et al., 1995). In public schools parents do not have a say in the curriculum because of the general standard set by the government and as a result innovative thinking is squashed. Compared to charter schools, public schools have large classroom sizes that can be disturbing to the learners in need of the extra attention and to teachers that desire to reach all their learners (Sarason, 1998). The same disparate is experienced in South Africa as the schools are categorised which has an impact on teaching and learning as well as the manner in which the schools are being managed. This is experienced by teachers in township schools where their classroom sizes are large compared to former Model C schools where classrooms are manageable.

The American traditional public school system (TPS) is usually influenced by the command-control style in which public schools follow state, federal, or local government guidelines and rules. However, several studies (Bryk & Gomez, 2008; Chubb & Moe, 1990; Gergen & Vanourek, 2008; Hess, 2008) point out that this command-control style is not effective for improving student performance because the command-control approach embedded in the TPS system can be a barrier to import outside sources that improve and change public schools. To reform the inefficient structure of the traditional public system, school choice scholars claim that public schools in the TPS system need to be exposed to the competitive circumstances, by introducing market-driven principle to the TPS system (Lee & Jeong, 2012; Fusarelli, 2003; Schneider, Teske & Marschall, 2000; Chubb & Moe, 1990). These scholars emphasized innovative education policies such as charter schools, magnet schools, home schooling, voucher, and open enrolment (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Lee & Jeong, 2012; Schneider *et al.*, 2000). Schneider *et al.*, (2000) indicate that a basic strength that these school choice policies generally have is that they assist parents to choose a school that they prefer best. Vergari (2007) states that Ray Budde and Albert Shanker are the pioneers to introduce the concept of charter schools in the United States in the late 1980s.

Lee and Jeong (2012) posit that a charter school is one of public educational reforms that effectively facilitate public educational performance without reducing a positive function of public education equality and moreover offer students more opportunities to develop their creativity. Charter school type describes the school's instructional focus that drives the curriculum and culture (Bulkley & Fidler, 2003; Crew & Anderson, 2003; Finn, Manno, & Vanourek, 2000; Nobbitt & Ervin, 2000; Stewart, 2002). Stout and Garn (1999) concluded that the charter landscape is not nearly as diffuse as widely believed and developed a division of culture by race of charter schools. They categorised schools broadly into three groups: schools designed for serve at-risk students, schools designed for college-bound students, and schools designed to address some special focus or to teach in a particular way. Stout and Garn (1999) further separate school design to serve at-risk students into components or category as content-centred schools and child-centred schools.

Wells (1998) suggests that this flexibility gives charter schools more power than most public schools to shape their educational communities but when shaping these educational communities, charter schools must be careful to observe state and federal laws. Wells (1998) further states that charter schools, like traditional public schools, are not exempt from providing services to learners with disabilities and must observe health and safety standards.

Charter schools are cautioned about admissions plans that favour a certain race or religion over another and must take care to avoid impermissible entanglement with the religious programs of their founders. It can be reasoned that charter schools are halfway house between public schools and private schools. According to Lee and Kim (2010), regarding accountability, charter schools are public schools that must be held accountable for learner performance as other TPSs and they are bound to participate in the tests that their state or school district requests.

A study by Gootman (2009) reports that there are as many as one hundred and thirteen niche charter schools which feature cultural themes in their mission statements. These schools focus on cultures ranging from Arabic and Hebrew to Greek, Hawaiian, German and American Indian. Fears that have been raised that culture-oriented niche charter schools could, in general, lead to greater racial segregation (Institute of Race and Poverty, 2008; Eckes, 2006). Study by Vernal (1995) at W. E. B. DuBois charter school in Detroit found that this school focuses on African American culture and it enrolls a high proportion of minority males, while the Academy of the Pacific Rim in Boston focuses on Asian languages and culture and enrolls high proportions of Asian learners. Institute of Race and Poverty (2008) argues that contrary to such concerns raised about the issue of culture, these ethnic-oriented niche charter schools are able to better compete with the traditional public schools because they include specific areas of interest that make them appealing to certain underserved families.

Another study by Jacobs (2009) showed that one elementary school that emphasised international study allows girls to wear head scarves without being harassed; serves food that meets the dietary requirements of Muslims; and provides teaching assistants from East Africa who also spent years in refugee camps and can therefore relate better to the students with similar experiences. In a similar vein, a charter school in one community that targets Native American students was founded because of the negative experiences that Native American learners had while in traditional public schools and that school had to focus on learners' culture and language (Berman, Nelson, Ericson, Perry & Silverman, 1998). In the case of some American Indians, in particular those who have viewed traditional American public schools as failing to "acknowledge their language, culture, or ways of educating their young," the charter school movement has been viewed as "a reform through which American Indians can step forward on their own behalf and on behalf of their children" (Bielenburg, 2000, p. 1). The fact that charter schools are created by state laws, their operation is different from

state to state (Gleason, 2007; Oluwole & Green, 2008). These scholars highlight that one state may wish to encourage student body diversity in its charter schools and thus will incorporate language into its charter school enabling legislation to influence this outcome, whereas another state's law may intentionally remain silent on this particular issue. In relation to this study when school were categorised a lot autonomy was given to public schools on issues such as admission policy, language policy, managing finances and recommending to the department the suitable candidate for the vacant post at the school. As much as all these powers were given to schools, it came with its challenges to school principals and the manner schools are run. It is such challenges this study seeks to explore.

Eckes, Fox and Buchanan (2011) suggest that niche charter schools have emerged and are growing in popularity among some families because they provide a certain level of comfort for some learners and may appeal to a particular interest of learners or the learners' family. These schools focus on ethnicity and culture and are part of the charter school landscape. Critics claim, though, that most of the learners who enrol in these schools choose to do so because the school's values align with that of their own family and cultural background, and, thereby, create cultural territories within the school system (Trotter, 2007). A study by Eckes, *et al.*, (2011) report on the one niche charter school in where its school information, the mission statement of the school is to deliver a first-class academic program that offers a unique bicultural, bi-literate and bilingual curriculum which prepares learners to have an edge in global competition through the study of Hebrew as a second language.

Some reports suggest that learners in veteran charter schools realise greater achievement scores than those in newer charters (Bifulco & Ladd, 2004; Bulkley & Fisler, 2003; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2002; Nobbitt & Ervin, 2000). For example, in 2002, California charter schools in operation for five or more years out performed younger charters and non-charter schools (Agostini, 2003). Yet, Carnoy, Jacobsen, Mishel and Rothstein 's (2005) study showed the opposite in both reading and mathematics, schools operating for more than four years progressed worse than new schools. A skilled workforce and highly educated community is one of the key drivers of a country's future prosperity. Therefore the communities' keen interest is in what type of educational institutions delivers better outcomes for their learners. Many parents have also recognised the link between their children's educational outcomes and their future prosperity. This has led to a strong connections between house valuations and proximity to what parents view as better schools for their children in a number of countries (Black & Machin, 2010).

Given the preceding literature I have presented on charter schools which are publicly funded with autonomy levels more like private schools in United States, one finds some evidence on learner achievement. Another example is in Sweden where a new type of private school has started operating (self-titled ‘free schools’) that compete for students with public schools on an equal financial basis. These free-schools are privately managed, but they receive full public funding that is calculated based on the number of students that they enrol who live in their local area. In England, there are currently seven different school types that make up the English secondary education system: independent schools, academy schools, city technology colleges, voluntary aided schools, foundation schools, voluntary controlled schools and community schools (Department of Education and Skills, 2007). Each school type is characterised by a unique set of features regarding their school autonomy and governance. In England, successive governments have aimed to improve pupil performance by increasing the amount of school choice and competition and by introducing a number of school types to the English education system (Gibbons, Machin & Silva, 2008). These scholars further state that the English education system has always been characterised by a strong voluntary movement that has been actively involved in the delivery of education. Historically these voluntary organisations were typically religious and, in the early times of education delivery, were the sole providers in England. Over time, the state sector gradually took a more active involvement in providing resources to the education system by first helping to fund these early schools.

At the top of the autonomy list is the registered independent school. Such schools are able to charge fees. They also possess a management body that determines all staffing decisions; the curriculum for the school; the structure and length of the school day; the admissions and pupil selection process; the school budget and all the other policies that the school follows (Department of Education and Skills, 2007). Collectively, the registered independent schools have the most autonomy. The state then went on to create new schools that had no affiliation with the voluntary sector (now known as community schools). However, despite the increased involvement of the state sector, the commitment of the voluntary movement to education has never diminished, even today a significant percentage of the schools in the English education system are run as a partnership between the voluntary sector and the state sector. These are: voluntary aided schools, voluntary controlled schools or foundation schools (Department of Education and Skills, 2007). The private sector also has an involvement in England’s education system. This has typically taken the form of privately funded as

independent schools that run alongside state funded schools with little private sector involvement in the state funded schools (Machin & Wilson, 2008).

2.3.2 Tendencies in England

Another group of this new type of school was city technology colleges (CTCs). In more recent years, the academy school programme has been introduced and, in some important dimensions, this can be thought of as a continuation and development of the CTC scheme. CTCs are obliged to follow the national curriculum in all subjects that is characterised by a strong technology, practical and science bias. Next are the voluntary-aided, the foundation and the voluntary controlled schools. All these types of schools are run as a partnership between the state sector and the voluntary sector. In a voluntary aided school the governing or management body is not responsible for all staffing decisions, the structure and the length of the school day, the school budget and any other school policy. The voluntary aided schools are obliged to follow the national curriculum in all subjects. However, the governing or management body is responsible for the admissions of the school in a non-selective way and it is also responsible for all staff decisions. The foundation schools are similar to voluntary aided schools, except that the sponsor is not able to appoint the majority of the governing body. Voluntary controlled schools are also similar to foundation schools, except that the Local Education Authority is responsible for admissions of the school in a non-selective way. Another type of school categorisation in England is the traditional local community schools which are centrally organised through the local education authority and have rigid governance structures. In addition these schools do not have responsibility for any staffing decisions. They possess little autonomy when compared to other types of schools (Department of Education and Skills, 2007).

Academy schools share some of the characteristics of independent schools. For example, an academy school will have a management that determines all staffing decisions; the majority of the curriculum for the school (except some core subjects: English, Mathematics, Science and Information Technology); the structure and length of the school day; selecting up to ten percent of their intake who demonstrate sufficient aptitude and enthusiasm in the specialism that the academy has decided to follow; the school budget and all the other policies that the school follows. However, academy schools cannot charge fees. They are also called all-ability schools (except for at most ten percent of their intake): the governing or management

body therefore has less scope to decide on their admissions compared to independent schools. Academic schools were set up to replace schools that were often failing, as a means for fee-charging successful schools, to become an additional school in a particular area and to broaden their intake of pupils (Department of Education and Skills, 2007). Study by Machini and Vernoit (2011) explored the introduction of academy schools into the English secondary school sector. The result suggests that moving to a more autonomous school structure through academy conversion produces a significant improvement in pupil performance.

2.3.3 Tendencies in Africa

The concept of school categorisation in a form of decentralisation has been on the political agenda for well-developed countries in Europe in the belief that it can bring about reforms in service delivery (Machini & Vernoit, 2011). Whilst in most developing countries such as in Africa, the education systems are faced with severe pressures of financial constraints because of poor performance of their economies (Chikoko, 2007). In African countries, education is seen as the major instrument for emancipation from poverty and unemployment, hence there is a rising concern for improved quality of education (Bush & Middlewood, 2005). In 1963 immediately after independence, Kenya took steps to restructure the education system so as to align itself to the aspirations and national needs of the country. The current education system called 8:4:4 was recommended by the Mackay commission in 1981 and implemented by the government of Kenya in 1985 (Republic of Kenya, 1985). Education system 8:4:4 simply means eight years of primary education, four years secondary education and four years for university education (Republic of Kenya, 1985). Even in independent Kenya, the education trend continues where communities established what is called Harambee schools also known as community schools (Sifuna, 1990). These schools were built by the communities and were maintained by the same communities. In terms of providing teachers it was the responsibility of the central government to support these schools. Eventually the government took over the community schools, but the communities continued through the Parents Teachers Associations to raise funds for maintaining and expanding community schools. In 2003 and 2008 the government introduced Free Primary and Secondary Education (Republic of Kenya, 2008). The central government provided infrastructure grants, levy and maintenance grants to target schools. In case of the primary schools these grants are managed

by the school management committees and for secondary schools the grants are managed by Board of Governors (Ministry of Education, 2007).

A study by Oketch and Ngware (2010) found that Free Primary Education had significantly altered the slum conditions that would make it impossible for the majority of learners in these schools to benefit from this policy failure. These scholars also found that the main reason for this policy failed was that it could not address excess demand for primary education and therefore parents kept moving their children from one school to another school where there are better teachers, more discipline pupils and good quality education. Another findings of the study was that different households and individual attributes motivates decision on the type of school as they are more inclined to choose a public primary school as they are in the lower wealth quintiles. Similar study was conducted in Nairobi by Ngware, Oketch and Ezech (2011) to assess the quality of school inputs in government-owned and non-government-owned schools. The findings of the study showed that learners attending government-owned schools face inequality in accessing child-friendly classrooms because of overcrowding in these schools compared to learners attending non-government schools. Another finding was that the achievement of Free Primary education is only the provision of textbooks.

While comparing large and small classes Arnold, Gaddy and Dean (2004) argue that in small classes the curriculum is more limited and directed to average learners rather than large classes with full range of learners with varied learning needs. This resonates with the study by Osnat, Berry, Ezech and Donchin (2008) which found that teachers in government schools are less motivated than teachers in no-government schools because of heavy workload and having to teach large classes. Contrary to these findings is a study by Duflo, Dupas and Kremer (2008) which found that reducing class size from eighty to forty learners without considering other school factors does not lead to a significant increase in learner achievement. A similar finding was reported by Banerjee, Cole, Duflo and Linden (2007) in India where no impact of reducing class size was achieved through the hiring of a remedial education teacher for learners. It can be reasoned that although class size count in schools but if learners are taking their education seriously and be dedicated and teachers dedicate themselves to teaching despite such odds, learners outcome can be achieved.

Some studies in Kenya found that the prefect system is the main structure used in learner participation in decision making in schools, but this is done in a top-down approach not in a

democratic way by the learners as it is only teachers who handpick learner leaders (Ouma, 2007; Jwan & Ongondo, 2010). Study by Karanja (2010) found that the system of involving learners is the motivating factor of having learner leaders' participation in the daily running of the school was directly linked to better academic performance and less school strikes. Furthermore, he found that learners are not the beneficiaries of the school programmes only, but they become the co-interested parties in school culture and able to advance the quality of their school programmes.

Having discussed the education system of Kenya the following section brings the overview of the education system of Nigeria. In Nigeria the management and provision of schools at the primary, secondary and university levels are the responsibility of the government with the Federal government providing funds and also dictating the rules (Ikoya, 2007).

Most African countries like Nigeria have practised traditional types of education in accordance with their different customs, culture, usage and traditions (Sulaiman, 2012). The latter further states that it is not true that education for the indigenous people of Africa was introduced by either the Missionaries or the Muslims. From time of immemorial the indigenous people of Africa had their own education by which their values, norms and cultures were transmitted and transferred to their children (Fafunwa, 1974). This takes me to the schools in Nigeria which are Missionary schools and Koranic schools. Missionary schools came upon various tribes in Nigeria who were speaking a variety of languages. The objective of missionary schools is to carry out evangelical work and the instruction in schools is to read and write which is necessary for understanding of the gospel (Sulaiman, 2012). Missionary schools are compelled to use English as a medium of instruction (Fafunwa, 1974). However missionary schools are lacking in terms of standard and uniform curricula as each missionary body establish schools to suit their specific needs.

A study by Babatunde and Olanrewaju (2014) found that class size and school climate influence significantly the learners' scholastic achievement in the missionary schools. Another studies by Osunde and Izevbigie (2006); Ogunyemi (2005); Osunde and Omoruyi (2005) found that poor working conditions as well as community's negative influence on the education system are fundamental factors influencing the quality of Nigerian teachers and their low status. In the same line of thought is the study by Ikoya and Onoyase (2008) which also points to the inefficient and ineffective management of school facilities by the principals and school managers, as well as lack of commitment to provide efficient management and

infrastructure. As a result, teachers work in unhealthy and unsafe conditions which lower their morale (Osunde & Izevbigie, 2006).

This type of education system called Koranic schools were established as a means of spreading Islam and converts were made to write and read Islamic poetry, Islamic law, literature and grammar of Islam. In northern Nigeria, Koranic schools are referred to as Makarantar Alo (Umar, 2003). Muslim boys are required by tradition to obtain basic religious literacy through Koranic schools (Qasim, 1991). A study by Jaafar (2006) confirms that most of the boys migrate from rural areas to cities to attend Koranic Schools so as to learn the Islamic culture, master the curriculum and graduate. The medium of instruction and learning in Koranic schools is Arabic and Hausa languages and the Quran is the central text resource in general acquisition of knowledge, expressive writing and language skills, reading while oral recitations are learnt through teacher scaffolding in a sing song manner for the boys to model (Fafunwa, 1974). According to Jaafar (2006) specific song called *yar bakara* is learnt and used by the boys after school hours to beg for donations from members of the public on the street. Tahir (2006) posits that the boys in Koranic schools are motivated to attend school because of free lunch program that the schools run. He asserts that most of the boys simply abscond school as soon as the lunch is over. Usman's (2008) study on Koranic schools found that schooling system is challenged by dysfunctional management styles and have little impact on retaining boys in the formal learning setting. Furthermore, teachers and the management lack effective communication forums that will address the fluctuating participation and attendance of the boys. Also teachers assert that their authoritative and positional power through the use of moral value, intimidation and discipline such as corporal punishment to coerce participation, attendance to learning success of the boys as compared to the primary teachers which are lacking. All curriculum process and policies are implemented by the male teachers whom they call Malam who also serves as a role model and in *loco parentis* (UNICEF, 1998).

2.3.4 Tendencies in South Africa

Having discussed the international and continental literature on school categorisation the following section brings the local literature on school categorisation.

School categorisation in South African education system appears to be entrenched with categorisations in terms of, amongst other issues learner performance (National Strategy for Learner Attainment and non-National Strategy for Learner Attainment), geographical demarcation (rural, urban, township and peri-urban schools), quintile rankings (1-5), fee paying and non-fee paying schools, section 21 and section 20 schools, functional and dysfunctional schools. A study by Bergman, Bergman and Gravett (2011) conducted at the schools in Gauteng province found that amongst the reasons why schools are dysfunctional is rule breaking or bending. The scholars found that rule breaking to school norms namely: chronic absenteeism and unpunctuality of learners or teachers, favouritism in promotion and hiring practices due to romantic interest, teachers fabricating learners' marks; cultural and etiquette norms: parents verbally abusing teachers and principals, learners' lack of respect and discipline; infringe of laws: drugs dealing, gambling, prostitution on school premises, rape of learners by teachers, counterfeiting and fraud of cheques by a deputy principal impedes to the smooth running of the schools. Another findings of study were resource dysfunctions include lack of qualified human resource: administrative staff, teachers, management and maintenance staff; support and welfare scheme: feeding schemes, student services, psychological services, security on school premises, safe and efficient transportation of learners to school; and scarce infrastructure: books, classrooms, water, toilets, electricity, offices, security fencing of school premises, sport facilities, basic maintenance and cleaning of buildings. Given the findings of the above study, it is clear that our schools need to adopt a drastic paradigm shift with support from the government, parents, community and business organisations in order to turn the schools around. If business organisations could adopt each school around their geographical area and support that school surely a lot can be achieved and dysfunctional school can be turned to be a functional school.

Similar to abovementioned study, Gallie (2007) assessed the quality of organisational capacity available to perform effective change management functions. He classified schools into high-functioning, low-functioning and non-functioning institutions and found that three thousand six hundred public schools have no electricity, two thousand four hundred forty four have no water supply, eleven thousand two hundred thirty one use pit-latrines, only 23% have a computing facility and 21% have a library. With the latter findings it is clear that school dysfunctionality does not start when learners enter their schools, but there are other factors such as late coming, poverty parents not supporting the school and lack of resources that contribute as well. According to Maree (2010) and Fleisch (2008), learners are often

hungry and ill, lack parental support, do not have proper clothing, lack study motivation, lack study facilities, lack self-esteem and language proficiency and move frequently from school to school. When schools were categorised there was flight to schools of their choice, but that brought challenges in the way schools have to be managed. For example socio economic challenges in South Africa in one way or the other impact negatively on the smooth running of the schools. High rate of unemployment result in parents being unable to support their children with school commodities. Other parents are not keen to attend school meetings because they are too busy with other things.

2.3.4.1 Effects of school categorisation on school governance in South Africa

The South African government has demonstrated ambition through many education policies to transform the education system such as management of school fees, the functioning of school governing bodies, the post-provision norms, national norms and standards for school funding and rationalisation and deployment of teachers with an intention to focus on equity, access, redress, quality, democracy and efficiency (South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996). In KwaZulu-Natal, media published challenges faced by one of the schools in the province where they state that one rural school with five hundred learners who were crammed into four classrooms with three different grades sharing one classroom. It further states that Grade One of this school was using the neighbours' house as a classroom (The Witness, 2015). With such example it is clear that despite all these policies introduced by Department of Education the basic infrastructures of the education system in South Africa leaves a lot to be desired if there are such challenges facing the education system. According to a study by Mestry (2014), the evidence of such disparities in South African policies is witnessed in township schools, rural schools, former Model C schools and private schools with disproportionate resources which impact heavily on learner performance and teacher quality. He alludes to the fact that governing bodies and many principals lack the necessary expertise in school governance and they are under extensive pressure because they are seemingly unable to formulate practical solutions to the practical problems. Mestry (2014) asserts that most governing bodies of inner-city schools and suburbs (former Model C schools) usually perform at a much higher level than their counterparts in township and rural schools. In another study by Motala (2009), he found that inequality persists in schools for a number of reasons including: unavailability of qualified teachers in some schools, unfavourable teacher-

to-learner ratios especially in black schools and public schools in general and the inability of parents to pay school fees. Some schools in urban and rural working class communities suffer the legacy of absence of learning resources and disgraceful physical conditions, large classes despite major projects such as National School Building Programme, Reconstruction and Development Programme and many other projects paid from provincial budgets (Reschovsky, 2006; Chisholm, 2004). Notwithstanding all the above challenges, teachers and learners in poor schools, mainly African, are still expected to achieve the same as the former Model C schools.

The National Norms and Standard for School Funding came into effect in 1998 to classify schools into five quintile rankings. This ranking has been specified according to the level of education (literacy rate) of the schools' surrounding community (its geographical catch area) and the income dependence ratio (unemployment rate) (Department of Education, 2006). A study by Wilderman (2008) showed that there are problems of funding as he found that learners who were classified as non-poor in one province were receiving a per learners allocation greater than the poorest learners in another province. Further, Roithmayr (2003) argues that school fees prevent learners' access to basic education. Contesting this argument are Fleisch and Woolman (2004) who postulate that school fees perpetuate inequality in public schools and the policy as applied does not support a link between school fees and general systematic failure, releases resources for distribution from wealth to poorer schools and if school fees were eliminated would result in great financial loss to public schooling.

The challenge of school fees led to the creation of a policy Exemption of Parents from Payment of School Fees to give poor parents relief in the cost of their children's education (Department of Education, 2006). Roithmayr (2003) contends that school exemption policy hinders access to education since many families who are eligible to apply do not apply because the process is time consuming. Also that the cost of dignity in terms of how parents and learners may be treated at school is regarded as too high. A study by Fiske and Ladd (2004) found that 2.5% of families with children in primary schools and 4.1% of families with children in former Model C schools receive fee exemptions. They further mention that at secondary school level only 3.7% of families and 5.7% at former Model C schools receive exemptions in all provinces. In addressing the plight of poor the South African government designed the no-fees policy to give poor learners free education.

Schools in poorer quintiles (quintile 1, quintile 2 and quintile 3) are declared no-fee schools and so receive larger allocations, and those in richer quintiles (quintile 4 and quintile 5) receive smaller state allocations (Ahmed & Sayed, 2009). Therefore, no-fee schools receive the better state funding also receive compensatory funding in areas such as nutrition, classroom construction, school safety and grade R expansion (Wilderman, 2008). The challenges highlighted by Giese, Zide, Koch and Hall (2009) is that no-fees schools are prohibited from raising money by any other charges or fees. They further state that the government prescribed how the allocated funds should be spent and this restricts schools in improving facilities and maintaining smaller class size and in hiring additional teachers resulting in the quality gap between affluent and poor schools being increased. The Head of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education was quoted by the local newspaper stating that the subsidy of no-fee schools will increase by 2.5% in 2015 there is no way he could go beyond that percentage (The Mercury, 2015). Given this statement by KwaZulu – Natal, Department of Education it is clear that schools are heading for a decline as they will fail to pay for utility bills, photocopiers, cleaning materials and even maintenance of the school.

2.3.4.2 Section 21 schools

Amongst the quintile ranking of schools, the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) introduced two categories of public schools, namely Section 20 and Section 21 schools. Section 21 schools are regarded as almost synonymous with self-managing or self-reliant schools (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996). When a school acquires section 21 status additional functions are passed unto the school. These functions include: purchasing of learner teacher support materials, equipment for the school, pay for services to the school, hiring of school governing body teachers and support staff, to improve and maintain the school property, grounds, buildings and hostels. The governing body has a responsibility to constitute a finance committee to undertake the abovementioned functions. The finance committee must be fully knowledgeable with accounting and budgeting procedures to ensure that all spending of the school funds is maintained (South African schools Act 84 of 1996). The local newspaper reports that the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education has tried to bail out some of the provinces' Section 21 schools by clearing their municipality utility accounts but the amounts are deducted from their annual subsidies. This thus left these schools to make ends meet as the majority of them are in the least poor public

school category and they do not have money to maintain their schools net alone to have water to prepare the nutrition scheme as well as for drinking (Post, 2015).

2.3.4.3 Non- section 21 schools

Non- section 21 schools are those who do not qualify for section 21 status. The Department of Education administers the budget allocation on behalf of the school in this category. These schools are required to present a budget to the Department of Education at the district office and the purchase is made against the budget presented. Some of the advantage of this status is that the department is compelled to pay for all the services that are rendered at the schools. However, some of the disadvantages of this status are that schools are unable to negotiate better prices with the suppliers and even if the suppliers are inefficient with regards to executing or delivery of orders timeously, the schools cannot engage alternative suppliers. Some school in KwaZulu-Natal province that are non-section 21 status have received letters from their district offices notifying them that their 2014/ 2015 subsidy allocation has been top- sliced (Post, 2015).

Having reviewed the literature on school categorisation, the next section deals with theoretical frameworks that underpin this study.

2.4 Theoretical frameworks

The preceding sections discussed the related literature on school ethos as influenced by school categorisation. The purpose of this section is to deal with theoretical frameworks for the study. When putting a label on particular type of group such as a country and try to define the essence of that group, it is difficult to resist the feeling that group as a natural social reality. This simply means that each group is obviously linked to a particular organisation. As it the case with school categorisation, schools are automatically linked to the schooling system of that particular country. I therefore posit that social groups are mainly from the field of social psychology and proposed social identity theory and self-categorisation theory as the most appropriate for the study. Reason for choosing these theories is that they refer to categorisations of individuals to groups and their norms which is what my study is about. Both theories are discussed in the following sections.

2.4.1 Social identity theory

As the term social identity suggests, it describes an aspect dominant to social identity theory. Social identity theory has its origin in Tajfel's (1970) early work on social and categorisation perception and his quest for social psychological understanding of the causes of intergroup relations in general, social conflict and prejudice (Hogg & Abrams, 1999). Social identity theory was developed to account for the result of the minimal group paradigm (Tajfel, 1970). According to Hogg and Abrams (1999), social identity theory has been applied to a broad range of areas such as norms, group influence, conformity, group motivation, stereotyping and prejudice thus reinforces the idea that peoples' social cognitions are socially constructed depending on their group or collective frame of reference (Hogg & Abrams (1999); Operario & Fiske (1999). Deducing from this above it is clear that social identity theory proposes that the social part of peoples' identity derives from the group to which those people belong. Tajfel and Turner (1979) argue that peoples' psychological processes are transformed in group settings. These scholars advise that the basis of peoples' self-definition changes in groups in that personal identity gives way to social identity. They mention that when we function as individuals we function with a particular personality, attitudes, talents, skills, opinions, likes and dislikes. These individual attributes may be carried into a group situation and are most apparent when disagreeing with the group. Tajfel and Turner (1979) claim that this can also occur in small groups within the organisation. These scholars further explain that as people move toward identifying with a group they adjust their sense of identity, their behaviour and their thoughts to match the collectively defined attributes of their social groups. Similarly, when schools were categorised in South Africa, lot of African learners migrated to former white schools. When these African learners enrolled in these former white schools they have to adjust and adapt to the norms and behaviours of those schools hence those schools did not make means to adjust so as to accommodate those newly admitted African learners.

The basic premise of the social identity theory is that each group creates certain criteria for membership of that group, which then serves to favour the in-group and comes at the expense of out-group. To make an example, when individuals identify themselves as part of a particular social category, (such as primary school learners, high school learners, women, men) they seek to improve themselves by gaining approval with that group (Terry & Hogg, 2001). An in-group prototype involves doing what is proper and following the expected norms, they describe how people do behave as well as how they ought to behave (Hogg &

Reid, 2006). One of my study key research questions seek to understand, how do participants live and practice their school ethos on a regular basis. This resonates well with the in-group prototypes as highlighted by Hogg and Reid (2006). Tajfel and Turner (1979) explain how social categorisation affects in-group and out-group perceptual process and suggest that the theory may be used to predict certain behavioural outcomes that are related to those processes.

Comparing the attributes of our own groups with those of out-groups, Tajfel (1978) suggests that we acquire both a positive sense of who we are and a clear understanding of how we should act toward in-group and out-group members. Social identity is associated with social representations which may extend further to actual activities and symbols that are used by the group for identification purpose. Van Dijk (1998) claims that group identity does not seem to be limited to shared mental representations, but involves a collection of action, objects, routine practices, settings, symbols and dress. He also mentions that identity is the form or setting of the organisation, social practices and artefacts that are typical for a group which its members identify with and has meaning to the organisation. This resonates with my study in way that when schools in South Africa were categorised there was a lot of resistance on the part of some of Model C schools to change their practices to the new system, as a result some chose to be independent schools. Those that decided to follow the government plan still did not change their culture of admitting learners from other race groups and their schools were exorbitant to exclude the non- white learners. Thus what they did was they maintained their identity.

Hogg and Adams (1999) state that it is possible to understand the individual during one period of their life but it should be noted that this is just a randomly selected part of the whole. In the light of the latter explanation the development of social identity theory from a psychological perspective makes it possible to gather a general understanding of the social identity and personal positioning of the schools as they are categorised. This will assist in understanding how differently the participants of this study practise their roles and the school ethos into which they are immersed and whether or not exist.

The perspective of social identity incorporates two separate but related theories which are the social identity theory and self-categorisation theory. As social identity theory has been discussed the following section deals with the self-categorisation theory.

2.4.2 Self-categorisation theory

Self-categorisation theory framework was developed by Turner (1991) as an expansion of social identity theory. By using a process called self-categorisation an individual's depersonalise themselves by conforming to in-group prototypes which then leads to normative in-group behaviour and thereafter begin to view all members of a particular group as interchangeable (Turner,1991). Putting it in simple terms, they view every group member as having the same values and therefore complying with group norms. Thus, Turner (1991) suggests that self-categorisation theory clarifies how group norms may impact on individual behaviour. The primary goal of self-categorisation theory in relation to social identity theory is to provide a reasoning account for how individuals relate to identity groups.

As mentioned earlier the interpretation of the minimal group paradigm offered by social identity theory is that a simple categorisation of individuals may under certain circumstances provide the basis for social group formation. This means, a social group is a collection of individuals who identify with the group and act collectively to improve the status of the group *visa vie* other groups. The main focus of social identity theory is on how the motivating factor influences the need for self-evaluation persuades forms of strategies to enhance the relative standing of self-perceived groups. However, the theory does not elaborate on the cognitive mechanism by which the category turns into a social group. In short, categorisation implies seeing some things as similar and others as different and thereafter depends on a comparative evaluation of motivations. Furthermore, cognitive categories exist at different levels of concept so that different categories at one level belong to a common and more inclusive category at a higher level of concept. To illustrate, an orange and an apple belong to two different categories which are known as orange and apple. At the same time, they both belong to higher-level category of fruits. In order for the two objects to be classified as belonging to different categories they must first be part of common category of a higher order. This is similar when looking at school categorisation the way there are categorised (such as section-21, non-section 21, fee paying, no fee paying, dysfunctional) in South Africa but the final analysis they all belong under one umbrella of the Department of Basic Education.

The principle of categorisation implies that in a particular perceptual setting a collection of objects is more likely to be classified as belonging to the same category if the perceived difference between them is smaller than the difference between that group and the other

relevant objects. The reasoning is that categorisation is a relational process. The classification of two objects as categorisation depends on the perceived differences and similarities with other psychologically relevant motivations in the given environment (Turner, 1991). Interestingly, another theorist, Horowitz (1985) refers this process of conflicting perceptual motivations as a foundation for group formation, even though his main focus is completely on ethnic identity. Similarly, social categorisation of people into social categories follows the same logic as for objects. What seems to be important is that this logic also applies to the self. This therefore means self-categorisation is the reasoning account of the self in a social frame of reference. In simple terms self-categorisation means perceiving one to be similar to certain people while different from other people. Congruently, self-categories are also hierarchical in nature, in a way that one may belong to many more categories or less categories at once at the different levels of concept. Furthermore, self-categories are not linearly hierarchical in nature, but they are often also multi-directionally cross-cutting, depending on the defining characteristics according to which categorisation takes place.

As people may identify with different social categories, turning them into social groups at different contexts, the theory also outlines which factor determine which categories are more likely to become social groups. In support of this notion Oakes (2001) mentions that self-categorisation theory clearly incorporates a contextual perspective, which means that there is a functional relationship between the process of social categorisation and the social context within which it occurs. Turner (1991) postulates that the psychological activation of self-categorisation depends on a factor called category salience, which refers to the likeness that a particular category will become influential for behavioural and social perception in a given situation. He further states that salience is a function of two factors, namely: category fit and perceiver readiness. The category fit he explains it as the extent to which the content of a category meaningfully represents the perceived reality in a given situation. Whilst the perceiver readiness is an individual level factor, meaning the propensity of the individual perceiver to activate certain categories based on her or his characteristic qualities. Turner (1991) mentions another basic insight of the minimal group paradigm in self-categorisation theory as the notion that social categorisation is the foundation for social group phenomena such as cooperation, ethnocentric behaviour and in-group favouritism. Oakes (2001) highlights the relationship between psychological group and social categorisation formation that psychological group which takes place when several individuals come to share a perception of themselves as members of social category. Thus lead to self-categorisation

theory to account for how this shift comes about. The following section summaries this chapter.

2.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has outlined the origin of school ethos hence this study is about this concept. It further reviewed the literature on school ethos and on school categorisation international, continentally and nationally. Lastly, the appropriate theories that underpin the study were discussed. The next chapter shall present the research design and methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the literature review and theoretical frameworks relevant to this study. In this chapter I present the research design and methodology that was utilised. This chapter commences with the introduction, it further proceeds with the research paradigm, research design and methodology. This chapter further provides the insight into the research approach. It then discusses sampling, data generation methods and data analysis. Issues of trustworthiness and ethical issues are discussed. Lastly, it concludes with the chapter summary.

3.2 Research paradigm

A paradigm is set of assumptions about the world and is what constitutes proper topic and technique for inquiry into that world (Punch & Oancea, 2014). According to de Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont (2011), a paradigm is a pattern or model encompassing a set of legitimated assumptions and a design for generating and interpreting data. Therefore paradigm represents what we think about the world (but cannot prove) and also serves as a lens or organising principles by which reality is interpreted (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Drawing from the above definitions, paradigm can be defined as ideologies or views of the nature of the world, and these guide the research methods. Babbie (2013) suggests that a paradigm shapes both what we see and how we understand it. Cresswell (2014); Nieuwenhuis (2007); Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest that there are four research paradigms. These research paradigms are positivism/ post-positivism, interpretivism/ social constructivism, emancipatory/critical and pragmatism/ postmodernism. Considering the four paradigms mentioned, this study is positioned within the interpretivism paradigm. The reason for positioning this study within this paradigm is discussed in detail in the next section.

According to de Vos, *et al.*, (2011), interpretivism paradigm is idiographic and thus holistic in nature, mainly it aims to understand social life and meaning that people attach to everyday life. Interpretivism is related to hermeneutics, it suggests a way of understanding textual data

by foregrounding the meaning that communities or individuals assign to their experiences. Interpretivism paradigm focuses on how people construct the social world by sharing meanings and how they interact with or relate to each other (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This suggests that the researcher working within the interpretivism paradigm attempts to discover meanings within the text through a detailed study, as opposed to positivism and furthermore, the interpretive researcher is concerned with the participant's interpretations of the situation and experiences. Instead of the ultimate truth or single reality as advocated by the positivist, the researcher within an interpretive paradigm is confronted with multiple realities and multiple interpretations of human experience. This simply means it is of vital important for the researcher working within interpretivism paradigm to understand the world from the participants' point of view. Therefore, the whole emphasis is on an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

Following the same line of thought are Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) who state that within the context of the interpretive paradigm the fundamental aim is to understand the subjective world of human experience. Interpretive researchers argue for the uniqueness of human inquiry, and to understand human action or behaviour through interpretation Nieuwenhuis, (2007). As a result researchers working within the interpretive paradigm believe that the world is socially constructed and therefore the aim is to discover how people construct meaning in natural settings. The researcher who foregrounds his or her study within this paradigm often uses participants' observation and field work where many hours and days are spent in direct contact with participants. Given this broad overview of the interpretivism paradigm I believed that the lenses of this paradigm were suitable for this study to interact with the research schools to explore how school ethos has been influenced by school categorisation from the experiences and practices of teachers and principals of the study schools. Lot of hours were spent in the five study schools to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of school ethos as influenced by school categorisation. Drawing from the preceding argument it was evident that interpretivism paradigm acknowledges that reality consists of communities or individuals subjective experiences. Thus for this, permissions was obtained from the principals and teachers of the study schools to gather their experiences on school ethos as influenced by school categorisation.

Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) suggest four aspects under which a researcher makes assumptions when investigating a phenomenon. These are ontology which deals with nature of reality, epistemology which deals with the theory of knowledge, axiology which deals with the role

of values or ethics in research and lastly methodology which deals with quantitative or qualitative study. In the following paragraphs I proceed to explain these aspects in detail.

3.2.1 Ontology

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), the study of nature and form of reality (that which is or can be known) is called ontology. Interest and politics shape multiple values and beliefs and these values and beliefs are socially constructed, privileging some values of reality and under-presenting others (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Interpretivists believe that it is the responsibility of the researcher to understand the multiple social constructions of knowledge and meaning (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This takes me to the point I mentioned earlier that interpretivism paradigm assumes that reality is socially constructed and it endeavours to understand the subjective world of human experience. In this study the reality was constructed by the participants through interaction and observation of the school context. Multiple realities offered by different participants provided substantial information on the study. This assisted me to gain clear insight in exploring school ethos as influenced by school categorisation.

3.2.2 Epistemology

As I have discussed above that ontology deals with nature of reality, whereas epistemology relates to how things can be known, how facts or truths or even physical laws if they do exist can be disclosed and discovered (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In simple terms the latter therefore states that epistemology looks at how one comes to know reality and the method for knowing the nature of reality thus assumes a relationship between the knower and the known (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). On this occasion the researcher was able to perceive the issue under study from the viewpoints of the participants. Therefore the researcher's biasness was then toned down resulting in authenticity of the study being enhanced (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). I found the epistemological assumptions of the interpretivism paradigm suitable for this study as it pursued to better explore the school ethos as influenced by school categorisation from the views of principals and teachers in the study schools. The study elucidated the participants' understanding as well as knowledge of school ethos as influenced by school categorisation while also enhancing the researcher's understanding on the phenomenon. Punch and Oancea

(2014) state that interpretivism concentrates on the meaning people bring to situations and behaviour which they use to understand their world.

3.2.3 Axiology

Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) postulate that axiology deals with the principles (what is acceptable to do in what conditions) in conducting research, the ethics that govern these principles. The aim of axiology is to provide guidelines during the research process on what constitutes appropriate moral behaviour. It is crucial for the researcher to be aware of how he or she positions himself or herself in relation to the context of the study, participants and how such positioning may influence the study as well as the researcher to make his or her values known in the study (Rule & John, 2011). In doing so, I have undertaken all ethical values in conducting this study which are outlined in the following section of this chapter.

3.2.4 Methodology

Methodology is based on assumption about the nature of the reality being studied, what constitute knowledge of that reality and what therefore are appropriate ways (methods) of building knowledge of that reality (Punch & Oancea, 2014). Given the above definitions methodology is a procedure that is used by the researcher during the investigation in finding out about a particular phenomenon under study. Qualitative approach is favoured by the researchers within interpretivism paradigm because participants meaning is interpreted as embedded in the social context and in the people who live in that context. Having discussed the methodology I proceed in discussing the suitable research design for this study and also justifying why I find it appropriate.

3.3 Research design and methodology

Punch and Oancea (2014) refer to research design as the overall plan for a piece of research, including the main ideas namely: the strategy, the conceptual framework, the question of who or what will be discussed for generating and analysing data. Whilst methodology is about the knowledge of know-how or what procedures, methods and instruments are employed to

gather the data (Mouton, 2009). I argue that research design forms the plan and the structure of a study and in doing so gives the compass pointer or direction to the study. Given the definition of methodology is concerned about the specific ways of understanding our world. For this study I utilised a case study design. The reason for selecting this design is because this is an empirical study of a qualitative nature through the lens of interpretivism paradigm and it aims to provide an in-depth description of the case (Mouton, 2009).

According to Yin (2009), a case study is an empirical inquiry in its real world context bounded system (bound by place or time) which can be a single or multiple cases using a variety of data generation methods over a period of time. Babbie (2013) also points out that a case study is an in-depth study of one particular case in which the case may be an individual person (such as a learner, parent or teacher), a community, a group of people, an organisation, an event, a school or even a geographic unit. Given the above definitions I reason that a case study can be defined as a detailed examination of a phenomenon. Case study aims to describe what it is like to be in a particular situation. This study aims at capturing the reality of the participants' lived experiences in their natural settings, thoughts and perceptions concerning the school ethos as influenced by school categorisations (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). The case in this study is schools and teachers. Yin (2009) refers to 'how' or 'why' research questions as the reasons for the use of the case study that seek to explain circumstances that justify its use. He further states that the more the research questions necessitate an in-depth and intensive description of the phenomenon, the greater the appropriateness of the case study. With that said, one of my sub-key research question focuses on, why does school categorisation influence school ethos, clearly articulated the need for an in-depth and intensive explanation of the principals' and teachers experiences and practices.

Some of the advantages of a case study mentioned by Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) are that it is concerned with a rich and vivid description of events relevant to the case, and it focuses on individuals or groups and seeks to understand their perceptions of events. These scholars further state that the potential of a case study also allows for the use of various techniques or methods to obtain information. This had assisted me immensely in exploring the phenomenon of school ethos as influenced by school categorisation through the voices of principals and teachers which were captured through interviews. Moreover, capturing the events of the schools through observations was of great benefit for this study in a sense that I was able to capture the close-up reality and thick description (Yin, 2011). The common disadvantage

levelled against case study is that it depends on a single case thus it is incapable of providing a generalising conclusion (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

Yin (2011) identifies three variations in case studies that are linked to the intent of the case analysis. The first is intrinsic case study in which the researcher expresses and defends intention to do a case study because it represents a unique case deserving to be studied on its own right. The second is instrumental case study in which the study not only presents a particular situation but it intends to inform other cases or situations. Lastly, the multiple case studies where two or more cases are selected because it is believed that they are similar. This study is based on a multiple-site case study as opposed to a single case study, since it is one case study into school categorisation that was conducted at five different sites, namely five schools. This is not a comparative study and I have opted to use five schools because I believed that they were able to illuminate my study by allowing some breadth as well as depth of the study focus (Rule & John, 2011). Yin (2009) maintains that the data gathered from multiple cases is often considered as being more convincing, and the study is thus viewed as being more robust. Yin (2009) also asserts that the analytical benefits of using two or more cases may be significant. Having considered the preceding arguments I believed that selecting five schools was able to strengthen my findings as opposed to the use of a case study conducted at a single site. Given the detailed discussion to employ a case study design and the rationale for using this design I proceed to the research approach.

3.4 Qualitative approach

Having situated this study within the case study design now the emphasis is on appropriate research approach for this study. The succeeding discussion highlights my argument for the use of qualitative research as the appropriate approach for this study. However, before proceeding to document my explanations, I find it necessary to briefly outline that there are three recognised approaches for conducting research and these are quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods (Creswell, 2014).

Silverman (2013) emphasises that quantitative research focuses on generalizability, which is achieved through statistical sampling procedures. The mixed methods approach deals with inquiry involving collecting quantitative data and generating qualitative data using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks (Creswell,

2014). This implies that the data is quantified in the view of single reality which through measurement and statistics should be obtained as objectively as possible. With that said, I am of the view that these approaches are inappropriate for this study. I refer to these critical features of both approaches in the above discussion as a defence to foreground my study within qualitative approach. The qualitative approach emphasises the lived experiences of the participants within their cultural contexts in natural setting (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Furthermore, qualitative approach is mainly for exploring and understanding the meanings groups or individuals ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014; Punch & Oancea, 2014; Babbie, 2013; Silverman, 2013; Yin, 2011). In qualitative approach the research questions are addressed more appropriately and focus on individuals and how they interact in their social settings, and how they see themselves in their environment (Silverman, 2013). Qualitative approach endeavour to reveal not only what happens but how it happens and most importantly why it happens the way it does (Yin, 2011). With that said, using this approach enabled me to explore the world of the research participants in their natural settings (schools environment) which will result in understanding their life experiences and practices on a regular basis. Thus the fundamental aim was to see the world from the individual's perspective and understand the phenomenon from the individual's experiences.

Through the qualitative approach, the researcher is able to enter the participant's life-world and explore their lived experiences. In qualitative approach detailed consideration is given to the holistic situation or picture of the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Unlike quantitative approach that is concerned with testing hypotheses, qualitative approach focuses on interpretation and meaning. With regard to this study, I conducted an in-depth inquiry so as to obtain thick, detailed descriptions of this phenomenon of school ethos as influenced by school categorisation through the perspectives of principals and teachers in research schools. Furthermore, in qualitative approach process the researcher has a crucial role to play which is through his or her ears and eyes that data are generated, settings are viewed, information is gathered and realities are constructed (Yin, 2011). In the light of the preceding statement this study explores the study schools within the democratic context that was brought about by the Government of National Unity. Finally, I have utilised qualitative approach because it is dynamic in nature, evolving and fluid as opposed to the rigidity of quantitative approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Given the detailed discussion on qualitative approach I proceed to research sampling or population of this study.

3.5 Sampling

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a portion of a group for the purpose of research (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Adding to this is Punch and Oancea (2014) who state that sampling means a selected target group drawn from larger group where data is generated and analysed with an intention to develop knowledge. Given these definitions, sampling involves decisions about which settings, people, individuals, behaviours and events to gain knowledge about the phenomenon under study. According to Cohen, *et al.*, (2011), convenience sampling method refers to situations when elements are selected based on the fact that they are easily and conveniently available. For this study, I have conveniently selected five public schools. These schools were selected based on their categorisation as well as of their quintile rankings as determined by the Department of Basic Education. These schools are all within uMgungundlovu district and are easily accessible to me as I am residing in the same district.

The schools that I selected were: two primary schools situated in the township opposite each other, the township high school with few non-African teachers working in the school, primary school situated in a former Indian area and lastly the urban school that is well resourced which is now classified as a former Model C school. I have purposively selected twenty participants from five schools (see Table 1). This was done by selecting the principal from each school and three teachers from each school. Throughout this study I have maintained the anonymity of the schools and the participants through the use of pseudonyms.

Table 1

School	Quintile	Status	Principals	Teachers	Total
Ngoyi Primary	3	No-Fee Paying	1	3	4
Hloba Primary	3	No-Fee Paying	1	3	4
Toyi Primary	4	Fee Paying	1	3	4
Lokishini Secondary	3	No-Fee Paying	1	3	4
Mshini Secondary	5	Fee Paying	1	3	4
Total			5	15	20

3.6 Data generation methods

The four primary methods that are commonly utilised by the qualitative researchers for generating data are: participating in the setting, interviewing in-depth, observing directly and analysing documents (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Rule and John (2011) suggest that the use of various data generation methods yields rich depictions of the case. Furthermore, Marshall and Rossman (2011) maintain that a specific strength of the case study is its potential to bring various types of evidence to focus in-depth on phenomenon. In this study I have utilised three data generation methods namely: semi-structured interviews, observations and documents review. According to Yin (2011), employing three different data generation methods to test the findings strengthens the validity of a study and it is called triangulation. Following paragraphs explain each of these three methods that were utilised in this study.

3.6.1 Interviews

Rule and John (2011) define an interview as a form of one-on-one guided communication between the researcher and the research participants. Elaborating, Nieuwenhuis (2007) states that an interview data generation method is a two-way discussion in which the researcher asks the participant questions to generate data to learn about the beliefs, opinions, views, behaviours and ideas of the participant. Reasoning from the above definitions, an interview has a purpose and questioning forms an essential part of the discussion. The aim of qualitative interviews according to Nieuwenhuis (2007) is to see the world through the eyes of the participant and to obtain rich descriptive data that can assist the researcher to understand the participants' construction of reality. Nieuwenhuis (2007) outlines the different types of interviews, namely: open-ended, structured, semi-structured and focus group interviews.

In generating data from the study participants (principals and teachers of five schools) semi-structured interviews were the most appropriate type to utilise so as to obtain the participants views about the school ethos as influenced by school categorisation. Semi-structured interview is defined as an interview organised around the areas of particular interest while still allowing flexibility and in-depth discussion during data generation process whilst creating space for the interviewer to pursue lines of enquiry stimulated by the interview (de Vos, *et al.*, 2011). Each interview lasted about thirty to forty five minutes. Interviews were

audio-recorded with the permission of the participants. Using the audio recorder ensured capturing of the actual words of the participants thus enabling the richness of the data to be captured. Silverman (2013) suggests that audio-recordings allow the researcher to replay the recordings thus improving transcribing and provide material for reliability checks. Interviews were conducted at the schools after normal school hours and week-ends on times we agreed upon between myself and the participants. During interviews I took notes to assist me during the transcribing process of the data.

As mentioned above, semi-structured interviews were utilised because this type would produce data that is in line with my study objectives, that is to generate descriptive meanings from the participants' views (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). As Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) state that semi-structured interviews allow the qualitative researcher to generate more descriptive data from few participants therefore it was of importance to utilise this type of interview. With semi-structured interviews I was able to probe and ask clarity of answers and do follow-up on participants' responses (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This is affirmed by Bell (2010) who points out that one of the key benefits of the interview is its adaptability. The contrasting side of semi-structured interviews is highlighted by Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) who state that one of the disadvantages of this type of interviews is that it can lead to bias and subjectivity with regard to the interviewer. To overcome these disadvantages I tried to be as impartial as possible and created a very relaxed atmosphere. Corbin and Strauss (2008) assert that it is beneficial to combine interview with observation so as to verify interpretations of the participants. I now proceed to elaborate on the utilisation of observation method.

3.6.2 Observations

As I have mentioned earlier, this study utilised observations as one of the methods to generate data. Observations entail the systematic recording and noting of events, behaviours and routines in the social setting (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Adding to this definition, Nieuwenhuis (2007) states that observations are a systematic process of recording the behaviour patterns of participants, occurrences and objects without necessarily communicating or questioning them. In simple terms observation involves the method of noting the behaviour. I utilised this method because I was of the view that it could provide me with the lens to witness first-hand experience of how school ethos has been influenced by school categorisation in the five study schools. This simply means that I was able to see and

hear for myself during the research period the practices of the study schools. This is in line with one of my key research question: how do participants live and practice their school ethos on a regular basis? With that said, I refer to Marshall and Rossman (2011) who purport that observations is a fundamental method for qualitative researchers as it discovers complex interactions in natural social setting. The natural settings in this study were the schools environment. Adding to this point is Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) when suggesting that observation is the best data generating method when it comes to generating primary data.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), there are four types of observations used in qualitative research. These are: complete observer, observer as participant, participant as observer and complete participant. For this study, I opted to be observer as participant. This means I was at the background as quietly as possible, recording information and tried not to influence the flow of the routine. Using this type of observation I am of the opinion that it provided me with first-hand experience on the realities of the school ethos as influenced by school categorisation. In gaining trust of the study schools I explained to the participants in details the focus of the study and also pointed out to them that I was not on a fault finding mission. When conducting observations the focus was on the climate at the schools, interaction of principal, teacher and learners. The atmosphere that prevails during interaction if it was cordial. The teachers' punctuality was observed. The staff briefing sessions and formal staff meetings were closely observed as well so as to find out if the atmosphere of collegiality does exist during these meetings. During these meetings I tried to establish the principals' leadership style, duration of the meeting, sitting arrangements, participation by each staff member, openness and shared decision-making. Another focus was on how the learners dress (in terms of school uniform, shoes and hair styles), their punctuality, participating in extra and co-curricular activities, learner attitude to school and teachers, sitting and interaction during their intervals. I also observed how teachers conducted the pastoral duties and how the assemblies were conducted. Furthermore, I observed how teachers dress, as this has an influence in the way learners copy how teachers conduct themselves in school. As the preceding statement states that the use of various data generation methods yields to the rich depictions of the case it was my intention to obtain rich data (Rule & John 2011). Having discussed interviews and observations I now proceed to the last method which is document review.

3.6.3 Documents review

Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) define documents as a record of a process or an event which may be produced by individuals or group and take a different form. Following the same line of thought are Marshall and Rossman (2011) who maintain that documents are written records that may be used as part of in-depth data generation method in a qualitative study. Stated briefly documents are written recordings of proceedings. Yin (2009) cautions researchers about the use of documents by stating that documents should not be accepted as literal recordings of events that have occurred as there is always a possibility of being deliberately edited. As this study explores the school ethos as influenced by school categorisation, Punch and Oancea (2014) assert that documents can reveal detailed information about the behaviour, symbolic context and culture of the participants. With that said, I argue that documents review was appropriate for this study to offer another lens as this is a qualitative study and some of the issues that may have not been mentioned during semi-structured interviews or captured during observations may be found in the documents of the school.

Marshall and Rossman (2011) state that the use of documents as data generation method is ideal in generating textual in-depth data in qualitative research and it entail the systematic approach called content analysis. Content analysis refers to brochures, books, transcripts, written documents, visual media, and news reports (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). For this study, content analysis was employed to analyse the meaning that was obtained from the documents reviewed. Some of the documents that I reviewed include the school vision, mission and value statement, teaching time tables, time books, learner registers, agenda of meetings, minutes of staff meeting, letters and notices to parents, sport extra- curricular fixtures. These documents were reviewed during normal school hours. In analysing these documents I captured notes on issues related to school ethos as influenced by school categorisation.

Having discussed the document review I now proceed with discussion on data analysis.

3.7 Data analysis

At the core of any research study is data analysis, which can be a daunting task, especially when faced with the problem of what to do with all the data generated. This can be regarded as the most crucial aspect in qualitative research. Qualitative data analysis involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of

the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Elaborating, Rule and John (2011) maintain that data analysis constitute a critical stage in research process which allows the researcher to construct thick descriptions to generate explanation of thought, identify themes and action event in the case. Reasoning from these definitions, data analysis is about interpretation of the raw data to make meaning of it in terms of report writing. As the way of managing data I arranged interview transcripts, observation note and documents review notes separately according to each school. When coming to analysing data captured during interviews I listened to interview recordings repeatedly in order to understand the participants' perspectives in conjunction with the notes I have captured. Notes from observation and documents review processes were studied thoroughly to make meaning and corroborate the findings from the semi-structured interviews. Data was organised employing inductive data analysis, which assisted me to identify multiple realities presented in the data (Maree, 2007). Marshall and Rossman (2011) describe the process of inductive analysis as discovery patterns, themes and categories in one's data. Content analysis was utilised to analyse the meaning that was obtained from the document review. The findings of the study are discussed in detail in chapter four and chapter five. Following is the discussion on issues of trustworthiness.

3.8 Issues of trustworthiness

In qualitative research the concept of trustworthiness promotes values such as scholarly rigour, transparency and professional ethics thus gaining levels of trust and fidelity within the research community (Rule & John, 2011). Expanding on this concept Lincoln and Guba (1985) postulate that trustworthiness of qualitative studies is achieved by giving attention to the four main aspects, namely: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility basically means confidence in the truth of the findings as revealed through the participants' original data and answers the questions as how congruent are the findings with reality. Transferability entails showing that the findings have applicability in other contexts other than the situation in which the current research is undertaken. Dependability is an evaluation of the standard and quality of all employed processes and means of data collection, data analysis and generation of new theory. Confirmability is a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped and supported by data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In line with the preceding definitions which are the substance and rigour of qualitative research, the issue of credibility was addressed by first capturing principals and teachers perspectives by using audio tape during interviews. Semi-structured interviews were utilised which are well established research method. Furthermore, I have utilised iterative questioning and probes to elicit more information. I transcribed the voice recording verbatim thereafter taken the text transcriptions to the participants for member checking. In doing the member checking I established accuracy and authenticity of the data and allowed participants to establish congruence between their voice recordings and transcriptions. The established congruence validated the information of voice recordings. Transferability was achieved by using the findings as well as the results of this study to other schools other than the five schools where the study was conducted. Dependability was confirmed through the use of same instruments in all five study schools and the responses from the participants will be used for generation of theory (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I achieved confirmability by ensuring that my bias and outside influence were eliminated during the study. Another concern when doing research is ethical consideration the following discussion reflects on how issues of ethical issues were addressed.

3.9 Ethical issues

Maree (2007) suggests that conducting research especially from a social science context has an ethical-moral dimension that researchers are compelled to follow. This means according to Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) the researcher must obtain permission to conduct research from all those who will be involved as sources of data. Furthermore, Maree (2007) asserts that the participants' anonymity and confidentiality are the most crucial aspects in social science research. Responding to this advice, I applied for ethical clearance from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Ethics Committee to conduct this study (see attached appendix A). I also applied for permission to conduct this study from KwaZulu-Natal, Department of Education as well from the five schools (see appendices B & C). Furthermore, I applied to study schools to conduct research (see appendices D & E). Informed consent were given and explained to all participants before conducting interviews. All participants were informed that their participation is voluntary and there will be no benefits and that there were free to withdraw should they wish to do so. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, I informed the participants that the pseudonyms will be used in all reports when generating data. Participants

were informed that information they will provide was solely for this study and all tapes and documents would be kept for five years in my supervisors' office in the steel cabinet and thereafter will be destroyed. Having explained how the ethical issues were addressed in this study, I now move on to the chapter summary.

3.10 Chapter summary

This chapter has clearly mapped logically my journey of research design and methodology that I utilised for this study. Lastly, it discussed the issues of trustworthiness and ethical issues. The next chapter focuses on data presentation, and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methodology of this study. Due to the voluminous nature of the data generated, the data presentation section was subdivided into two chapters, namely (Chapter Four and Chapter Five). Specifically, this chapter presents and discussed the findings in terms of the first nine themes that emerged from the data. Chapter Five will focus on the remaining themes. The data was generated from the field through semi-structured interviews, observations and documents reviews. A critique of the findings is then facilitated through interrogating the literature and theoretical frameworks that were explored at length in Chapter Two. To remind the reader, my study, sought to address the following key research question and sub-questions:

Main research question

- What is school ethos and how is it influenced by school categorisation?

Sub- research questions:

- What do participants understand to be school categorisation and school ethos?
- How do the participants live and practise their school ethos on a regular basis?
- How and why does school categorisation influence school ethos?

In order to address issues of trustworthiness of my data and to enhance the confidence in the research findings, this study used data triangulation (De Vos, *et al.*, 2011) as discussed in the previous chapter. In addition, in presenting the data, I wanted to ensure the voices of the participants were not lost. In this regard, verbatim quotes are used throughout in the data presentation and discussion chapters.

4.2 Data Presentation

The following data is presented (currently guided by the questions that were put to the participants) under the themes from analysis of the transcripts, documents as well as through observations that were conducted.

4.2.1 Conceptualisation of school categorisation and school ethos

It is worth noting that when participants were asked about their understandings of school categorisation, only principals were able to respond to the first part of the question pertaining to school categorisation as they understanding this concept as classification, clustering, grouping and demarcation of schools for the purpose of funding. Also there was no tangible evidence to support or to refute the information supplied by the principals pertaining their understanding of school categorisation. Whilst the majority of the principals and teachers understood the term “school ethos” to be the culture, the spirit and the climate that exist within the school. The principals were vigorous and passionate when responding to this question about school ethos. Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School had the following to say:

School categorisation is the mechanism the department of education employed to classify schools for funding purposes. School ethos is the characteristic of a culture era as manifested in its attitudes and aspiration in its spirit that pervades in the school culture

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Likewise, Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School said when speaking about the school ethos he said the definition that resonates well with this term that also embodies all other definitions and ones that he favours most when he echoed that:

School categorisation in my understanding is the way schools have been catalogued for allocation purposes. School ethos is the soul, spirit and climate of the school

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School felt she has a lot in her understanding of school ethos which she said it mirrors how her school functions as a well-oiled machine and stated that:

School categorisation is the way schools have been crusted for funding. School ethos is what makes us who we are, how we do things in the school looking at our

character, our fundamental values, our culture, the climate and spirit that exist in the school under which we function

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

Coming from another perspective which is similar is Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School who in her understanding of school ethos saw it as being discipline displayed in the school environment when she echoed the following:

School categorisation is the system used by the Department of Education to group schools so as to inject finances to the poorer schools. School ethos to me is about discipline in terms of school responsibilities that need to be performed

(Ms Maviyo, principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School stated:

School categorisation is the structure of providing funding to schools according to their needs. I think school ethos is the moral ideas and attitudes that belong to the school

(Mrs Sibonga, principal of Hloba Primary School).

Apart from the similar views voiced by the principals, some teachers from the study schools understood the term “school ethos” to be: the vision, respect and trust, partnership, distinctive character, morals, values and beliefs. Mrs Nkala, a post level 1 teacher from Mshini Secondary School when asked about her understanding of the term “school ethos” had the following to say:

School ethos is the vision the school has within its overall environment

(Mrs Nkala, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

Answering along the lines of her principal views, Mrs Phakela, the post level 1 teacher from Toyi primary school mentioned that:

It is about fundamental values embodied in climate of respect and trust based upon the shared values across the school

(Mrs Phakela, post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

Following the same line of thought as the principal of Hloba Primary School is Mrs Sewrum, the post level 1 teacher from Ngoyi Primary School when she stated that:

School ethos to me refers to the moral values and beliefs that guide the school

(Mrs Sewrum, post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

Mrs Bhakala, another post level 1 teacher from Hloba Primary School in her understanding of the term “school ethos” she explained that:

School ethos is the distinctive character of the school

(Mrs Bhekela, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

Although the responses of the majority of the participants were similar, there were participants who understand the term “school ethos” in the different meaning from the rest of the participants. Amongst those like Mr Madala, a post level 1 teacher from Lokishini Secondary School who stated:

School ethos is only a cooperation of learners, teachers and the principal within the school

(Mr Madala, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

This suggests that people even if they are in the same institution understand and see things differently as it was the case with Mr Madala and Mr Zukwa from Lokishini Secondary School. Given his views they are in line with Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace and Thomas (2006) who state that in an organisation, one of the key things is collaboration which is the key to school ethos. During my visits to the study schools the majority of the schools have displayed an atmosphere that was conducive to learning the school as they promoted respect, as well as healthy productive attitudes towards learning. For example, I visited Mshini Secondary School for two days and I was so impressed by the neat appearance of the learners.

Probing Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School further said:

What I am proud of is, my predecessor said this when he first arrived in this school in 1998 get the uniform right first, he went about listening to all of us and I think down the line I inherited that with the staff and we have come to realise that he was right as this has built our school ethos

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

As mentioned above, at all the five schools visited there was no evidence to corroborate or to refute what the principals explained when asked about their understanding of school categorisation. Nonetheless, as this study focused on school ethos as influenced by school categorisation, the literature concerning school categorisation showed that the grouping of schools within the same geographical location for economic, administrative, pedagogical and political purposes is known as school clusters and has arisen as one of the possible solutions

to achieve in education system within the framework of financial austerity which is the similar system the South African government post-apartheid adopted when categorising schools (Bray, 1987). Furthermore, according to the *South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996*, the state is required to fund all public schools and provides a quintile ranking mechanism to address equity in schools by disseminating progressive funding by classifying public schools into wealth quintiles where schools serving poorer communities should receive more funding than schools serving better-off communities (Mestry, 2014).

Referring to the second part of the question pertaining to school ethos, Mshini Secondary School has a welcome sign at the entrance of the school, every learner (girls and boys) in the school was in full school uniform. Every learner I met from the school gate to the corridors greeted. During the lesson change-over by the ringing of the second bell all learners were in class learning. To me this resonates with what Mr Bell said very passionately when he said school ethos is about the soul, spirit and climate of the school as well as what he learnt from his predecessor. Mshini Secondary School was the only study school that did not start a day with a morning assembly, they only conduct their assembly before break time. All five schools were conducting their assembly three days a week. Other four schools were starting their day with an assembly in the morning before commencing with the lessons. I am not comparing the schools I visited but I must say when the principal of Ngoyi Primary School responded when asked about her understanding of school ethos she mentioned discipline. During my visit all learners and teachers during the assembly and after the assembly leading to their classrooms for lessons were well-behaved.

At Hloba Primary School, the opposite of what I had observed at Ngoyi Primary School, was obtained. There was only one teacher at the morning assembly who was struggling by herself to maintain order or trying to let learners sing whilst waiting for the principal to conduct the assembly. Responding to the question about her understanding of the term “school ethos” the principal, of Hloba Primary School, Mrs Sibonga mentioned that it is about moral ideas that people have and display in the school. During assembly I did not witness dignity from the staff of Hloba Primary School as I expected to see a dignified gathering that should be teaching learners good ethical behaviours. What I witnessed were the teachers who were sitting in their cars eating, others going to their classrooms carrying cups of tea. The moral ideas and attitudes understood by the principal, Mrs Sibonga were not displayed by the teachers. Furthermore, from my observation the climate of the lessons at Hloba Primary School two teachers were administering corporal punishment to the learners who failed to do

their homework. When perusing the documents, school homework policy those not outline that if the learner has not done homework corporal punishment should be administered, instead it states that the learner would receive a warning or a letter will be sent to the parent and lastly the parent will be called in if the misdemeanour persisted. The actions by the two teachers contravened the *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996* which forbids the use of corporal punishment in schools. Deal and Peterson (2009) describe this type of behaviour as what arises when ineffective practices become typical within a school. In support of the latter Tajfel and Turner (1979) argue that within the social identity theory, peoples' psychological processes are bound to function with a particular attitude, behaviour and dislikes within the organisation. As much as the principal of the school understand the term "school ethos" as morals at the school, I did not witnesses such ethics. This suggests that Mrs Sibonga's, the principal of Hloba Primary School understanding of school ethos is the opposite of what is being practised by the teachers and learners in her school.

Rutter, Maughan and Ouston's (1979) study of school effectiveness in London found that amongst other factors the social organisation of the school, behaviour of learners and characteristics of learners they introduce the idea of school ethos that provided a more positive behaviour of learners in their interactions between the school and its environment. When the principal of Lokishini Secondary School responded regarding his understanding of the term "school ethos" he mentioned amongst other things the characteristics spirit of culture and era or community. During my two days observation at this school, what I witnessed was not pleasing from the learners coming through the school gate, the way they dress, their hair styles to the way some of the teachers were dressed. It was like both parties (teachers and learners) were going for shopping and not coming to school. Reading the Learner Code of Conduct of the school it outlines clearly how learners should dress, but such was not evident in some of the learners. Furthermore, I found the school has a Code of Conduct for Teachers which also stipulates that clothing of teachers should at all times display professionalism at school and during sport events. This suggests that the school has policies which outline clearly what is expected but such is not followed which seems to display that the way the school is being led and managed is questionable. Supporting the issue on uniform is Grant, Jasson and Lawrence (2010) who assert that schools that practise a sense of pride in neatness, discipline and in their uniform succeed in achieving their core responsibilities of teaching and learning. Despite the fact that the motto at the entrance of Lokishini Secondary School as well as in school letter head which encourages learners to work and pray, but the atmosphere

that prevailed during the two assemblies I observed refuted what the principal mentioned and the motto of the school. In my own view an assembly where people gather to worship God should be treated with outmost respect and in a dignified manner.

The responses of both the principal and post level one teacher at Toyi Primary School when asked about their understanding of the term “school ethos” they understood it refer to the fundamental values which are trust and shared values. During my visit at the school I witnessed the way the learners and teachers conduct themselves. I witnessed some learners going to assist some teachers carrying the books out of their cars to the school without hearing the teachers calling them to assist them. That willingness to help without being told to do so suggests the ethos of the school that the two participants (Mrs Nodlula and Mrs Phakela) spoke about.

Generally, the findings to this question suggest that the participants know what school ethos means but the practice was incompatible with that knowledge. In my own view the above findings are not sufficient if people understand school ethos as something that must be on paper, know it but fail to practice and nurture it in an organisation as a school. If ethos is practiced it then agrees with the literature which states that culture is the way people do things around where there are and the way of life of a particular group (Bush & Anderson, 2003; Fink, 2000).

The following theme discusses how the schools practice their school ethos.

4.2.2 Practice of school ethos

The majority of the participants articulated that they encouraged and practised school ethos through having moral/ spiritual talks during the assembly and also holding staff meetings to discuss matters pertaining to the school so that the school ethos did not escape the system. Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School had the following to say:

We usually have staff meetings (with the staff) to plot the way we should do things and at the end of the term we do introspection to see how we have performed and look at areas where we did not do well and come up with strategies to improve

(Ms Maviyo, principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Furthermore, Ms Maviyo stated that matters should not be discussed at the boardroom and end there as they are not serving the walls of the boardroom. Some of the things need to be communicated to learners as they are the ones that they serve and the important stakeholders but also ensure that they also practise the school ethos. She commented:

During the assembly we conduct lessons as well as activities to ensure that our school ethos is maintained

(Ms Maviyo, principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School asserted that:

Every Monday morning it is my duty to conduct the assembly. I make sure that I motivate learners and teachers as well as to how we should do things as a school so that we can be disciplined ambassadors of Hloba primary school. I also highlight that when we having meetings with the staff

(Mrs Sibonga, principal of Hloba Primary School).

When asked how the school encourages and practises school ethos the post level 1 teacher, Mr Mbomvu (Hloba Primary School) gave the contradicting response to what his principal had said when he stated:

I cannot pin point things that we do as a school that I can say they encourage or we practise as our school ethos. Even meeting we only have it at the beginning of the year and that's it

(Mr Mbomvu, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

A morning assembly is viewed by the participants as the core to practise of school ethos where more values can be imparted to learners including to read scriptures from the bible so as to start the day. Furthermore, to ensure school ethos is encouraged around the full complement of the school that is learners and teachers. Mr Zukwa the principal of Lokishini Secondary School explained:

Throughout the year we dedicate time for our morning devotions whereby we read the bible, we explain the scripture and we do that interchangeable on voluntary basis, it swings like a pendulum from teachers to learners and to parents. During assembly we

encourage the culture of intrinsic motivation to a point where learners demonstrate self-discipline

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mrs Sewrum, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School had the following to say:

During assembly we communicate good values and morals and teach things that would influence all of us to have good attitudes towards the school ethos

(Mrs Sewrum, post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mrs Khuleka, the post level 1 teacher from Toyi Primary School mentioned what they practise as a school and asserted the following:

Every morning we start our day with an assembly before going to class, we read the verses from the Bible, we pray as one, we speak to our learners instilling good morals. And during our meetings we share ideas and look at things that can make us grow collectively

(Mrs Khuleka, post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

The emphasis of using the assembly gathering as a good podium to encourage and practise what the school stands for is also mentioned by Mrs Panday the post level 1 teacher from Mshini Secondary School. Mrs Panday had the following to say:

In our school the vision and mission statement is always part of our daily business in anything that we do. During the assembly we always take a particular point from general announcement related to our vision and mission statement and project it through power point presentation and music clips that our learners can be able to identify

(Mrs Panday, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

Likewise, Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School shares the same sentiments as the above participant when she mentioned the following:

We always believe in our motto which says “we share one vision” that assist us in all what we do

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

Responding to the question of how the school encouraged and practised school ethos Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School stated that it all starts with him for the school climate to prevail. Mr Bell explained:

Its starts with my leadership style where I create a climate where learners want and are keen to learn as well as teachers want and enjoy teaching in this school. On daily basis in leading the school I nurture the sense of love and caring and make this school a happy school by listening to learners and staff. Our vision and mission is something that we always work at and it encourages us as a school. Also the code of conduct for learners and teachers is what we always follow

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

When Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School mentioned that it all begins with his leadership style, during my visit at the school I observed that as much as the school functions so effectively, he goes out of his way to ensure that there is teaching and learning in class. Perusing the schedule of teachers who have produced excellent results in the school he was on the top of the list. Such leadership style is highlighted by Southworth (2008) when he states that the principal as an instructional leader uses number of strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning in school. Amongst the three leadership behavioural strategies expected of a leader as mentioned by Southworth (2008) are: modelling, monitoring and professional dialogue, where the principal uses teaching as an example to model how to do things. Given what the principal of Mshini Secondary School exercises it can be deduced that the style he mentioned to encourage and practice school ethos is in line with instructional leadership style. Looking at Southworth's (2008) model, it implies that the principal should be at the centre of school by understanding, viewing, practising and enhancing the open interactions within the stakeholders (learners and teachers) so as to promote the positive climate. This simply means the principal needs to influence the pulse of the school ethos for the school to be effective.

Although I did not attend the staff meeting at Ngoyi Primary School but perusing through the documents, the minutes of the staff meeting dated 22 July 2015, there was a discussion about how the learners have gone about learning the culture of greeting teachers, other learners and visitors coming to the school. Also in the same minutes of the staff meeting at Ngoyi Primary

School teachers were highlighting their reflection of what works for the school in terms of teaching values to learners. Furthermore, during my visit at the school I attended the assembly and they were six learners comprising of three boys and girls who came to the podium to read the books about the value of women in the country. This is congruent with what the participants alluded to when they mentioned good values, human rights and morals were conveyed during the assembly.

The divergent response of Mr Mbomvu, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School to his principal was confirmed when I perused the school documents further. There were no minutes of any staff meeting that I could review as the principal has mentioned that she conducts the staff meeting. Given the contradicting views they presented, this seems to suggest that this school does not encourage or neither practise the school ethos. The fact that there were no records or minutes of staff meeting corroborates with what Mr Mbomvu, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School alluded to during our discussion.

Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School mentioned that through assembly sessions it was where learners demonstrated self-discipline through the culture of intrinsic/extrinsic motivation. During my visit to the school and attending the assembly at this school such could not be displayed by both the teachers and learners. The majority of learners were showing no respects to the proceedings of the assembly as well as some of the teachers were not paying any attention to the assembly. Learners were busy having their conversations, others busy playing with cell phones and some teachers were reading the newspapers and having their own discussions. This suggests that the school is somehow losing control of learners and some teachers to pay respect to the school proceedings. My observation at Lokishini Secondary School seems to suggest that the way some of the things are done by some learners and some teachers in the school does not show respect and consistency.

Deducing from the findings so far, the majority of the participants believed that the only way to encourage and practise school ethos is through the use of the gathering such as the morning assembly where all stakeholders which include both learners and teacher were present. Some participants mentioned that they believed in practising the school ethos by always referring to their vision and mission statement which was the cornerstone of the school. Thus the vision and mission statement serves to enlighten values, state the school purpose, gives direction and focus, convey its identity and reason for school being (Deal & Peterson, 2009; Robison,

Lloyd & Rowe, 2008). While reviewing literature the study conducted by Sulaiman (2012) evidenced that a form of a ritual like an assembly was powerful in conveying discipline in Missionary and Muslim schools where values were transmitted to the learners. Another study by Dias and Menezes (2013) found that the participatory experiences in school such as school assemblies and meetings were regarded as important learning opportunities that contribute to the school ethos. In addition, Southworth (2008) posit that assemblies are used in schools as occasions to reinforce, practise and promote educational practices and values. The findings of this study, viewed from social identity theory, suggest that an individual's identity can be shaped and influenced by social gathering in a social space (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This suggests that when schools are using morning assemblies to congregate, they enhance positive influence in terms of moral behaviours of learners. This is supported by Van Dijk (1999) who postulates that group identity also involves routine practices which its members identify and has a meaning to the organisation.

The findings presented so far suggest that the schools do encourage and practice school ethos and the dominating platform they used is the morning assembly in a collective manner. Furthermore, the participants suggested that they reinforce what have been communicated in an assembly through staff meetings.

The next theme discusses the relationships among learners, teachers and between learners and teachers in schools.

4.2.3 School relationships among learners and teachers

Some participants viewed the relationships in their school as being respectful, caring and loving. But the majority of the participants (Lokishini Secondary School, Ngoyi Primary School and Hloba Primary School) perceived the relationships in study school as being negative as they mentioned cases of bullying, disrespect and disobedience among learners and teachers. The participants were categorically clear when explaining the relationships in their schools. Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School stated:

The relationships in the school have deteriorated so badly in that there is lot of disrespect for one another's dignity. Teachers throw tantrums at one another and learners fight all the time

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Concurring with her principal of Lokishini Secondary School is Miss Buyeka, the post level 1 teacher who said the condition in her school were not conducive to teaching and learning and their safety was not guaranteed. Miss Buyeka stated:

The relationships in school is a huge mountain to climb as it is so horrendous, fights spread like wild fires because of dagga that is paddled in school amongst learners and lot of negative attitudes amongst teachers as well

(Miss Buyeka, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Similarly, lamenting about the ill-discipline and negative relationships of learners that take most of her time is Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School who mentioned that:

Every hour I have to separate learners, who fight in the school, deal with learners who are rebellious to teachers and who bully other learners and smoking dagga in school

(Mrs Sibonga, principal of Hloba Primary School)

When asked further about the teachers in school Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School had the following to say:

Teachers work collaboratively, they treat one another with respect, they respect the rules of the schools and have open communication with the learners

(Mrs Sibonga, principal of Hloba Primary School).

However, a post level 1 teacher Mrs Thobeka of Hloba Primary School shared opposing sentiments to those uttered by her principal. Mrs Thobeka had the following to say:

There is a great deal of lack of respect in school, conflicts amongst teachers, learners fight every day, bullying one another, sexually harassing each other and having negative attitude towards the school

(Mrs Thobeka, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

The different views regarding issues of respect and collegiality at Lokishini Secondary School and Hloba Primary School seems to suggest there is no collaboration and that the

relationships for both learners and teachers make the school climate to be negative which does not add any value to the school ethos. Also it seems to suggest that the two schools mentioned above have failed to put measures to ensure that the atmosphere is conducive to teaching and learning.

Likewise, Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School admitted that as much as they were trying their best as a school to instil discipline, there were some handful of learners who did not want to toe the line. Ms Maviyo explained:

We have a group of learners who are bullies, fight, steal others belongings thus causing the relationship amongst learners to very toxic. These are the learners who do not respect teachers but we deal with them. The professionalism of teachers makes them work as a team and they show love and care for our learners

(Ms Maviyo, principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Responding to the issue of relationships in school concerning the learners and teachers Mrs Ngema, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School had the same views as her principal had the following to say:

Some of our learners are out of hand but teachers work as a team, so professionally that they respect one another

(Mrs Ngema, post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

Schools are really unique and have different calibres of teachers and learners. Some school contexts are relatively durable and have generally a quality atmosphere that is prevalent among the learners and teachers. Such schools have internal stakeholders who are pulling together. Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School put it passionately and stated:

The relationships throughout the school are more of loving and caring, I always tell teachers and learners that we are the autobiography, the community out there is reading us

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

Similarly, Mrs Pillay, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School explained:

In this school we are like one family, as teachers we are good role models and learners have built so much trust in us. There is a spirit of respect in the whole school

(Mrs Pillay, post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mrs Smit, the post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School stated:

The relationships in our school are so incredible, it is embodied by the spirit of Ubuntu, unity, respect, loving and caring from both teachers and learners

(Mrs Smit, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

Corroborating the response of the principal of Lokishini Secondary School concerning the toxic relationships in his school, during my visit at the school after the staff briefing in the morning, there were heated exchanges of words between two staff members. The two teachers had a heated argument and there was use of vulgar language in the foyer of the school. This suggests that there is lack of professionalism among some teachers in the school, if they fail to resolve their differences amicably. Furthermore, when perusing the school log book, there was an entry dated 03 February 2015, wherein there was a disciplinary hearing of a learner and a teacher which was attended by a Departmental official. The school has a register for disciplinary hearings. When reading that register most of the offenders were for smoking of dagga in school, extortion of money from learners and for fighting in school. Despite what is taking place at Lokishini Secondary School, I further came across two documents the Code of Conduct for Learners and another for Teachers which stipulate that learners and teachers should behave in the manner that does not put the school into disrepute and they should uphold the values and the culture of the school. From what I witnessed at Lokishini Secondary School concerning what I have described above, there seems to be an atmosphere of disrespect and some teachers and learners do not uphold the school as place of learning values, clearly human dignity was missing.

The response about the relationships amongst teachers by Mrs Thobeka, the post level 1 teacher at Hloba Primary School, refute what her principal, Mrs Sibonga said. During my two days' visit at the school the sour relationship of teachers surfaced when the principal sent a learner to ask one particular teacher to go to the gate and do the duty because the teacher that was supposed to be on duty was not present. The learner returned with a reply that the teacher said she was busy and therefore could not do that duty. During the two days that I was at Hloba Primary School, I witnessed three fights amongst learners during break time.

Throughout break time there was no teacher doing ground duty. The causes of those fights were the arguments over gambling and bullying on the school grounds. This seems to suggest that teachers at Hloba Primary School do not fulfil their roles completely as they leave a vacuum on the grounds. The negative relationships at Hloba Primary School suggest a negative light about the ethos of the school where teachers and learners quarrel at the drop of a hat.

Although I was at Ngoyi Primary School for two days as well I did not witness the incidents of bullying in school as it was mentioned by the principal and post level 1 teacher. I spent most of the time during break time observing how the learners were interacting with one another, how they behaved well on the playgrounds. I could not witness any sort of bullying amongst them. Perusing the documents there were letters sent to parents for incidents of assaults and bullying amongst learners on 8 August 2014, 12 November 2014 and 20 March 2015. Furthermore, I examined the minutes of the staff meeting dated 14 May 2015 where the principal thanked the teachers for professionalism in dealing with learners and also for identifying learners that need special attention. In the school log book there was an entry dated 29 July 2014 of the visit by South African Police to address learners that were caught in teachers' classrooms during break time interfering with teachers' bags. Such incidents found in the school documents suggest that some learners of Ngoyi Primary School come to school with elements of criminality which ends up diminishing the positive school ethos that is needed in school. Rossouw (2012) posits that South African schools regularly witness incidents where fundamental rights of educators are infringed by learner ill-discipline in the form of psychological or physical violence and such hostilities have detrimental effects on school environment and educational activities. School ethos that is conducive in Swedish Schooling system is mentioned by Alloid (2010) as interpersonal relationships between teachers and learners, teachers' behaviours and moral beliefs, peer relationships and communication style and all these are essential in a social climate of the learning environment.

The evidence of loving and pastoral care was displayed during my visit at Mshini Secondary School when one teacher came to the principal's office and handed him a cell- phone. The principal narrated a story behind the new cell phone that the teacher handed him. He said he was approached by one of the learners who told him that her parents have taken her cell phone to pawn it to get money for liquor and he shared that with his staff. The teachers were so touched that the teacher bought her a new cell phone. Walking through the corridors of

Toyi Primary School there were posters on the walls by the learners praising their teachers for being good to them, naming other teachers as their Mother Teresa. Looking at the teacher at Toyi Primary School and Mshini Secondary School they were always smiling communicating to one another and to learners with respect. What I have noticed in Toyi Primary School when the teacher was calling a learner, he or she would say my son or my daughter.

In another study by Hatton (2013), she found that respect, teamwork and collaboration by learners and teachers in school nurture the school ethos and make the schools prosper. In the two schools I have mentioned above there was so much ambiance and the schools were alive, and you could see that even learners enjoyed being at school. The core of social identity theory sets out the basis to explain individuals' role-related behaviours which further mediate the relationships between individual behaviour and social structure (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). These authors further state that the individuals in an organisation will then emphasise their characteristics to associate themselves with the particular group that have the same identity. The theory thus suggests that there is interaction between structures of the organisation, social context and group identity where the individuals associate which can influence the organisation in a negative or positive way.

The findings on the relationships between teachers and learners in the study school varied. The majority of the schools are experiencing the toxic and awful kind of relationships which makes teaching and learning impossible in those schools. Some of the schools are experiencing positive relationships which make the atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning.

The following theme discusses the relationships between the schools and the parents.

4.2.4 School relationships with parents

Responding to the question of the relationships between the school and the parents and how this relationship promotes or discourages school ethos the majority of the participants highlighted a great disappointment and dismay with the parent body that were not supportive. Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School explained:

It is regrettable to note that we have bumpy relationships with parents as they have split attitude towards the school

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

When asked further what he means about split attitude of the parents. Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School stated:

Whilst parents want the school to educate their children but at the same time they denigrate, make life difficult for the school and keep on dragging the name of the school into newspapers with negative comments which are unfounded

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mr Sikhulu the post level 1 teacher from Lokishini Secondary School shared the same sentiments as his principal. Mr Sikhulu stated:

We have serious problems with parents, they do not support the school, and they display negative attitudes outside the school instead of coming to school and finding out about their children's progress. There is animosity from the parents to school

(Mr Sikhulu, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Likewise, Ms. Maviyo the principal of Ngoyi Primary School was not happy about the parents not showing any interest in the school where their children are attending. Ms. Maviyo explained:

There is serious problem between the parents and the school. Parents do not bother about the work of their children, they do not even report when a learner is absent or sick for days. In short parents do not support the school and they do not care about what is happening in school

(Ms Maviyo, principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Sharing the same responses were the post level 1 teachers of Hloba Primary School who feel that parents do not care. Amongst these post level 1 teachers, was Mrs Bhekela who stated:

Parents do not co-operate at all, they do not care, and they do not attend meetings when invited. In the last meeting in my class out of forty- three parents only five attended

(Mrs Bhekela, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

Contrary to the responses of her post level 1 teachers, Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School said the parents were very supportive to the school and they enhanced the school ethos. Mrs Sibonga mentioned:

The relationships with parents are good and they are supportive of the school, they attend meetings and sport activities that are happening in school

(Mrs Sibonga, principal of Hloba Primary School).

The rest of the participants at Toyi Primary School and Mshini Secondary School were enjoying the support of the parents and they were very happy with the feedback they received from the parents. These participants strongly believed there was mutual understanding between their schools and the parents. Mrs Singh the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School explained:

Parents dedicate their time to attend our long meetings, come up with good ideas and concerns to strengthen our relationship... that alone show that their relationship with the school encourages positive school ethos

(Mrs Singh, post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

Similarly, Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School responded positively when asked about the relationships between parents and the school. Mrs Nodlula, stated:

We have an open door policy with parents, they trust the school. We write to parents they write to us raising concerns that we might not be aware of. They attend meetings in numbers, attend school activities even on Saturdays when we have sports they come in numbers showing so much interested

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mr Bell the principal of Mshini Secondary School is very happy with the relationship and support the parents offer to the school. Mr Bell explained:

We are lucky as a school with the relationship we have with parents. Some of our parents work till late but when it comes to anything that has to do with the school they are here to support us

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mrs Nkala, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School stated:

I would sound like I am bragging about our school. Most of our parents when invited to attend a meeting they would come, show respect and appreciation of what is happening in school. If a parent could not attend he or she would send a letter of apology to the school, which is something unusual

(Mrs Nkala, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

It is believed that when parents send their children to school there is partnership that is established between the family and the school. This means the parents and teachers have an important role to create an environment conducive to teaching and learning for their children and to promote the interest of the school. Such parental involvement simply means that the two-way communication between the school and the home should be sustained for the school to prosper thus resulting in the enhancement of the school ethos. If the parents are showing no interest in the activities of the school, it simply suggests that there have no interest at heart of their children's education which then results in not enhancing school ethos. In perusing the school log book the entries dated 04 February 2015 and 29 April 2015 of Lokishini Secondary School, there was evidence of parents attacking the school through the media, in the form of local newspaper and local radio station. This corroborates what the principal and post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School said during the semi-structured interviews. Even though I did not view copies of the letters sent by Ngoyi Primary School to parents to invite them to meetings but the minutes of the staff meeting dated 14 May 2015, the Grade Four teachers were complaining about parents not attending the meetings and them stating this as a serious concern for the school.

The response of the principal of Hloba Primary School about the relationship with parents was not evident when examining the documents noting the letter of disappointment dated 16 April 2014 by the principal to parents for not attending the school governing body election. Furthermore, perusing the documents a letter dated 19 June 2015 asking the parent for the fourth time to visit school to discuss the referral of his child to the special school. The documents refuted what the principal of Hloba Primary School stated about the relationships of the parents and the school but at the same time corroborated what the teachers mentioned during the semi-structured interviews. This seems to suggest that the parents of Hloba

Primary School do not cooperate in terms of involving themselves in the school activities, although the principal claims that they support the ethos of the school.

The similarities were observed through pictures and parents' attendance registers at Toyi Primary School and Mshini Secondary School. In perusing the parents' attendance register file, Toyi Primary School invited parents for sport activities on 20 May 2015, on this day parents were also taking part in those activities. The attendance register on the day showed that eighty percent of parents attended. Moreover, the pictures of the different events were displayed in the foyer of the school. The same is documented in the parents' registers of the meeting that took place at Mshini Secondary School on the 2 March 2015. These documents which are attendance registers and pictures corroborate with what the participants of the above two schools stated when they boasted about the relationship of the parents and the school saying that it definitely encourages and supports their school ethos.

The findings in the study schools varied in a sense that as much as the majority of the participants felt the parents' relationships does not encourage school ethos, there are some who feel that their relationships with parents is positive. This suggests that for the school to improve and be successful, the relationship between parents and school needs to be enhanced bearing in mind that parents are the main stakeholders of the school. In addition, parents are the ones who have their children studying in these schools. For the schools where there are positive relationships with the parents, such relationships must be maintained by both the schools and the parents.

The literature states that there are number of factors which lead to parents' lack of participation in schools, power relations, and unstable relationships between the schools and parents which led to poor governance in schools (Mncube, 2009). The relationships between the school and parents that does not encourage school ethos is understood as dysfunctional behaviour in school which leads to counter productivity, incivility, deviance and organisational misbehaviour (Bergman, Bergman & Gravett, 2011). The elements alluded to by these scholars speak to the responses of majority of the participants when they were asked about the relationships between the school and parents. A study by Brown, Busfield, O'Shea and Sibthorpe (2011) in London borough that showed that strong relationship between the parents and the school where parents were invited to regular evening meetings through newsletters and direct communication created a positive school ethos. This study resonates with what some of the participants mentioned and evident in the school hallways and parents'

meetings attendance registers. Viewed from the social identity theory, the findings display number of important features such as group behaviours found in an organisation relate to conformity and socio-cognitive of individuals in a particular context (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The findings showed that the majority of the participants are not happy with the relationship between the school and the parents as it suggests that such relationships are not conducive. Some participants are happy with the relationship between the school and parents which suggests that parents understand their roles in supporting the schools.

The following theme discusses how the schools maintain their ethos.

4.2.5 Maintenance of school ethos

The findings from the participants when asked what mechanisms do their schools use to ensure that the ethos prevailed varied from school code of conduct, being a happy school, caring, effective communication and following the school year planner. Mrs Nkala, the post level 1 teacher from Mshini Secondary School explained:

School code of conduct for learners and teachers stipulate what is expected of learners and us. These are instruments the school use to monitor all of us and ensure that school ethos prevails

(Mrs Nkala, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

Similarly, Ms Maviyo the principal of Ngoyi Primary School stated:

It's the code of conduct for learners and teachers that ensure that our ethos prevails. These policies make our life easier and they keep us in line all the time

(Ms Maviyo, principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mr Zukwa the principal of Lokishini Secondary School said:

School code of conduct and policies for learners and teachers guide us as a school, therefore, for the school ethos to prevail we have an obligation to show these policies to staff and implement them and to ensure that the routine is then followed

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Other participants believed that by having a school year planner was what reminded them of the school ethos. For example, Mr Sikhulu the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School was one of the participants who believe in a year planner as means to ensure that the school ethos prevails. Mr Sikhulu stated:

School year planner guide us and maintain our school ethos, that is where we list things we need to do and keep on reminding ourselves by looking at the year planner

(Mr Sikhulu, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Being a happy school and doing things together was also highlighted by some of the participants as a mechanism that ensures that its ethos prevails. Citing Mrs Nodlula the principal of Toyi Primary School as one of those participants who believed in happiness as mechanism that enhanced the school ethos. She explained:

By keeping ourselves happy and making the school a happy environment. We make sure that every small thing that may not matter to somebody else we do celebrate and enjoy

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

Elaborating further as to how they keep the school a happy environment, Mrs Nodlula mentioned the following:

Keeping our school ethos burning, we organised Valentine's Day functions where learners chose Miss Valentine and Mr Valentine, we also have spring day celebrations where everybody comes in dressed in floral dresses and hats, and we surprised teachers with special lunch

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

Caring and communication was what other participants believed to be a mechanism that ensured that the school ethos prevails. Mr Bell the principal of Mshini Secondary School was the one of the participants who strongly believed in pastoral caring in his school. Mr Bell had the following to say:

School ethos is nurtured, maintained daily, we live, breath, walk and embody through caring, effective communication. For example, if someone in our school it could be a

learners or staff member was sick, a delegation of us would visit that individual to give moral support

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Likewise, Mrs Thobeka, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School stated:

Caring and communication within the school and community by following our vision and mission statement are the ways that makes us work towards the same goal and to ensure that our school ethos triumphs

(Mrs Thobeka, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

The participants who mentioned code of conduct as a mechanism to ensure that the school ethos prevails have copies of the Code of Conduct for learners and teachers. These policies were availed to me, and looking at what was stipulated in those documents and the practices of the schools there was synergy. This suggests that the responses of the participants corroborate with the policies the schools have as a mechanism to maintain school ethos. This suggest that the schools that have policies in place are able to run smooth and effectively. I have noticed when perusing the documents at Lokishini Secondary School, there was only a Code of Conduct for learners and the one for teachers was not available. This means that what the principal mentioned during our discussion is not fully confirmed in terms of the policies when referring to how the school maintains the school ethos. This means that the school still has a missing link in terms of policies that can cover the whole school. In the school staff room at Lokishini Secondary School there was a year planner which was full of dates of activities such as assessment plans, sports activities and social activities for learners and teachers. This evidence confirms what Mr Sikhulu, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School mentioned during our discussion when he stated that they follow what is on their year planner. This suggests that the school that has a year planner is able to execute activities without any delay what they list in their year planner.

Referring to caring, when perusing the school documents at Mshini Secondary School the minutes of the staff meeting dated 23 October 2014 there was delegation of staff members who volunteered to visit the child that was critically sick in the local hospital. Moreover, in the same minutes of the staff meeting mentioned above it showed five staff members who brought clothes for indigent learners. This shows that there are communication channels at the school. In the school's staff room there was a communication book that the staff used to

relate information to the management, Representative Council for Learners and to the support staff. Matters in the communication book involve issues like repairs of school property, request for school bus and matters to Teacher Liaison Officer. This corroborates with what Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School mentioned when he spoke about caring as something embodied in their school ethos. During my visit at Hloba Primary School, I could not corroborate what Mrs Thobeka mentioned during the semi-structured interview in terms of caring and communication as the mechanism that ensured that the school ethos prevails.

Happy school was what Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School declared as a mechanism that ensures that school ethos prevails. At the foyer of the school there are lots of pictures displayed where learners and teachers are laughing and joyful. When perusing the documents, the newsletters of the school dated 03 February 2014 was informing the parents that the school was having Valentine's Day, thus learners had to bring R5-00 on the day. Furthermore, the foyer of the school has the pictures of Miss Valentine and Mr Valentine 2015. Such event with no doubt simply brings joy and happiness to the life of the learners and the school. This corroborates with what Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School mentioned during the semi-structured interview. In addition, amongst the documents was the memo from the principal dated 3 October 2014 inviting all teachers for tea after school as commemoration of the teachers' day. The activities that are conducted at Toyi Primary School suggest that the school tries to ensure that there was an atmosphere of happiness.

The structure that the school follows as a means to ensure that the school ethos prevails is vital so as to sustain the school ethos. The critical part is whatever instrument that is used by the school must be well known to all members of the school. The literature states that for the school to operate and maintain its morals there should be policies in place, thus school's Code of Conduct functions as yard stick to ensure that schools are able to instil values, norms and rules within its society (Mncube, 2009). The school that focuses and shows more concern on practising school policies in its school culture is able to promote the overall goals, resulting in school effectiveness (Hargreaves, 2001). Self-categorisation theory states that by bringing cooperation into individuals' behaviour and self-perception into line with the context relevant to the group, transforms individuals into the correct group behaviour (Turner, 1991).

The findings from the participants suggest that having policies like code of conduct, showing caring, ensuring that the school has a year planner which includes elements of school ethos and communications are the mechanisms that ensures that school ethos prevails.

The following theme focuses on how the schools acknowledge achievements and why is it important to acknowledge achievements.

4.2.6 Acknowledging achievements

All participants interviewed indicated that they conducted award ceremonies and incentives to acknowledge achievements and they believed that it was important to acknowledge achievements because by doing so the awardees were encouraged and motivated to work harder. Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School explained:

In the big book called bible 1corinthians 9: 24-25 Apostle Paul speaks about those who run the race receive the prize as well as crowns and awards. As a school we guided by that in the sense that those learners who performed well we recognised them through prize giving ceremonies in the form of certificates, positive incentives, be it verbal or a pat on the shoulder

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

When asked further, why is it important to acknowledge achievements, Mr Zukwa stated:

Good begets good, which I believed in that you reaped what you sowed and you feel good and like to move from extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation. So a person then feels motivated and strives to do better

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mr Madala, a post level 1 teacher from Lokishini Secondary School mentioned the following:

By organising prize giving ceremonies every year where learners are awarded for academic excellence, best in sports activities and cultural activities. This motivates learners to change negative attitudes to positive attitudes towards the school work.

All our achievements posted in the foyer for everybody to see and others get more motivated

(Mr Madala, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Although all participants mentioned that they conducted awards ceremonies, some participants stated that at time they do not have to wait for the end of the year. For them they see the acknowledgement to be something that needs to be sustained throughout the year and learners to be acknowledged immediately as they do well. As Mr Bell the principal of Mshini Secondary School explained:

As a principal I have this cupboard full of chocolates, tuck shop vouchers and stamps that says well done... On daily basis I have learners coming in here flash with pleasure and exited to show me their hard work and I incentivised them either with voucher, chocolate or stamp their work. I am amazed how desperate learners are for affirmation and rewards. I thought that was for primary school learners even secondary school learners crave for that. This speaks to our mission to get the best kind of everybody else

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

When asked further about what happened to the rest of the school and how the learners are recognised especially those who did not get opportunity to visit the principal's office with their work. Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School stated:

We have progress ceremonies every term to incentivise hard work and progress by giving certificates. We also gave certificates for merits for those who got 80 % and above and acknowledged the top three in each grade. At the end of the year we have prize giving for top achievers

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Likewise, Mrs Bhekela the post level 1 teacher from Hloba Primary School stated:

As much as we have prize giving at the end of the year, but at the beginning of each term all those learners who have done well are given book vouchers from CNA. That motivates them to work harder and inspire other learners

(Mrs Bhekela, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

Contrary to what Mrs Bhekela mentioned was Mr Mbomvu, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School who felt that the school has disregarded and demotivated the learners' effort in terms of acknowledging their hard work in sport that he was in charge of as well as the performance of learners. Mr Mbomvu explained:

We have learners who performed exceptionally in well sports as well as in academic work but the school has done nothing to praise them. If the school can acknowledge those learners that would motivate them and they would feel proud

(Mr Mbomvu, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

Innovative teachers have their means of acknowledging their learners within their classrooms as Ms Buyeka post level 1 teacher from Lokishini Secondary School mentioned:

Each and every month in my class, those learners who performed well for example top ten would sit in the front of the class and I would laminate their names in colourful chart and displayed them on the wall. This had motivated learners to wish to take the front seats and they fight for that

(Ms. Buyeka, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Not only learners appreciated being recognised for their hard work even teachers as part of the system who impart values to these learners also need to be recognised. Mrs Panday the post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School mentioned:

During our end of the year prize giving for learners, we also have an award for the teacher of the year. This makes the awardee felt good for the effort he or she has put to those learners and the school in general and elevated him or her in one way or the other

(Mrs Panday, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mrs Phakela, post level 1 teacher from Toyi Primary School explained:

As teachers in this school we are recognised in a form of certificates for hard work, but it does not stop there, I have the trophy that I received from the school where I was recognised for running Comrades Marathon-2015. These recognitions have knitted us together and encouraged learners and teachers to work hard and be the best

(Mrs Phakela, post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

The evidence of what Mr Madala the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School mentioned during the semi-structured interview was displayed in the school foyer. Corroborating what Mr Madala spoke about when mentioning how the school acknowledged achievement there were pictures of learners receiving their awards from the principal of the school and from the guest speaker they invited in 2014 prize giving ceremony. This suggests that the school honours and see the need for conducting prize giving ceremony to inspire learners and visitors coming to school through pictures. In the same school, I conducted semi-structured interviews with Ms Buyeka in her classroom at the end of the school day. She mentioned the list of top ten learners that are displayed in her class but such was not available when I looked around the classroom. Therefore, my observation around the class room of Ms Buyeka refuted what he mentioned about the list of top ten learners displayed on the walls. This means Ms Buyeka does understand about acknowledging achievement but putting it into practice as she has mentioned is a challenge.

In perusing the documents, the mission statement of Mshini Secondary School says “*all of us we strive to shine*” this corroborates with what Mr Bell the principal of Mshini Secondary School mentioned when incentivising good performance of learners by giving them tuck shop vouchers, chocolates and endorsing well done stamp on their books. In one of the learners’ book I viewed the principals well done stamp praising the learner and his signature. This suggests that the principal was ensuring that he was supporting learners for their hard work. During my second day visit at Mshini Secondary School I attended the progress awards ceremony of the grade 11 and 12 at the school. On this day the school was recognising the top three learners of the above two grades. The recipients were receiving the certificates for their outstanding performance throughout the term. This further corroborates with what Mr Bell explained during our semi-structure discussion. Furthermore, in the school foyer the school had a picture of the teacher that was nominated as 2014 teacher of the year. This also corroborates with what Mrs Panday of Mshini Secondary School mentioned when she said the school does not exclude teachers when it comes to recognising achievements of their good and hard work but it nominates the Teacher of the year as a token of appreciation. This suggests that the school acknowledge the learner achievements and teachers as part of their school ethos.

Understanding that the records of recipients must reflect in school records or at least an entry in the school log book. Perusing the documents at Hloba Primary School there was nothing confirming what Mrs Bhekela, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School mentioned during our discussion when she spoke about vouchers from CNA that there give to learners as way of recognising their achievements. Only in the school year planner there was a date for the prize giving function and nothing else. For not viewing the evidence of learners receiving the CNA vouchers as stipulated by Mrs Bhekela, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School refute what she mentioned during the semi-structured interview. This suggests that the school does honour the prize giving ceremony but awarding the book vouchers cannot be confirmed. Mr Mbomvu, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School mentioned that the school does not recognise learners is refuted in a sense that the school year planner has dates set for awards function.

During the semi-structured interview with Mrs Phakela, a post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School, she mentioned certificates that the learners had received and she pointed to the pictures of the Prize giving ceremony that had taken place in the school. She further went to her classroom to bring me a trophy that she had received from the school for taking part in Comrades Marathon-2015. The evidence she showed me was appreciation of her achievements from her colleagues. This suggests that the school acknowledged the achievements of learners and teachers as a means of motivating them. Such evidence is shown in Jelagat's (2014) study in Kenya where during the ceremonies learners and teachers were recognised in a form of certificates and trophies for their hard work. According to Herzberg's (2005) theory the intrinsic factors such as achievements and recognition motivates and brings job satisfaction to members in an organisation. Furthermore, Deal and Peterson (2009) describe ceremonies as important events in which the organisations celebrate success, communicate values and recognise the special contributions made by its members. In line with the social identity theory, Hogg and Adams (1999) state that this theory has an influence on organisation norms and group motivation which reinforce ideas of the members of the organisation. This suggests that if the schools acknowledge achievements in a way it motivates the members of the school and bond them together and they feel valued in the school.

The findings suggest that the schools acknowledge the achievements through prize giving ceremonies, but other school do it continuously throughout the year. Furthermore, other

school do not leave out their teachers in acknowledging the achievements of learners but they value them as people who have great contributions in the life of learners.

The following theme discusses how the schools promote their ethos.

4.2.7 Promotion of school ethos

All participants highlighted the following factors as the way their schools promotes ethos to other neighbouring schools: ambassadors of the spirit of culture, networking with other schools, showing off through their unique performance of cultural activities, playing sports, subject clustering, show off though discipline behaviour and dress code.

Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School explained:

We do networking with other principals of the neighbouring school when I am with them we share our school ethos, what we do as a school to maintain discipline conducive to school atmosphere

(Ms Maviyo, principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Similarly, Mrs Phakela, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School stated:

We teamwork with other schools in educational matters in the form of subject clustering, sharing the strategies of teaching content easier

(Mrs Phakela, post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

Also some participants highlighted that through sports and co-curricular activities schools were able to promote their ethos to other neighbouring school. Mrs Bhekela, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School had the following to say:

Our school is good in sports so we go to other schools and play sport and made them love sport and create the atmosphere of togetherness

(Mrs Bhekela, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

Likewise, Mrs Singh, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School explained:

Our eco-club visited neighbouring schools to teach about water conservation and biodiversity through poems, displaying poster and performing drama

(Mrs Singh, post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

Similarly, Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School stated:

Our learners are the ambassadors of the spirit of culture, we specifically invited our neighbouring schools to attend cultural event we hosted in our school. While we indulged ourselves in our culture through different activities, the young ones got to embrace the culture before they even step to the gate officially

(Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

The school that ensure that learners and their teachers are dressed properly portrays the ethos of that school, as Mrs Smit, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School highlighted:

The way our learners dressed and behaved in sport events, on the street made other schools to visit us to see how we do it and we shared the secret to them

(Mrs Smit, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

Corroborating what Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School discussed during semi-structure interview was her diary entry dated 15 August 2014 at 17H00 where it was stated that she was chairing a discussion meeting with three other principals from neighbouring schools sharing issues of school morals. On the school year planner dated 1 April 2015 Toyi Primary School was hosting mathematics teachers from other schools to discuss issues related to mathematics and annual national assessment performances. This confirms what Mrs Phakela, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School mentioned about subject clustering. Perusing the sport fixtures and activities of extra-curricular programmes of Hloba Primary School, Lokishini Secondary School and Mshini Secondary School, they corroborate what the participants stated when they mentioned that they participated in sports and extra-curricular activities with other schools. Among the documents I perused at Lokishini Secondary School was the letter dated 28 May 2015 inviting neighbouring schools to the Heritage Day they were hosting on 21 September 2015. This confirms what Mr Zukwa the principal of Lokishini Secondary School mentioned during our discussion when stating that the school is strong in promoting cultural events to other schools.

I observed the learners of Mshini Secondary School coming to the training session the way they were dressed, all of them were still in their full uniform on the road to their homes. This confirms what Mrs Smit mentioned when she was bragging about the way their learners honour their uniforms. In addition, at the hallways of these schools there were pictures of the school teams for previous years. In the foyer of Toyi Primary School, there were pictures of the eco club, the four poems about water and poster about water conservation. This was the only evidence that was available concerning the eco-club that the school used to promote the school ethos to other neighbouring schools. The findings from the participants suggest that in one way or other the study schools do take time to promote school ethos to neighbouring schools. When schools are engaging in subject clustering it resonates with what Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace and Thomas (2006) highlight that professional learning communities are essential to knowledge sharing and make knowledge correspond to existing school culture. Planned curricular and extra-curricular programmes that are being created by the school are essential for the growth of the school as well as for all stakeholders in the school to enhance the school culture (Helfgot, 2005). Social identity theory points out that the subjective belief structures is in this case as peoples' beliefs in their nature of relationships is being interacted with the out-groups (Hogg & Abrams, 1999).

The following theme discusses how the schools foster responsibility among learners.

4.2.8 Fostering responsibility among learners

All of the participants from secondary schools reported that they have a representative council for learners' (RCL) and matric council structure as a means to foster responsibility in learners. The majority of the participants from primary schools informed that they have the prefect system, monitors, scouts, girl guides and soul buddies that they make use of in their schools as the means to foster responsibility in learners.

Ms Buyeka, the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School had the following to say:

As a school we have RCL's who are responsible for taking care of learners matters, assisting teachers around the school in terms of checking learners' uniform, unacceptable behaviour, reporting bunking and maintaining order during assembly

(Ms Buyeka, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mr Bell the principal of Mshini Secondary School explained:

RCL system, is the wonderful structure that embodies everything about our school. Last year we had a remarkable young lady chair lady of RCL and this year again impeccable role models, there are gentle souls, when you read about servant leadership they are definitely servant leaders of the school

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Likewise, Mrs Panday the post level 1 teacher from Mshini Secondary School highlighted the following:

The RCL is the system of the learner voice, the matric council which runs matric matters, like matric ball, dance, breakfast and lunch, they also assist in orientation and induction programmes, and they work as mentors

(Mrs Panday, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

The prefect system was understood by some primary school participants as the way to foster responsibility in learners in their schools. Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School explained:

We have prefects in place which assist us in various spots like at the gate in the morning and afternoon keeping order when the learner come to school from their transports, by the taps to ensure that taps are not left leaking water and by the tuck shop they assist when learners are buying

(Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School stated:

Through the prefect system there were responsible for maintaining order in the assembly, starting songs, choruses, read bible and assist teachers on the grounds in classrooms and when they are not present

(Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School).

Some primary school participants believe in monitors as a system to foster responsibility in learners. Mrs Ngema, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School had the following to say:

We have Monitors in each class that were responsible for giving out and collecting learner books, distributing the specialised learning equipment from the teachers cupboard and check equipment before returning them into the cupboard. They also make sure that every afternoon the group responsible to sweep the class does it

(Mrs Ngema, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

Sub-cultural structures are formed in other schools as a means to foster responsibility in learners. Mrs Khuleka the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School explained:

We have girl guides, scouts, soul buddies all learners belonging to such groups are responsible to keep the school clean, report unsafe acts, for recycle fund raising project

(Mrs Khuleka, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

It is worth pointing that it was so strange that all the primary school participants mentioned that they still have the prefect systems in their school. Why this is pointed out is because the prefect system was phased out with the inception of *South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996* and the representative council for learners was introduced in the secondary schools. Confirming the existence of the RCL body at Mshini Secondary School was when I observed the meeting of the RCL members where they were addressed by their chairperson telling them some changes that the management have taken together with them pertaining to the learners that wait outside the school for their parents to pick them up. The whole discussion was how those learners should conduct themselves as they were the mirror of the school. Furthermore, during my visit at school the RCL executive was busy planning a women's day celebration for the woman and they had small pieces of cakes that they were giving to female educators at school. The leadership role of the RCL executive at Mshini Secondary School was evident to me which then corroborates what Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School mentioned during our discussion. With regards to matric council that Mrs Panday, the post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School the only thing that I observed was the list of those learners who are members of the matric council. Also in the school year planner were the activities that need to take place like mentorship programme for grade eights that took place on 24 January 2015, matric ball and breakfast lunch for grade twelves.

During my visit at Lokishini Secondary School I did not witness the RCL body practising what Ms Buyeka, the post level 1 teacher explained during the semi-structured interview. I

attended the two assemblies there were no RCLs members maintaining order during proceedings of the assemblies, I walked around the school there were learners bunking lessons during the lesson change over periods and there was no RCL taking care of that conduct. The majority of the learners in the school were coming late, dressed in their own clothing, I did not witness anybody attending to them from the gate to the classrooms which then refute what Ms Buyeka, the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School mentioned. What I witnessed at Lokishini Secondary School suggests that the learners are not taking the responsibility of their role as leaders of the school. During my visit at Toyi Primary School I witnessed learners in the morning standing apart from the teachers on duty on the path ways from the school gate checking if other learners were in school uniform. Also during break time there were learners by the tuck shop and by the water taps monitoring those areas. This corroborates what Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School mentioned during our discussion concerning the role of their prefect system as a means to foster responsibility to learners. Furthermore, at the end of the day on my second visit, I observed the group of learners taking part in the activities of scouts and girl guides outside the school where there were doing marches and speaking about keeping the school clean. This confirms what Mrs Khuleka, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School mentioned during our discussion when referring the groups of organisations their learners involved at. The same groups were also separating paper and bottles packing them in separate bins which corroborates what Mrs Khuleka, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School explained when she mentioned the recycling project that are run by these learners. The only thing I observed in the lessons at Ngoyi Primary School was the learners who were giving out books and stationery and equipment to other learners. Also at the back of the door of each classroom there was a list of learners responsible to sweep on each day for the whole week. This confirms what Mrs Ngema, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School stated during our discussion. This suggests that learners at Toyi Primary School and Ngoyi Primary School are starting at a very early stage to take positions as leaders.

At Hloba Primary School in my two days' visit and attending the assembly, I did not see the list of learners responsible for any duties at school neither witnessing learners maintaining order in an assembly, reading a bible, starting songs helping during break time. This refutes what Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School mentioned during our discussion when she said prefects were given responsibility. This means that the school does not seem to have a way of fostering responsibility among the learners. A study by Brown, Busfield,

O'Shea and Sibthorpe (2011) shows that involving learners in decision making and responsibilities of the school are instrumental in shaping the school policies and also contribute to the school culture. In addition Mager and Nowak (2012) posit that listening to learners encourage them to participate in school matters and gives them more responsibilities to be part of creating a better functioning school. Kamper (2008) posits that if key values, principle and accountability are not instilled in learners, it will result in the schools being dysfunctional. Social identity theory processes shows the influence to exert power to set the agenda through individuals' responsibilities in an organisation, define identity and mobilise individuals to achieve collective goals of the organisation (Hogg & Abrams, 1999).

The following theme discusses how the schools foster responsibility among teachers.

4.2.9 Fostering responsibility among teachers

The responses from all of the participants during semi-structured interviews point to the fact that study schools are relying on the duties assigned to teachers and committees that they used as the means to foster responsibility in teachers. Mrs Zondi, the post level 1 teacher from Ngoyi Primary School explained:

Teachers are responsible not in the class but from the morning, during break time when learners are on the playground and after school they are given duty to monitor the learners

(Mrs Zondi, post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

Similarly, Mr Mbomvu, the post level 1 teacher from Hloba Primary School stated:

As teachers we have a roster for ground duties, where we take care of the learners from the gate, up until the end of each school day

(Mr Mbomvu, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

Apart from the ground duties teachers have the responsibility to lead committees of the schools. Mrs Nodlula the principal of Toyi Primary School highlighted the following:

Teachers are responsible to lead various school committees such as educational excursions, girl guides, scouts and farewell functions of the school

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mrs Nkala, the post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School stated:

As teacher we are involved in managing and leading sport teams as well as co-curricular activities of the school

(Mrs Nkala, the post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

In all the study schools, I had the opportunity to visit for two days. In all my visits I was making it a point that I was at the school early in the morning up until the end of the school day for me to observe the operations of the school. On my visits at Ngoyi Primary School, Toyi Primary School and Mshini Secondary School I noticed that the teachers that were on duty on that day would normally come earlier than the other teachers. When having an informal discussion with few of the teachers of these schools, they told me that it has been their culture that if they are on duty there would come to school early and leave late to ensure that learners are always safe. Perusing the documents of the three schools I have mentioned above, all three schools had duty roster for teachers. Furthermore, the documents showed that all three schools had mostly post level 1 teachers responsible for sport and co-curricular activities committees. At Ngoyi Primary School and Toyi Primary School committees are also displayed on the board in the staffrooms. The response of the participants of these school during our discussions corroborate with what I observed during my visits and also what was documented in their school documents in terms of drawing the duty roster and committee leaders.

Both Ngoyi Primary School and Lokishini Secondary School have duty rosters for teacher to perform ground duty. At Ngoyi Primary School in my two days visit I did not witness any teachers on ground duty, either before the start of the school, break time and at the end of the day. According to the duty roster of Ngoyi Primary School there should be three teachers on duty each day, but none performed the ground duty on the days I visited. At Lokishini Secondary School the duty roaster shows that there should be four teachers on duty each day. On my first day at Lokishini Secondary School there were teachers on duty in the morning attending to late comers, during break time and afternoon there was no teacher on ground duty. On my second day of visit at Lokishini Secondary School not even one teacher was on the ground duty. The vacuum left by the teachers that were responsible to perform the ground duty on my second day visit was filled by the two boys who were involved in a serious fight

on the grounds. What the participants of Ngoyi Primary School and Lokishini Secondary School shared with me during semi-structured interviews was contrary to what I observed and what is on paper in terms of the duty rosters the two schools have.

Also both schools have committees that are responsible for sports and co-curricular activities. Perusing the documents of these two schools post level 1 teachers were responsible for these committees, which was in line with what was shared by the participants from the two schools. Grant, Gardner, Kajee, Moodley and Somaroo (2010) describe teacher leadership as a model of leadership in which teaching staff at various levels within the organisation have the opportunity to lead by involving themselves in planning of extra-mural activities in their schools. According to the findings of a study by Kamper (2008), the principles of the schools and key values to produce a positive climate is the accountability and commitment of teachers always honouring their duties. In addition the *Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998* stipulates that amongst the responsibility of teachers is to perform ground duties and extra and co-curricular activities. Through the process of social identity theory, the identified in- group members adopt the group norms so that other groups assume to behave because of the understood shared expectation of agreement (Turner, 1991). Therefore, when learners are aware that during break times and when teachers implement the rules of the school the expectation is that there should comply.

The findings showed that all study schools foster responsibility to teachers in terms of drawing the duty roster and having committees to ensure that teachers are responsible for leading them.

The next section presents the summary of this chapter.

4.3 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on the presentation of the data and discussion of the findings in terms of my research questions. Presentation of the data took the form of the themes that emerged through inductive and content analysis of the semi-structured interviews, observations and documents review. Pertinent findings were then analysed and discussed through the lens of the literature reviewed and theoretical frameworks chosen specifically for this study. The following chapter focuses on the remaining nine themes that emerged from the data.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter was devoted to the discussion and analysis of the first nine themes to emerge from the data. As indicated in the preceding chapter, due to the voluminous nature of the data generated, the data presentation section was subdivided into two chapters as explained in Chapter Four. This chapter specifically deals with the remaining nine themes that emerged from the data. A critique of the findings is also facilitated through interrogating the literature review and theoretical frameworks which were explored at great length in Chapter Two. To remind the reader, the five study schools are categorised as follows: Ngoyi Primary School, Hloba Primary School and Lokishini Secondary School are quintile 3 no-fee paying located in the township. Toyi Primary School is a quintile 4 a fee paying located in the former Indian area. Lastly, Mshini Secondary School is a quintile 5 situated in an urban area and it is a fee paying school.

5.2 Data presentation

Similar to Chapter Four, the following data is presented under themes that emerged from my analysis of the interview transcripts, observations as well as documents that were reviewed.

5.2.1 Complexities to school functionality

During semi-structured interviews there were series of responses from the participants which they felt are the challenges their schools encounter that impact on the smooth running. These are: the department of education, teacher union, absenteeism, late coming, drugs, drop outs and the community. With enormous frustration, Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School explained:

I will tell you categorically, the biggest, impediment, stress, and frustration in running the school is the Department of Education. On a daily basis you are a highly organised school, highly organised school management team with the best teaching staff. We run a wonderful school, it's the dictate or the request from the Department

of Education: the impossible deadlines that they impose on us in the last minutes. The miscommunication, the top- down approach they use. All they are doing is breaking our spirit more and more with unreasonable demands. I am incredibly frustrated with the lack of leadership in this province

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Ventilating his frustration Mr Bell further said it does not end with the Department of Education as he had the following to say:

Also teacher unions, which I am all for I am not against unionism as long as they protect the rights of teachers in terms of labour issues but where they start to mingle with the management issues of the school they really impact on the functioning of the school

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Similarly, the same views about the department of education were also pointed by Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School and she stated:

Within the school there is nothing, we do our outmost best but the problems are caused by the department of education where they just move the problematic teacher from another school and dump him or her to your school without consulting

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

Other participants felt the challenges that impact in school running of their schools are within their schools as Mr Zukwa the principal of Lokishini Secondary School explained:

We find ourselves in the cold, when it comes to punctuality, I must point out and mention it with fatigue, yes we are failing but not with our hands down, to nurture punctuality, we are the talk of the community

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Adding to what his principal had said Mr Madala the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School stated:

Our challenges are the drugs paddled by the community through our fence and high level of drop outs due teenage pregnancy as well

(Mr Madala, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mrs Zondi, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School stated:

The community that selling at the gate is the interference in the smooth running of the school since they sell items that are not healthy for our learners as well as cigarettes. The items that they sell make our learners hyperactive after break time

(Mrs Zondi, post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

If learners are not attending school, it makes it difficult for teachers to proceed with teaching and learning and this affects the smoothing running of the school. As Mrs Bhekela, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School explained:

Absenteeism and late coming is huge from the learners, we have to go back and forward teaching because some of the learners are not coming to school

(Mrs Bhekela, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

The evidence of what Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School pointed during our discussion was reflected in the delivery book that the school had to send the same documents to the department of education for the third time. Furthermore, was a letter from the union requesting their members to attend a meeting during school hours. The same frustration concerning the department of education was shared by Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School which was evident when I perused the documents of the school. In the school log book there were entries about the teacher that has been placed in school and not attending regularly. Furthermore, the minutes of the school management team meeting dated 14 October 2014 where the superintended of education management was at the school to discuss the non-attendance of the teacher that was placed at the school. Although Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School and Mrs Bhekela, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School mentioned punctuality as an impediment caused by the learners, during my two days' visit at both schools I witnessed half of the teachers were late for the morning briefings and the majority of learners were also late for the first periods. The late coming was also confirmed from the school registers where other teachers have not signed in the morning but signed in the afternoon. The learners register was showing learners late every day and some registers were not even marked by the teachers. Regard to teacher signing register was

when the Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School walking around with the teachers' register asking teachers to sign before she handed it to me to review.

Both Mrs Zondi and Mr Madala, the post level 1 teachers of Ngoyi Primary School and Lokishini Secondary School respectively mentioned community members as the people affecting the smooth running of their schools. Perusing the documents of Lokishini Secondary School on 24 February 2015, the principal had a meeting with the local station commander and the discussion was about the community paddling dagga to the learners. The concern about teenage pregnancies at Lokishini Secondary School raised by Mr Madala, post level 1 teacher during our discussion was confirmed by the fifteen letters from the school dated 30 April 2015 sent to the parents of affected learners inviting them to school. During my visit at Ngoyi Primary School I witnessed lots of community members around the school fence selling to learners especially during break time. When the bell rung other learners where still buying from these hawkers ignoring the rules of the school. I witnessed learners buying cigarettes through the school fence at Ngoyi Primary School which corroborates what Mrs Zondi, the post level 1 teacher shared with me during our discussion.

The literature also confirms dissatisfaction with the Department of Education by principals in a form of time consuming instructions and directives as well as uncoordinated demands they impose on principals (Maforah & Schulze, 2012). In addition, the latter highlights interruptions and interference on principals' daily working lives that waste their time by taking them out of the schools during school hours (*ibid*). The continuing unpunctuality of teachers and learners in schools is regarded as one of the most dominating cause of the dysfunctional schools in South Africa (Bergman, Bergman & Gravett, 2011). This suggest an impediment to teaching and learning in schools as learners lose a lot of time for late coming which at the end impact in the smooth running of the school. Another impact on smooth running of the schools that is outlined clearly as major concern is the teenage pregnancy which disrupts female learners and most of them end up dropping out of school (Mchunu, Peltzer, Tutshana & Seutlwadi, 2012; Basch, 2011; James, Van Rooyen & Strümpher, 2011; Bhana, Morrell, Shefer & Ngabaza, 2010; Macleod & Tracey, 2010). A study by Kamper (2008) shows that the surrounding community were able to ensure effective teaching and learning in schools through their positive support of the school. The second insight of self-categorisation theory is the one that reflects to the operation of the context in which people see themselves as either complying with the context or not (Turner, 1991).

The findings from the participants showed that there is lots of frustration posed by Department of Education. Furthermore, the late coming and teenage pregnancy in some study schools is still a challenge. Moreover, the interference of the community by distracting learners during teaching time is a huge problem.

The next theme discusses the categorisation of schools.

5.2.2 School categorisation

Three of the study schools (Lokishini Secondary School, Hloba Primary School and Ngoyi Primary School) were categorised as quintile 3, Toyi Primary School was categorised as quintile 4 and Mshini Secondary School categorised as quintile 5. In all the participating schools **this question** was able to be answered by the principals, none of the post level 1 teachers were able to state what quintile their schools were. Ms. Maviyo, principal of Ngoyi Primary School explained:

The school is categorized as quantile 3 and I don't think it was a good category. It was once categorized as quantile 2 because of the buildings, the tar roads, electricity and water it was then categorised as quintile 3

(Ms. Maviyo, principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School stated:

The school is categorised as quintile 3 we get a better funding per learner its above R 600 - 00 per learner. Even though I may not tell you by heart the exact figure unlike quintile 4 and quintile 5 we are much better

(Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School pointed out her views about quintile ranking her school is classified and had the following to say:

It is quintile 4 because we have electricity, when they come here the school is extremely clean we do our own repairs we keep the school in tacked we have tar roads we have got buildings water hence they felt we should be quintile 4

(Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School).

Despite being at quintile 5, Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School mentioned:

Being a former Model C school, make no mistake, the quintile 5 school like ours make no mistake one of the things that quintile 5 equates to is that it's got facilities so teachers here are spoiled by having access to good facilities

(Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School).

In all the study schools the only evidence confirming their quintile rankings was reflected in some documents between the school and department of education. Some of these documents were the education management information systems which is the responsibility to develop and maintain an integrated education information system for management of education and the returns for the schools that have a school nutrition programme. The four schools receive school nutrition programme except Mshini Secondary School. During my visits at the study school I observed learners receiving food through this programme. In my informal discussion with Mrs Khuleka, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School during break time concerning the school nutrition programme, she had the following to say:

As most of our learners come from impoverished households they run to get the plate of food and this feeding scheme has helped us a lot to motivate our learners to come to school

(Mrs Khuleka, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

What was shared by Mrs Khuleka and what I observed when witnessing many learners queuing for their meals resonates with Usman's (2008) study that shows the positive impact of the free lunch programme in terms of motivating learners' retention and continuous attendance in Koranic schools. Mestry (2014) also states that schools in poorer quintiles and declared quintile 3 receive larger allocations, and those affluent schools ranked quintiles namely: quintile 4 and quintile 5 receive smaller state allocations. The purpose of the quintile ranking system, according to Mestry (2014), is to achieve equity and redress in school funding, with the aim of gradually improving the quality of school system particularly in historically disadvantaged schools. One of the insights provided by the self-categorisation theory is when people perceive themselves to share group membership with other people (to be similar) in a given context, they are motivated to strive actively to reach agreement with them and to co-ordinate their behaviour in ways that are relevant to that identity (Turner,

1991). Therefore, as the study schools are categorised in various categories they share their membership in their given quintile ranking.

Given the findings from the participants which happened to be the group of principals in the study schools there seems to be mixed feelings about the quintile rankings. The findings suggest that others were happy about their rankings while others were not.

The next theme discusses the influence of school categorisation on learner performance.

5.2.3 Influence of school categorisation on learner performance

When the participants were giving their views if school categorisation has any influence on the performance of the learners, there were mixed responses in a way that some agreed to the question and others disagreed. Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School had the following to say:

Certainly yes, but I must mention that we do not have an alternative to choose or to groom whomever we want, we have got a mixture of learners we are unlike our neighbouring secondary schools who have a type of learner which they want

(Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

When asked to explain further how the mixture of learners has to do with the performance in his school. Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School stated:

Those schools are mentioning through their admission policies and their criteria have a way of identifying an underperforming learner and exclude him or her or a difficult learner in terms of behaviour. Our school was like an appendix we have taken those learners which result to our learner performance being bad

((Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mrs Thobeka, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School explained:

Yes it does, because we are a no-fee paying school learners are not serious about their school work and above all we got large number of learners who cannot perform academically and should have been referred to special schools

(Mrs Thobeka, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

Likewise, Mrs Ngema, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School had the following to say:

A person outside the school may not see the influence of this categorisation but it does affect the performance of our learners in such a way that learners are not taking their school work seriously and nobody is supporting us in terms of bringing in remedial specialists

(Mrs Ngema, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

Some participants felt school categorisation was not an issue to them, thus they had a task to teach their learners and they were able to execute their duties regardless of the category their school was in. Mrs Khuleka, the post level 1 teachers of Toyi Primary School said the following.

Not at all, it does it not. As a school firstly, we ensure that there is effective teaching and learning in classrooms. At the end of the year we evaluate the good performance of learners which we are able to equate and compare with Ex-Model C schools. And we are proud of that

(Mrs Khuleka, the post level 1 teachers of Toyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School explained:

It does not, we were so fortunate and our school was lucky because our learners worked so hard and they really managed to perform to the best of their ability. Look at our grade twelve results there are the evidence of good performance of our learners

(Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Corroborating what Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School said was the school log book entry dated 24 April 2014 where the Superintendent of Education Management was instructing the school to admit three learners who had been removed from their schools because of behavioural problems. Looking at the final mark schedule of the school, the performance of three learners was so bad. I perused the assessment records and few learner assessment books at Ngoyi Primary School and what I found was: some of the

learners were really struggling to meet the required assessment criteria as they were performing way below the level of their grades. This evidence corroborates what was mentioned by Mrs Ngema, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School. In addition, the letter dated 2 March 2015 to Toyi Primary School from the District Office was inviting the principal to the Annual National Assessment Awards function for the good performance of the school. Moreover, there was the certificate displayed in school foyer stating the position the school had received for Annual National Assessment Awards. This evidence corroborates what Mrs Khuleka, the post level 1 teacher, pointed out during our discussion when she mentioned that they are able to equal or match their learners' performance to that of former Model C Schools. There was similar evidence in the form of a certificate displayed at the foyer of Mshini Secondary School where the school was congratulated by the Department of Education for their 98, 5 % Grade 12 pass rates for the 2014 academic year. Perusing the assessments records of Hloba Primary School as well as the records of the Annual National Assessment, the performance of the learners was appalling. In 2013 and 2014 the school Annual National Assessment results were 3 % and 2 % respectively. I do not know whether such results at Hloba Primary School can be attributed to no-fee paying as Mrs Thobeka, the post level 1 teacher suggested. The study by Jelagat (2014) showed that the high learner performance in his study schools was strengthened by the commitment of the all the structures of the schools which resulted in the positive school ethos. In addition, Deal and Peterson (2009) posit that artefacts that recognise the performance of learners provides motivation and shout out that the school has done great if not excellent things. Hogg and Abrams (1999) postulate that the in-group based identities may be categorised along the social identity theory stereotyping of the intellectual outcomes of the in-group.

The findings from the study schools seem to suggest that schools do not focus on the negatives of their individual categorisations but at the broader picture of the learner performance by ensuring that they inject more effort to produce the good results.

The following theme discusses the influence of school categorisation on the schools effectiveness.

5.2.4 Influence of school categorisation on school effectiveness

The findings from all the participants during semi- structured interview showed that their schools were effective despite the categorisation the schools are ranked in. They mentioned the well organised school structure, taking initiatives, focus on teaching and learning. Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School stated:

No, we do not operate with the sense of the quintile in mind. With all our efforts that we put to the school we are effective, looking at our well-oiled school structure, from school governing body to school management team: all our committees are effective, to me that was excellent

(Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Likewise, Mrs Phakela, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School explained:

It was all about people in the school taking initiatives: people having a vision and working together. As a school serving needy learners we formed partnerships with other organisations to assist us, we did not look at our categorisation

(Mrs Phakela, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

Similarly, Ms. Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School had the following to say:

Being able to focus on teaching and learning which was the core business of the school, where there was 100% disciplined environment to me that was the huge achievement

(Ms. Maviyo, principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Entering the staff room of the school was the school organogram that I observed displaying all the school structures that Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School mentioned during our discussion. Furthermore, perusing the documents of the school, these structures have their year plan and policies. What was interesting was during my walk about around the school the notice boards have also the organogram of the Representatives of the Council of Learners (RCL) for 2015. Also all the members of representatives of learners could be easily identified in the school through the badges that they wore. Even the teacher who is a Liaison Officer for Representative Council of Learners wore the badge. Looking at the vision of Toyi Primary School displayed in the main entrance door as well as in the foyer of the school

which states *we strive for towards becoming a self-reliant school* which I found that corroborating with what Mrs Phakela, the post level 1 teacher highlighted that they have gone the extra mile to support their learners so that the school could be effective. Perusing the documents of the school, letters dated 7 April 2014 and 12 September 2014 were written to private organisations requesting donations such as learner uniforms and computers for the computer laboratory. Reaping the fruits of fund raising was reflected in the school log book entry dated 20 March 2015 where the local Taxi Association was handing school uniforms to needy learners. Also on 25 March 2015 a log book entry shows that another organisation donated forty new computers to Toyi Primary School. With the donation of computers this would assist learners to be able to be effective in their information technology and enhance the modern culture of teaching and learning in school as well match the same level of computer skills.

Perusing the documents at Ngoyi Primary School the memo dated 23 April 2015 the principal was praising learners for the good discipline they have displayed when the school had a visiting school. This corroborates with what Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School mentioned during our discussion when she said that they ensure that there is a 100 % disciplined environment. An effective school has culture that is largely dependent upon vision and commitment set of goals created by the school leadership together with the school community so as to be a moving school (Msila, 2011). In addition, Macbeath and Mortimore (2001) postulate that the school effectiveness is associated with amongst other things the traditional views of how the school operates, sets rules and what visionary leadership is. The literature on social identity theory claims that intergroup relations involves a process of effectiveness of a particular behavioural style which leads to positive identity in which organisations and their members strive to enhance its positive social identity (Tajfel, 1978).

The findings suggest that the participants do not operate with how they are categorised in their minds, but they do what is best for their schools. Furthermore, some go the extra mile to ensure that the schools are effective and its core business which is teaching and learning is taken care of.

The following theme discusses the influence of school categorisation on schools improvement.

5.2.5 Influence of school categorisation on school improvement

The majority of the participants highlighted the negative influences of their schools categorisation in terms of accessing the resources and blaming the quintile rankings in which their schools were allocated in. The participants mentioned that the allocation they are receiving does not necessitate them to access modern resources that can stimulate learners' abilities. The majority of the participants mentioned that they were unable to access resources namely: computers, projectors, learning programmes, text books and laboratory kits. Only few participants felt they that they were able to access the resources such as: books, computers with internet and support, but they need more.

Mrs Panday, the post level 1 teacher from Mshini Secondary School explained:

To our school it has positive influence, but we've had to make do because we can access all kind of resources and manage it well. I think the challenge was where we look at what we could have because if we want to move into the modern era which is where we want to move, even in terms of the technological advancements, we cannot have that

(Mrs Panday, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School stated:

Our resources were reasonable well to meet the needs of school, such that our learners and staff have access to computers in the school and we have a Wi-Fi campus

(Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Likewise, Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School had the following to say:

When we order resources we get them on time, each and every learner has a reading book in front of him or her. That has a good improvement in the school

(Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School).

The majority of the participants felt that the allocation they are receiving from the Department of Education is not sufficient because they cannot improve teaching and learning

to the level they wish to. Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School highlighted the following:

I wish we were in a quintile where we could get more money so that we could have the resources, for an example if each child in a classroom could have a computer or maybe teachers have more access to more projectors in each class, whiteboard or even a television as a teaching tool. I wish we have programmes for English and Maths that can be installed in the computers. Although we do have computers they are only for basic or elementary programmes. If we could have those programmes but there are very costly

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mrs Serum, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School explained:

Categorisation does because when we start ordering textbooks there was a certain percentage for the books, we have to get textbooks with that but what happens in the case where we find that we need to improve the language like reading of the school, we don't need the textbooks we need maybe more tape recorders and televisions in this era as teaching resources

(Mrs Sewrum, post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

When asked further Mrs Sewrum, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School stated:

Perhaps our grade R we need to have a good foundation there, so the resources for the Grade R's: they need to be impeccable, they need lots of resources like exposure to the puzzles: the books and so forth: let say for the language in order to improve by the time they get to Grade 1 we have inculcated that sort of a culture of reading, language and working with those resources. Even sport equipment we cannot afford, only through donations we get few balls that all

(Mrs Sewrum, post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

Similarly, Mrs Bhekela, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School had the following to say:

We are a no-fee school: I think that is what affects us negatively because you cannot access resources the way you want to. We sometimes run out of funds; there was a

time where I complained to the principal that I'm a science teacher but ever since I came here I have not seen a science kit. I am heading to the point that we cannot access resources the way we are supposed to

(Mrs Bhekela, post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

Likewise, Mr Sikhulu, the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School felt they were hard hit by the scarcity of the resources as secondary school that is expected to should produce the future citizens. As he had explained:

This was unbearable. The only resources that we can afford were the resources that we cannot live without. For example, textbooks, we do buy textbooks, although not enough. Most of the learners share textbooks, because we cannot afford to buy a textbook for each learner

(Mr Sikhulu, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

In addition, Mr Sikhulu, the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School stated:

Secondly, whenever there is a change in the syllabus, for example when the curriculum assessment policy was introduced, we checked the content of the textbooks that was used in the old syllabus and in most cases the content is the same so we tried and used the old textbooks because we cannot afford new textbooks. Unfortunately, due to the scarcity of funds we were compelled to do that

(Mr Sikhulu, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Perusing the documents at Mshini Secondary School, the school time table stipulates that all classes attend the computer lessons. In addition, during my visit at the school I went to the computer room where I observed the learners during the computer lesson were busy using computers which shows that they were productive. At the staff room there were thirty computers for the teachers which have internet access. This corroborates with what both Mr Bell and Mrs Panday of Mshini Secondary School mentioned when they alluded to the fact that there were able to access resources. Furthermore, in every lesson I observed all learners had books in front of them.

Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School stated that every learner has a book in front of him or her. But during my lesson observations at the school I witnessed six learners

in a classroom sharing one book and in another classroom the teacher was writing notes from the book on the board and learners were copying them. What I observed at Hloba Primary School refutes what Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School mentioned during semi-structured interview where she mentioned that every learner has a book in their school. In the same vein although I did not observe the Science lesson it can be concluded that what Mrs Bhekela, the post level 1 teacher mentioned about the shortage of resources corroborates what I observed. In addition, Mrs Bhekela, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School pointed to the minutes of the subject meeting dated 29 January 2015 where she was remarking the non-existence of the science kit for a science lessons. This corroborates with what Mrs Bhekela shared during our discussion concerning the access of resources.

I visited the computer lesson at Toyi Primary School the programmes that were installed in the computers were very old, although learners attended lessons in the computer room but they were able to learn the basic skills like using the keyboard and the mouse. This corroborates with what Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School explained during our discussion when stating that the software their computers have were old and outdated. When visiting the grade R classes at Ngoyi Primary School the only resources that were present were the handmade alphabets written in cardboards for the learners to learn with. This corroborates with what Mrs Sewrum, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School when she was pointing out that there cannot build the foundation on the grade R because of the fact that there cannot access the necessary resources. The concern raised by Mr Sikhulu, the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School was confirmed when observing the three grade 12 classrooms, where out of forty-five learners in each class, only about twenty learners had text books supplied by the school. When checking with one teacher I was told that the school cannot afford to buy textbooks for the entire learners, it is the responsibility of the teacher to make photocopies for the learners only on important topics. This seems to suggest that effective teaching and learning is being impeded by the shortage of resources.

For the school that was able to access the resource it suggests that teachers were able to teach without any contextual factors and learners were able to strive for the best. Having access to internet mean that learners able were to work independently and improve their academic performance. When the foundation was not built in learners in terms of accessing basic resources suggest that the learners will struggle to grasp the concepts of their foundation learning. This is confirmed by literature that in a study by Ramovha (2009) which show that the lack of learners' support materials hampers the culture of teaching and learning in schools

which results in the school being ineffective. In the Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality 111 study by Spaul (2012) textbooks are classified as essential classroom resources on the basis that effective teaching and learning cannot take place without them. Since the literature proves that accessing resources is essential for those schools which the majority in my study are unable to access resources this suggests that it will be through hard work and struggling that they were able to improve school performance without resources. Terry and Hogg (2001) postulate that one of the basic premises of the social identity theory is that each group seeks to improve itself by gaining approval from the organisation.

The findings from the majority of the participants suggest that there was a negative relationship between how they were categorised and how they accessed the school resources. Listening to the majority of the participants, they seemed to be frustrated with the fact that they come to school but they could not access the basic resources for the core business of the school which is teaching and learning. The few participants who had the resources felt they were able to make do with whatever they could access.

The next theme discusses the impact of school categorisation on teaching and learning.

5.2.6 Impact of school categorisation on teaching and learning

All participants mentioned that the categorisation of their schools had a huge impact on teaching and learning in school as they cited: the shortage of teachers, ill-disciplined learners, teachers teaching subjects they were not qualified to teach, small class/large classes, support and supply of teaching materials by the Department of Education and shortage of funds. Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School who school is quintile 5 but getting funding from other organisations through school governing body by soliciting donations explained:

As much as teaching and learning continued in this school, thanks to the school governing body who hired fifteen extra teachers which results in our classroom being small and manageable, not the categorisation of the school

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Similarly, Mrs Zondi, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School had the following to say:

We receive learner teacher support materials from the Department of Education once a year which was of bad quality for starters and it got finished before the end of the year and we struggled to continue with teaching and learning in classrooms

(Mrs Zondi, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mr Mbomvu, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School explained:

We teach learners that are not interested, not having teaching materials, above all not getting support from the same Department and government that came with this categorisation is a huge challenge for us

(Mr Mbomvu, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

Not having enough funds to purchase the basic teaching needs impact negatively on teaching and learning. As Mr Madala, the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School highlighted:

Having large classes' leads to teachers being given subjects that they are not qualified to teach because the Department of Education cannot supply relevant subject teachers and the school cannot afford to hire such teachers to assist

(Mr Madala, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Observing the number of learners and perusing the class registers at Mshini Secondary School, the classes were really small. Each class has a maximum of fifteen learners. This confirms what Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School mentioned during the semi-structure interview. Observing learners during the lesson at Ngoyi Primary School there were sharing pens to write. When checking with the teacher in the lesson I observed she pointed out that once the pens that have been given by the department of education were finished the learners were unable to purchase theirs. This corroborates what Mrs Zondi, the post level 1 teacher at Ngoyi Primary School said during semi-structure interview when she mentioned that pen were the challenge for their learners after when ones supplied by the department of education were finished. Mr Mabomvu, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School mentioned that learners are not interested during teaching and learning sessions in class. During my observation, the only thing that I noticed during the lessons was some of the learners going out of the classrooms to other classrooms borrowing pens as well as some tearing exercise books sharing papers with one another so as to write.

What I observe speaks to what Mr Mbomvu, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School explained during our discussion when he mentioned the impact of school categorisation to teaching and learning in school. The large classes mentioned by Mr Mbomvu, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School was evident when I observed few lessons where in some classrooms the learners were above forty-five per class. Furthermore, perusing the class register this was confirmed in most classes the learners were forty-six to the maximum of forty-eight per class. Osnat, Berry, Ezeh and Donchin's (2008) study found that some of the factors that make teachers in government schools to be less motivated than teachers in non-government schools are heavy workload and having to teach large classes. Whilst Arnold, Gaddy and Dean (2004) argue that in small classes the curriculum is directed to learners which yield to better teaching and learning in school. Tajfel (1978) argues that theoretical perspective of the social identity theory takes learning to be an aspect of participation in socially situated practices where individuals are taught and learning is internalised.

The majority of the participants highlighted challenges in teaching and learning in their school which they felt emanate from the categorisation system and felt that it impedes to teaching and learning in the classrooms. All the challenges they mentioned point to the Department of Education and government.

The following theme discusses the impact of school categorisation on school finances.

5.2.7 Impact of school categorisation on school finances

It is worth noting that again only the principals of the study schools were able to answer the question about finances. All post level one teachers were saying they do not have an answer for this question because they were not aware of the school budget and finances and how that impacts on the school. When they were asked if there were the members of the Finance Committee of the school governing body, none of them was a member. All principals of the study schools agreed that because of categorisation, they have challenges with school finances such as: most of the money went to utility bills, maintenance of the school and the school fees were not paid. Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School had the following to say:

We only received 40% on the allocated funds that we spend on paying for water, electricity and rates. The local municipality targets the schools so they escalated their costs and sometimes the school sunk on debts. The rest of the funds stay with the Department of Education

(Mrs Sibonga, principal of Hloba Primary School).

Similarly, Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School explained:

The problem of billing from the municipality affects us a lot, if they were become harsher in the next few months then we would not have electricity and the pressure of the water could be reduced because at times we do not have the money to pay for these utility bills

(Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School had the following to say:

School finances have been a challenge, for instance when I started in this school we would struggle to make ends meet because we were expecting the school fees of R150-00 to be paid. Only 2% would pay to a point where the Department of Education now pay for each and every learner

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School further elaborated as why he felt there was a challenge in school finances. He stated the following:

The Department of Education pays full and pays upfront for every learner then you cannot believe that even now because of the categorisation we find ourselves still trying to service the debt accumulated over the years especially the years when we had nothing to service the debt. Whether the learners have paid school fees or not, domestic accounts needs to be paid that we were accumulating. There was a point in time when they threatened to discontinue or cut the services

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

Even fee paying schools have challenges when it comes to school finances. Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School explained:

Our allocation was about R400 000, 60 % went to learner teacher support materials and 40% to non-learner teacher support material. So we are left with R165 000 for the year to run the school on average our water and electricity is R 28 000 per month, so we are looking at only five months payment for water and lights only what happens to the seven remaining months: what happens to the security because school has to be safe what about the cleaning of the school what about the maintenance generally, cleaning materials, sports equipment, how do we purchase the sanitation for our toilets? Ablutions facilities are not in good condition although they are clean but there are not in a good state

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

As much as the school is charging school fees to top up on its finances, Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School further highlighted the following challenges:

Parents have to pay school fees to top up unfortunately not all of them could pay but also while some can but they take advantage of community meetings or political announcement that education is free. For an example one parent is a professional nurse, she is sister in charge where she is working she is raking hundreds of thousands of rands but she could not pay a single R1000 school fees she is taking advantage of political announcements. Such cases have left the school at a disadvantage, because when people do not want to pay school fees they decided not to pay whilst we not getting enough. Also I am not saying being quintile 1, 2 or 3 would be a better option

(Mrs Nodlula, principal of Toyi Primary School).

Similarly, another fee-paying school was facing the same challenge. Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School explained:

That is huge, this school runs on a budget of R10 million plus and the Department of Education gives us only R178 000. What they give us does not cover the water and lights for a couple of months. But they expect us to continue to deliver certain levels of excellence, they hold us up in the ceiling as the school that delivers and yet they do not always appreciate how much goes into raising the school fees and to maintain it

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School further stated:

The Department of Education and the District Office would come in and direct us to admit this learner and it works out being a no-fee payer. When they come with about eight out of ten of those learners that they impose on us would be the learners that do not pay school fees. Now I cannot get them to understand that what the school was because of the direct result of the finances. Although they do give us compensation back but I think there should be more from the Department of Education by way of understanding that the finances of the school are critically: it is the finances was the tail of a dog and were directly impacting on everything. I sometimes say: we better be a no fee school and get R900- 00 per learner which was probably more than what we got per learner

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

Perusing the documents of Hloba Primary School, the school log book entry dated 31 March 2015 the principal noted that the school has received the funding for the Norms and Standards from Department of Education. This corroborates what Mrs Sibonga, the principal of Hloba Primary School mentioned during our discussion but it did not stipulate that it is the 40 % she highlighted. There was no other evidence to confirm that the rest of the money remains with the Department of Education as she stated. The frustrations the principals of the study schools raised when discussing finances, all of them showed me the utility bills from the municipality. In four township schools the monthly payments for the utility bills were between R17 000-00 and R 21 000-00 per month. Only at Mshini Secondary School the monthly payment for the utility bills was R 75 000-00 per month. I do not know whether this exorbitant amount paid by Mshini Secondary School was as a result that the school had a hostel as well. The evidence of the utility bills confirmed what the principals of the study schools explained during semi-structured interviews.

In terms of Section 34 of the *South African Schools Act, 84 of 1996*, the government was required to fund public schools from public revenue on an equitable basis in order to ensure proper exercise of the rights of learners to education and redress of past inequalities in educational provision. As much the schools receive funds but the literature states that there is a substantial disjuncture between the funds received by the schools and what the government expect schools to do and what schools are in fact able to do with those funds (Mestry, 2014). In support of the latter Motala (2009) posits that the funding allocated to school makes it

difficult for them (schools) to pay for basic needs thus resulting in schools being unable to continue with running effectively. Social identity theory advocates the concept of identity based on the social categories created by society (nationality, race, class, etc.) that are relational in power and status (Hogg & Abrams, 1999). In this the categories are the quintile rankings that guide the department of education to exert power in the form of funds allocated to schools.

The principals from the study schools felt the school finances is a huge problem in terms of ensuring that the school is up and running as they all lamented the lot of money they pay to the municipality for lights and water which are the essential commodities of the school. The findings also cited some parents who do not support the school by paying school fees. This suggests that the schools are experiencing a huge challenge in terms of ensuring that the schools run, bearing in mind that some of this school need electricity and water to conduct the lessons. Furthermore, water as such is a human rights need, if such is being disconnected it poses a challenge to teaching and learning in school.

The following theme discusses challenges of school categorisation.

5.2.8 Challenges of school categorisation

The general views of the majority of the participants mentioned school infrastructure and safety as the main challenges their schools encounter because of categorisation. Only one participant highlighted that the categorisation brought the culture of entitlement of which according to him was the main challenge. Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School explained:

Because of categorisation we have some parents who would not lift a finger to assist where they can, they feel it is their entitlement to send their children to school and the government must provide

(Mr Zukwa, principal of Lokishini Secondary School).

The majority of participants mentioned the school infrastructure and security as the main challenges the schools encounter because of categorisation. Mrs Khuleka, the post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School stated:

School infrastructure was so bad, we have gutters falling and roof damaged when reporting we are told we must wait, they are still attending to schools that have more serious problems. Even at the gate we do not have a security guard, anybody can come in and endanger us. Being in this quintile I think the safety of the learners and teachers is compromised

(Mrs Khuleka, post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

Similarly, Mrs Ngema, the post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School explained:

We are given no security guard, which should take care of the school property, not alone the safety of the learners and teachers. We might say today we are fine something strange might happen next day and we in a predicament

(Mrs Ngema, post level 1 teacher of Ngoyi Primary School).

Likewise, Mr Bell, the principal of Mshini Secondary School stated the following:

At the glance the buildings of the school may look good, but come close there are falling apart and department of education was not coming to the party to assist, maybe they were waiting for it to fall to the ground, then they will wake up

(Mr Bell, principal of Mshini Secondary School).

From my observations during my two days visit at Lokishini Secondary School I witnessed the visits of three parents who came to school to complain that their children had not been given food from the school nutrition programme. In one of the newsletters dated 3 August 2015 written to parents the school indicated that due to the change of suppliers the department of education is in the process of finalising the new suppliers, hence the school would not be in the position to feed the learners. This action of these parents who visited the school corroborates what Mr Zukwa, the principal of Lokishini Secondary School, mentioned during our discussion when he mentioned that parents have developed the culture of entitlement. Looking at the five schools, the conditions of the infrastructure were so bad in such a way that they were not conducive to teaching and learning. As much as the schools were kept clean, except Lokishini Secondary School that was untidy from the entrance gate in all the school the water down pipes did not exist. Some of the schools had broken windows, broken door-handles and the roof in the verandas were broken. What I observed corroborates

with what the participants explained during the semi-structured interviews when they referred to the school infrastructure being in very bad state.

During my visit at Ngoyi Primary School the principal stood at the gate and waited for learners to arrive and she would close the gate because the school had no security personnel. That confirms what Mrs Ngema, the post level 1 teacher mentioned when she pointed out that the school was not safe because they do not have the security guard. Maforah and Schulze's (2012) study shows that disadvantaged school experience problems with infrastructure namely: school security, poor facilities, the absence of maintenance by the government and dilapidated buildings. The receptiveness of the social identity theory and self-categorisation theory is to immediate social context which the central feature of these theories and has direct implications for the organisational contexts (Hogg & Reid, 2006).

The findings from the participants show that the manner in which their schools are categorised have made the Department of Education and the government to compromise the safety of the learners and teachers as well as ignoring the maintenance of the school infrastructure. One participant felt that because of categorisation, parents developed the culture of entitlement.

The following theme discusses other effects of school categorisation on schools.

5.2.9 Other effects of school categorisation on schools

The majority of the participants mentioned that the government did not consider the learners the schools service before categorising the schools and others highlighted that because of categorisation some schools have lost the learners they used to teach. Mrs Singh, a post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School explained:

Before this school had lot of Indian learners, now we do not even have one in school although some of the teaching staff of colour were still in school but none of the learners were here

(Mrs Singh, post level 1 teacher of Toyi Primary School).

Similarly, Ms Buyeka, the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School stated:

Because of categorisation we have these former Model C schools around and then the township and rural schools. Normally when the parents afford they prefer to take their children to the former Model C school, which is a well-known thing. As time goes on in South Africa our rand was diminishing and that impacts on every household and the same parents were compelled to return the children to township school

(Ms Buyeka, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Likewise, Mrs Nkala, the post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School had the following to say:

If look around us there is no sign of poverty but our learners are not from the same rich environment, some of our learners come as far as Eastern Cape, from the surrounding townships like Imbali, others from rural areas because they were coming for better resources, now if we were categorised as a rich school but having poor learners, I think that has an impact on the school

(Mrs Nkala, post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School).

The majority of the participants mentioned that the government must be realistic and practical when categorising the schools. Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School explained:

I feel Department of Education must not consider categorising schools in terms of infrastructure. Everything may look fine but we are not teaching the walls, the tar road, electricity we are teaching learners coming from poor families. They need to come to school and do their study or send a form that we can fill-in to say how many learners that we have that do not have parents, learners coming from impoverished homes, etc. They need to do that before they can categorise schools

(Mrs Nodlula, the principal of Toyi Primary School).

Similarly, Mr Sikhulu, the post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School stated:

I criticise the government for simply deciding to categorise without checking the needs of every school. Whoever did the categorisation of schools must come back to the schools to check the essentials needs of that school, they did not do that properly and this is affecting the schools, schools that are supposed to be achieving are not

achieving. If our quantile can change, I'm definitely sure that we can move from the worse to a better quintile level

(Mr Sikhulu, post level 1 teacher of Lokishini Secondary School).

Likewise, Mrs Thobeka, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School had the following to say:

There has not been consultation about it. I think it cannot be viewed through the tarred roads, water and electricity to a minimalistic categorisation of school environment that houses human beings. They have taken away the human factor and they have categorised it based on the building and I think that is the greatest injustice. So, there was no consultation about it and there is no human factor. I think that was the greatest challenge to categorisation

(Mrs Thobeka, the post level 1 teacher of Hloba Primary School).

Sharing the same opinion is Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School who mentioned the following:

Looking at how poor our learners are and the same government that was preaching free education cannot take care of the education system through this categorisation they have imposed on us

(Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School).

Whilst I was waiting at the gate of Mshini Secondary School I observed many learners brought to school by minibuses and bakkies which proved that some of the learners attending this school were not from the area. Furthermore, there were also some of the learners walking from the taxi rank to school. What I observed confirms what Mrs Nkala, the post level 1 teacher of Mshini Secondary School mentioned when stating that the majority of learners attending the school were not from the local community but are from the outskirts of town. The similar observation was evident at Toyi Primary School where most of the learners attending the school were African learners coming from different townships of the city bussed by mini busses and bakkies as well. Resonating with what Ms Maviyo, the principal of Ngoyi Primary School said during our discussion was the letter dated 18 November 2014 written to non-profit organisation which had donated clothes and blankets to the learners.

This suggests that the schools are really serving the indigent community thus the department of education did not take that into consideration when they categorised the schools.

Kamper (2008) posits that sociological and socio-economic problems relating to poverty were evident in the true impact of high poverty schools by the signs like learners who do not have proper clothing. Besides the socio economic status some black parents decide to move away from historically black schools in the townships and chose schools in other areas outside their dwelling places because they perceive these schools as having quality and reasonable standards as opposed to low-quality schools (Msila, 2011). Social identity theory and self-categorisation theory highlight the fact that intragroup dynamics and structure also are influenced by the sociodemographic structure of society (Hogg & Reid, 2006).

5.3 Chapter summary

This chapter focused on the presentation of the data and a discussion of the findings in terms of my research questions. Presentation of the data took the form of themes that emerged through content analysis of the semi-structured interviews, observations and documents. Pertinent findings were then analysed and discussed through the lens of the literature reviewed and theoretical frameworks chosen specifically for this study. The following chapter concludes with the study summary, conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings linked to the key research questions.

CHAPTER SIX

STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters dealt with the data presentation, analysis and the discussions of the findings obtained from semi-structured interviews, observations and documents review. The generated data was critiqued through the literature review and the theoretical frameworks which underpinned this study and was also guided by the key research questions. This chapter presents the summary of the whole study, drawing conclusions from the findings and proposing recommendations. The implications of the study for further research are put forth. In presenting the conclusions of the study, I link them to the key research questions that guided this study.

6.2 Summary of the study

Chapter One discussed the introduction to the inquiry to orientates the reader to the study. It commences by setting the scene with a quotation, followed by the background to the study and statement of the problem. In the next section of chapter one I discuss the purpose and rationale for the study followed by the significance of the study. Aims of the study as well as key research questions underpinning the study are highlighted. The two key concepts utilised in the study are defined. What follow next are the delimitations and the organisation of the study. I conclude this chapter by providing the summary of the chapter.

Chapter Two reviewed the international, continental and national literature review and theoretical frameworks that underpins the study. This chapter reviews the body of literature and theoretical frameworks pertinent to the study.

Chapter Three discussed research design and methodology of the study. The key focus areas of this chapter were paradigmatic position of the study; description of the research design methodology; target population; data generation methods; data analysis; issues of trustworthiness; ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

Chapter Four and Five presented and discussed the data generated from the field through semi-structured interviews, observations and documents that were reviewed. In doing this, the findings of the study were presented thematically.

Chapter Six summarises the whole study and draws conclusions that emanated from the findings of the study. It also presents the recommendations based on the findings of the study as well as the implications of the study. Lastly it concludes with chapter summary.

6.3 Conclusions

Conclusions of any study serve to encapsulate and bring together the main areas covered in the writing (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). The conclusions which follow seek to summarise the key research questions and findings that are presented through themes that emerged from the study.

6.3.1 Conceptualisation of school categorisation and school ethos

This study found that only principals of the study schools were able to respond to the understanding of school categorisation. The principals' understandings of school categorisation were classification, clustering, grouping and demarcation of schooling system for the purpose of allocating funding. This would seem to suggest that these principals do understand their schools' quintile rankings and furthermore, they were also aware of the implications brought by how their schools were categorised. It can thus be concluded that principals were conscious that in managing their schools, they had a lot to prepare for in terms of their school's funding; resources available and when those resources were made available to them. Generally, the findings on school ethos suggest that the participants understand what is meant to by school ethos, but in some schools the practise was incompatible with their knowledge.

6.3.2 Practice of school ethos

The majority of the participants believed in practising their ethos through the utilising of the morning assembly gatherings, where everybody comes together and engages in particular practices through which particular values are instilled and promoted. During the proceeding

of the assembly, the participants mentioned that conversion practices take place such as reading the Bible, reminding learners and teachers about the school vision, mission statement and values, instilling good morals, nurturing the spirit of caring and motivating both the learners and teachers. Furthermore, it also emerged that staff meetings were used as instruments to practise their school ethos. Although there were also contradicting views that meetings were not the order of the day, they were (in some schools) only held once at the beginning of the year only. This seems to suggest that through the different practices in the various schools, something common was the use of the morning assembly as means to promote social and personal values.

6.3.3 School relationships among learners, teachers and parents

The findings suggest that there were commonalities in quintile 3 schools regarding the relationships among learners, teachers and parents in study schools. These varied from teachers displaying disrespect which leads to outburst among them, learners fighting and bullying one another, learners disobedient to teachers and learners stealing others belongings. In quintile 4 and 5 schools findings show that the relationship in schools is love and caring with a high spirit of respect. This seems to suggest that the relationships in quintile 3 schools have caused the environment not to be conducive to teaching and learning. Whilst the findings in schools in quintile 4 and 5 show that there was a spirit of collegiality which leads to the positive climate of teaching and learning. There were also commonalities with regard to the relationship between the school and parents. The findings suggest that all the schools in quintile 3 have toxic relationships with the parents which range from parents dragging the name of the school in newspapers with negative reporting, displaying negative attitudes towards the school, parents lacking interest in their children's education and not co-operative at all. School is the microcosm of society, what seems to be at play at these schools(quintile 3 schools) is the behaviour that learners and teachers bring to school which leads to spark of feud and disobedient. With all that said, people joining the school need to be informed of the school ethos.

In contrast, findings that emerged from quintile 4 and 5 schools show that there is effective co-operation of parents which led to good healthy relationships between the schools and parents. The findings this seems to suggest that schools in quintile 3 were not supported by the parent body to enhance the education of the learners. Whilst the findings from quintile 4

and 5 schools suggest that parents are co-operative and they were interested in the learning of their children which seems to improve the learning of their children. Parents in these schools seems to have the mentality of education of their children at heart and perhaps the relationships with the schools have been grounded on the manner the school manages communications with the parents.

6.3.4 Maintenance of school ethos

The findings point to the fact that the study schools have policies such as code of conduct for learners and teachers, showing caring, ensuring that the schools have year planners which include elements of their school ethos. The codes of conduct for both learners and teachers contained the disciplinary rules for learners and teachers; it is therefore crucial in maintaining school ethos. School code of conduct consisted of a body of values and norms which the school community valued and should abide by. Equally important was the fact that these rules should be properly implemented and enforced to ensure a well-organised teaching, learning as well as disciplined school environment. School connectedness, which accompanied by caring and school bonding are some of the views the participants mentioned regarding their school environment. This seems to suggest that schools utilise school code of conduct, caring and being happy as the attempts to communicate its expectations and standards of ethical behaviour.

6.3.5 Acknowledging achievements

Celebration and humour characterise the study schools' ethos. The majority of the participants mentioned that they assembled for special ceremonies to acknowledge achievements. It was at those ceremonies that learners and teachers were rewarded for their excellent academic performance, as well as in extramural and co-curricular activities. Both learners and teachers were acknowledged by receiving certificates and trophies. During the course of the year positive acknowledgements were done by the schools through verbal pronouncements, vouchers and recognition stamps. It seems that celebrating good performance of learners enhances commitment and appreciation of good behaviour in them and made them feel good and proud about their work.

6.3.6 Promotion of school ethos

The findings from the participants also showed that they participated in the culture of sharing through extra-mural and co-curricular activities and collaboration with other schools. It was shown that sports were used to build community cohesion where there was a common goal, vision, sense of belonging as well as strong relationship that has been developed between people in neighbouring schools and workplace. Engaging in sports was not only for physical activities but it was also used to promote the culture of socialising, sharing skills, spending time with friends and meeting new people. As schools attempt to face many challenges participants mentioned that through clustering with neighbouring schools, they envisaged overcoming the pedagogical issues in their schools with an aim to improve teaching and learning in their schools. This suggests that when individuals participate democratically in team work they learn more about one another.

6.3.7 Complexities to school functionality

The participants spoke at length about their frustrations and these were related to what they regarded as interference by the Department of Education, teacher unions, late coming of staff and learners as well as local communities meddling in school affairs and trading around the schools. The findings show that the participants (school principals) were dissatisfied with the Department of Education practices that affect the day-to-day running of the schools and their lack of autonomy in running their schools. The findings point to the fact that all what was being done to schools had a negative impact on the school culture. The participants mentioned insufficient support and recognition from Department of Education as a significant source of dissatisfaction and contrary to what the participants expected. The findings also show that the teacher unions interfered with the smooth running of the schools and perceived this as a huge impediment. Furthermore, punctuality was significant to other researched schools where there was unnecessary wasting of time during a normal school day. This seems to suggest that participants viewed this as neglect of the policies if people could not honour time management. In other instances the findings show that there were concerns about the influence of community on the value system and behaviour of the learners. This suggests that the community is not working in collaboration with the schools. Referring to the issues of the interference of the Department of Education all researched schools were not happy about the treatment they receive from the officials of the department. What came out from the findings

is that schools in quintile 4 and 5 had no problem with late coming in their schools but those schools in quintile 3 were experiencing challenges when it comes to punctuality. This seems to be linked to the fact that most of the learners in quintile 3 schools are coming from areas far from the schools and their social background were not in good state.

6.3.8 Influence of school categorisation on learner performance

The findings show the commonalities and differences from the views of the participants regarding school categorisation and learner performance. What emerges from the findings was the concern on school admission policy and school funding. While the *South African Schools Act 84 of 1996* gives every learner the right to be admitted to any public school, there were some schools that have their own criteria of admitting learners of their choice whilst other schools could not discriminate. This seems to suggest that as much as schools have been categorised and open for every learner but there are schools that do not follow that. Such school want to maintain their culture and do not want to see themselves admitting learners that are not going to perform. In terms of the funding, the findings attribute the no-fee paying school in quintile 3 schools to the lack of interest in some of the learners as they do not give off their best in their studies and display laissez faire attitude towards the school. It states that learners were not performing to the optimal standards. This seems to suggest that other school choose learners to be admitted on the basis of their performance so as to keep their performance standards high. Other findings show that as much as the participants teaching African learners in quintile 4 and 5 schools, they were able to set high standards of performance and their learners were capable of meeting those standards. This suggests that the learners understood what their schools wished to achieve and teachers did their best to achieve good results in the core business of the school which is teaching and learning.

6.3.9 Impact of school categorisation on teaching and learning

The responses to the that impact of school categorisation on teaching and learning varied from large classes, shortage of learner teacher support materials, learners' lack of interest and teachers teaching subjects that they are qualified to teach. Findings from quintile 5 school showed that there were able to manage only because of extra teachers paid by their school governing body, otherwise there would be facing overcrowding in their school. Other

findings show that the quality of learner teacher support materials was of poor standards or were not available and unable to support teaching and learning throughout the year and this posed challenges to the schools and learners showing a lack of interest in school. Due to the number of learners schools in quintile 3 had to admit, it emerged that classes ended up unmanageable because of large numbers which compelled the schools to allocate subjects to teachers that were not adequately qualified to teach them. This suggests how the school was categorised and its ability to raise resources to fund its academic activities had a negative impact on teaching and learning to schools. The schools in lower quintile rankings seemed to suffer the most as they served mostly poor communities and were thus unable to hire school governing body paid teachers.

6.3.10 Impact of school categorisation on school finances

The factors that the participants felt impacted negatively on their schools were school finances which were allocated from the Department of Education, the utility bills from the municipality and non-payment of school fees. The findings showed that the allocations from the Department of Education were unable to meet their accounts from the municipality up until the end of the year. The insufficient allocations, according to the participants, resulted in school services being discontinued and they failed to maintain teaching and learning if they did not have water and electricity. The findings also showed that the participants in quintiles 4 and 5 which were the schools charging school fees have challenges in getting full complement of learners paying and this caused a negative impact on their finances. Such schools found themselves unable to maintain the needs of their schools, above all to pay for the security of the school. This seems to suggest that the state subsidies provided by the Department of Education were minimal across quintiles and impose challenges in the running of schools.

6.4 Recommendations

The preceding discussion centred on the findings and conclusions that emerged from the generated data. The following recommendations are therefore made:

6.4.1 Conceptualisation of school categorisation and school ethos

While all principals in the studied schools seemed to understand the meaning of school categorisation, it is of importance that they make their teachers, learners and parents as well understand not just the term but the implications of how they are categorised as well. Also, it is important for teachers to worry themselves and find out what quintile ranking their schools were in as these have financial implications that directly affect what is allocated to them as schools and eventually to the learners they teach. With regards to the term “school ethos” based on the findings of the study, it is obvious the participants do not need just to know it but live it as well to cement the moral spirit of ethos.

6.4.2 School relationships with learners, teachers and parents

As schools indicated that they have a Code of Conduct which was the fundamental document that all schools formulate to uphold discipline. The findings seemed to suggest that there was no thorough consultative process and buy-in from all stakeholders. It is therefore recommended that the schools in quintile 3 formulate a code of conduct in consultation with all stakeholders which include learners, parents and teachers. In the code of conduct the school rules and the consequences of the transgression of the rules must be clearly stated. All learners should be given a copy of the code of conduct yearly, with an acknowledgement slip to fill and return to the school. The management of the schools in quintile 3 should ensure that all teachers were workshopped on the South African Council for Educators document called the Code of Professional Ethics so as to understand what is expected of their conduct as professionals. Teachers need to work collaboratively with their fellow teachers when they are faced with issues. Schools should go out of their way to encourage and motivate parents’ active involvement in the running of the school by ensuring that there was a two-way effective communication. Schools must ensure that every parent signs the commitment form to be involved in school matters at the beginning of the year.

6.4.3 Complexities to school functionality

It is recommended that the Department of Education ensures that they make greater efforts to assist and support schools by working together with them in terms of proper channels of

communications and be reasonable in their requests. School principals are usually the targets of the teacher unions because they are perceived by the teacher unions as the puppets of the Department of Education. In order to make sure that there is mutual understanding, it is recommended that the teacher unions be appraised of their role in terms of labour issues and labour peace in an organisation as school. Furthermore, teacher unions must ensure that school managers are not their enemies but partners in labour force, therefore they must work in collaboratively with the schools. The principals of the schools must ensure that teachers and learners are conscientise on time management and the policies of the school and consequences for being late be outlining clearly to them. Communal relationships are important for the quality teaching and learning to take place at school. The study also found that there was a wastage of time where learners were buying from vendors outside the school when the bell was long gone and therefore school principals must invite the community and hawkers to the meeting where they can make arrangement in terms of time to sell and what to sell to the learners.

6.4.4 Impact of school categorisation on teaching and learning

Large classes present occupancy challenges and also bring other discomforts experienced by both learners and teachers. The Department of Education should accelerate the programme of infrastructure so as to alleviate overcrowding in school. Furthermore, as the employer, the Department of Education must ensure that there were sufficient teachers in schools who were qualified to teach the subject that the schools offer. The learner teacher support materials were the backbone of the schools and therefore the Department of Education must work closely with schools to ensure that there were sufficient and suitable resources that can last the whole year for teachers to teach and learners to learn more effectively. If learners are demotivated they would not be able to grasp the content they need to learn. Schools must also come up with other ongoing motivational programmes of providing incentives to learners not to wait for the prize-giving ceremonies.

6.4.5 Impact of school categorisation on school finances

The Department of Education allocates funding using the quintile ranking system. Such system posed challenges to schools in the sense that the human factor was not taken into

consideration when the system was conceptualised and implemented. It is recommended that the Department of Education should reconsider this funding system to accommodate the needs of all the schools. Municipalities were billing schools like they were billing businesses. The Department of Education must come up with a memorandum of understanding with the municipalities so as to charge schools the minimum rates for utility bills. School fees in quintile 4 and 5 schools form a large part of school income, hence the running costs of these schools largely depended on income from fees for maintaining the educational standards. Non-payment of school fees thus has a negative impact on these schools that have to a large extent relied on school fees to be able to pay their bills. This study found that poverty on the paying of school fees and therefore it is recommended that parents who cannot pay school fees need to inform the school early and apply for exemption but the schools should be compensated by the state for such a shortfall. In this way, the schools would be able to survive.

6.5 Implications for further research

This was a small scale study of three primary schools and two secondary schools. Therefore the findings of this study do not in any way reflect the broader community of school ethos as influenced by school categorisation in the district of uMgungundlovu. However, the findings in this study do point to the differences in the way the schools function, the relationships within the schools and the manner in which the schools are being managed. The implication for further research would be to compare and contrast schools in different quintile rankings (quintile 1 and 2) as opposed to the ones that have been studied and whether it would make a substantive difference to the school ethos. Furthermore, there is a need for a larger study to be conducted using different methodologies and methods in order to get a better picture of school ethos as influenced by school categorisation

6.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the synopsis of the study, conclusions and the recommendations. Thereafter conclusions were drawn from the findings linked to key researched questions and recommendations were made. Lastly, the implications of the study for further research were presented. It is believed that the recommendations made will assist in the better

understanding of how school categorisation impact on other areas of school including school ethos which was the focus of this study. In conclusion, the implications of the study for further research were presented.

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APPENDIX A

ETHICAL CLEARANCE



12 February 2015

Mr Zakhele Dennis Nzuza 200001329
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Nzuza

Protocol reference number: HSS/0050/015M

Project title: School ethos as influenced by school categorization: Perspectives of school principal and teachers from five schools in uMgungundlovu district

Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 3 February 2015, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.



Yours faithfully


.....
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

/pm

Cc Supervisor: Dr SE Mthiyane
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor P Morojele
Cc School Administrator: Ms T Khumalo

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/8350/4557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4609 Email: xmbac@ukzn.ac.za / snymann@ukzn.ac.za / motung@ukzn.ac.za
Website: www.ukzn.ac.za

 1910 - 2010 
100 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
Founding Campuses ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

APPENDIX B

(PERMISSION LETTER TO THE KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION)

73 Howick Road

Pietermaritzburg

3201

1 December 2014

Attention: The Head of Department (Dr N. S. P. Sishi)

Department of Basic Education

Province of KwaZulu-Natal

Private Bag X9137

Pietermaritzburg

3201

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Zakhele Dennis Nzuzza, an M. Ed. student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). As part of my degree requirements, I am required to conduct research. I humbly request permission to conduct research in five secondary schools under your jurisdiction in and around uMgungundlovu. The schools are: XXXXXXXXXX. The title of my study is: **School Ethos as Influenced by School Categorisation: Perspectives of School Principals and Teachers in uMgungundlovu district.**

This study aims to explore how school ethos has been influenced by school categorisation as well as to understand how does school ethos has been influenced by school categorisation. The planned study will focus on school principals and teachers. The study will use semi-structured interviews, observations and documents review. Participants will be interviewed for approximately 30-45 minutes and each interview will be voice-recorded. In addition, I will do observations of school meetings, assembly, learners during break time, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. When doing observations during meetings I will listen to what participants say and watch what they do and take notes.

Responses will be treated with confidentiality and pseudonyms will be used instead of the actual names. Participants will be contacted well in advance for interviews, and they will be purposively selected to participate in this study. Participation will always remain voluntary which means that participants may withdraw from the study for any reason, anytime if they so wish without incurring any penalties. If you have any concern about the study, please contact my supervisor or the research office whose contact details are provided below. I hope that you will consider my request favorably and grant me written consent to conduct my study at your school.

Thanking you in advance for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely

Mr Z. D. Nzuzo.

Supervisors Details:

Dr. S. E. Mthiyane; University Of KwaZulu-Natal; School of Education, Edgewood Campus

Tel. No. 031-260 1870, Cell No. 073 377 4672. E-mail: Mthiyanes@ukzn.ac.za

UKZN Research Office Details: P. Mohun: 031- 260 4557: E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za

APPENDIX C

LETTER FROM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Nomangisi Ngubane

Tel: 033 392 1004

Ref.:2/4/8/341

Mr ZD Nzuzo
73 Howick Road
Wembly
PIETERMARITZBURG
3201


Dear Mr Nzuzo

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: "SCHOOL ETHOS AS INFLUENCED BY SCHOOL CATEGORISATION: PERSPECTIVES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS IN THE UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT", in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 April 2015 to 30 April 2016.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Miss Connie Kehologile at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Office of the HOD, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to schools and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education:

UMgungundlovu District


Nkosingithi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education
Date: 26 January 2015

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa ...dedicated to service and performance
PHYSICAL: 247 Burger Street, Anton Lembede House, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 392 1004 beyond the call of duty
EMAIL ADDRESS: kehologile.connie@kzndoe.gov.za / Nomangisi.Ngubane@kzndoe.gov.za
CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363; Fax: 033 392 1203 WEBSITE: WWW.kzneducation.gov.za

APPENDIX D

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

73 Howick Road

Wembly

Pietermaritzburg

3201

11 February 2015

Attention : The Principal

Dear Sir/ Madam

Request to conduct research at your school

My name is Zakhele, Dennis Nzuza. I am a M. Ed. student studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Education (Edgewood Campus). As part of my degree requirements, I am required to conduct research. I have identified your school as one of my potential research sites. I therefore kindly seek your permission for your school to be part of my research project.

My study title is: **School Ethos as influenced by school categorisation: Perspectives of School Principals and Teachers from Five Schools in uMgungundlovu district.**

This study aims to explore school ethos as influenced by school categorisation in uMgungundlovu district and will focus on the views and experiences of the school principals and teachers. The study will use semi-structured interviews with the principals and post level 1 teacher to generate data. Furthermore, observations and documents review will be utilised to corroborate data gathered during interviews. Participants will be interviewed for approximately 30-45 minutes at the time and place convenient to them.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE THAT: There will be no financial benefits that participants may accrue as a result of their participation in this research project.

Participants' identities will not be divulged under any circumstance/s, during and after the reporting process.

All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.

Fictitious names will be used to represent participants' names.

Participation is voluntary which means participants are free to withdraw at any time they so wish without incurring any negative or undesirable consequences/penalty on their part.

The interviews shall be voice-recorded to assist me in concentrating on the actual interview.

Participants will be contacted on time about the interviews dates and times.

For further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me using the ff. contact details: Mr Zakhele, Dennis Nzuzo; Tel: 033-345 2217 or 082 970 8667; E-mail: zakhele.nzuzo@yahoo.com.

OR

My supervisor, Dr. S.E. Mthiyane who is located at the School of Education, Edgewood Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Mthiyanes@ukzn.ac.za; Phone number: 031 260 1870; Cell: 073 377 4672

For additional information, you may also contact the UKZN Research Office through: Mr P. Mohun (HSSREC Research Office). Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za.

The interview schedule is attached herewith for your perusal.

Your anticipated positive response in this regard is highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely

Mr Z. D. Nzuzo

APPENDIX E

PERMISSION LETTERS FROM THE SCHOOLS

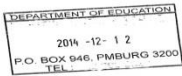
Declaration

I (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: *School Ethos as Influenced by School Categorisation in uMgungundlovu district.*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time should I so desire.

Signature of Participant: [Signature] Date: 12/12/2014




Declaration

I (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: *School Ethos as Influenced by School Categorisation in uMgungundlovu district.*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time should I so desire.

Signature of Participant: [Signature] Date: 18-12-2014



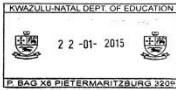
Declaration

I (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: *School Ethos as Influenced by School Categorisation in uMgungundlovu district.*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time should I so desire.

Signature of Participant: [Signature] Date: 22-02-2015




Declaration

I (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: *School Ethos as Influenced by School Categorisation in uMgungundlovu district.*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time should I so desire.

Signature of Participant: [Signature] Date: 12/12/14



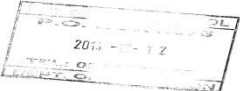
Declaration

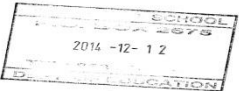
I (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature, purpose and procedures for the study: *School Ethos as Influenced by School Categorisation in uMgungundlovu district.*

I have also received, read and understood the written information about the study. I understand everything that has been explained to me and I consent voluntarily to take part in the study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the research project any time should I so desire.

Signature of Participant: [Signature] Date: 12/12/2014





APPENDIX F

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

73 Howick Road

Wembly

Pietermaritzburg

3201

11 February 2015

ATTENTION: THE EDUCATOR

Dear Participant

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Zakhele, Dennis Nzuza. I am a M. Ed. student studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, School of Education (Edgewood Campus). As part of my degree requirements, I am required to conduct research. I have identified you as one of my potential research participants. I therefore kindly seek your permission to be part of my research project. My study title is: School Ethos as influenced by school categorisation: Perspectives of School Principals and Teachers from Five Schools in uMgungundlovu district.

PLEASE NOTE THAT:

- Your confidentiality is guaranteed as your inputs will not be attributed to you in person, but reported only as a population member opinion.
- The interview may last for about thirty minutes to forty five minutes.
- Data will be stored in secure storage and destroyed after 5 years.
- You have a choice to participate, not participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- The research aims to understand how school ethos is influenced by school categorization.
- Your involvement is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved.

•If you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate (by ticking as applicable with an X) whether or not you are willing to allow the interview to be recorded by the following equipment:

	Willing	Not willing
Audio equipment		
Photo equipment		
Video equipment		

For further information on this research project, please feel free to contact me using the ff. contact details: Mr Zakhele, Dennis Nzuzza; Tel: 033-345 2217 or 082 970 8667: E-mail: zakhele.nzuzza@yahoo.com.

OR

My supervisor, Dr. S.E. Mthiyane who is located at the School of Education, Edgewood Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Mthiyanes@ukzn.ac.za; Phone number: 031 260 1870; Cell: 073 377 4672.

For additional information, you may also contact the UKZN Research Office through: Mr P. Mohun (HSSREC Research Office). Tel: 031 260 4557 E-mail: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za.

The interview schedule is attached herewith for your perusal.

Your anticipated positive response in this regard is highly appreciated.

Thanking you in advance

Yours sincerely

Mr Z. D. Nzuzza

DECLARATION

I (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project. In addition, I consent/not consent to the interview being voice-recorded.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

.....

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The semi-structured interviews will be based on the following questions:

- ❖ Please tell me what do you understand to be school categorisation and school ethos?
- ❖ How does your school encourage and practice school ethos? Please elaborate.
- ❖ Can you please explain the relationships among learners, teachers and between learners and teachers at your school? Is it negative or positive and how does this relate to your school ethos? Please elaborate.
- ❖ Can you please explain the relationships between the school and the parents and how this relationship promote or discourage school ethos?
- ❖ How does your school acknowledge achievements? Why is it important to acknowledge achievements?
- ❖ What mechanisms does the school use to ensure that its ethos prevails? Please explain and provide examples.
- ❖ How the school does promotes its ethos to other neighbouring schools? Please elaborate and provide examples.
- ❖ How does the school foster responsibility in learners and how does this speaks to the manner the school is categorised?
- ❖ How does the school foster responsibility in teachers or do you think the categorisation of this school contribute to the manner in which teachers are responsible or not responsible? Please explain.
- ❖ What challenges does the school encounter, if any, that impact in the smooth running of the school?
- ❖ How is the school categorised in terms of quintile?
- ❖ Does the school quintile ranking have any influence to the performance of the learners? Please elaborate.
- ❖ Does the school categorisation have any influence to the effectiveness of the school? Please elaborate.
- ❖ Does the school categorisation have any influence on the school improvement? Please elaborate in terms of how your school access resources and support.
- ❖ What impact does school categorisation have in teaching and learning in the school?
- ❖ How does the manner in which your school is categorised (in terms of quintiles) impact on your school finances?
- ❖ What are other challenges if any does the school encounter because of its categorisation? Please elaborate.
- ❖ Is there any other matter related to school categorisation that I have not asked but feel strongly you would like to share with me?
- ❖ Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity to speak to me.

APPENDIX H

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Observation sessions will be based on the following:

- Ceremonies and rituals
I will observe how the assemblies are held and conducted. During rituals and ceremonies such as worshipping I will observe the behaviour of learners and teachers, presence of an element of co-operation and unity among learners and teachers.
- Time management
I will observe how the usage of time is valued and honoured by teachers and learners during the arrival to school, signing of registers, attending lessons and other school activities.
- Lessons in classrooms
I will observe the communication between learners and teachers, how teachers control the classes during lessons.
- Climate of the school from the entrance to the grounds
I will observe the manner in which the learners dress when they attend school, after school, how they conduct themselves, how they interact, where they sit before school start, during their intervals and how they conduct themselves during extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, I will observe how teachers dress when they are at school. I will observe how visitors are treated by the staff and learners.
- Staff meetings
I will observe how the formal and informal meetings are held and conducted. The atmosphere during meetings, such as: speaking turns, behaviour of staff during meetings, respect and openness for differences, contribution by each staff member, seating plan of the staff. The prevalence if any of collegiality and involvement of people attending the meeting.

During the actual observation I will record the notes of what was observed as quickly as possible.

APPENDIX I

DOCUMENTS REVIEW SCHEDULE

The documents which are relevant to the study will be reviewed. The documents that will be reviewed will not be older than two or three years and will include the following:

- Minutes of the staff meetings.
- Time book for teachers.
- Registers for learners.
- Teaching timetables (composite and class time tables).
- Letters and notices to parents, Department of Education and various organisations.
- Sport and other extra-curricular fixtures.
- School vision and mission statements.
- School policies, namely code of conduct for learners and teachers.
- School log book.

Notes will be taken on matters related to school ethos and school categorisation. Official documents will be used to corroborate the interviews and observations to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings.

APPENDIX J

TURNITIN CERTIFICATE

Document Viewer

Turnitin Originality Report

Processed on: 14-Dec-2015 7:48 PM CAT
 ID: 614967150
 Word Count: 48989
 Submitted: 1

School Ethos as Influenced by School Categori... By Zakhele Nzuz 1% match (student papers from 03-Dec-2015)

Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal on 2015-12-03

	Similarity Index	
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	Internet Sources: 2%	
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<1% match (student papers from 03-Dec-2015)
Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal on 2015-12-03

<1% match (Internet from 23-Feb-2014)
<http://dspace.nmmu.ac.za:8080>

<1% match (publications)
A Decade of Research on School Principals, 2016.

<1% match (student papers from 11-Dec-2015)
Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal on 2015-12-11

<1% match (Internet from 05-Feb-2012)
<http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org>

<1% match (Internet from 11-Feb-2015)
<http://wiredspace.wits.ac.za>

<1% match (student papers from 16-Nov-2014)
Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal on 2014-11-16

<1% match (publications)

APPENDIX K

LANGUAGE EDITOR CERTIFICATE

25 Maple Crescent
Circle Park
KLOOF
3610

Phone 031 – 7075912
0823757722
Fax 031 - 7110458
E-mail:
wvebanksec@telkomsa.net
sathsgovender4@gmail.com

Dr Saths Govender

19 DECEMBER 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

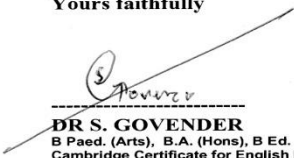
LANGUAGE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

This serves to inform that I have read the final version of the dissertation titled:

**SCHOOL ETHOS AS INFLUENCED BY SCHOOL CATEGORISATION:
PERSPECTIVES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS FROM FIVE
SCHOOLS IN UMGUNGUNDLOVU DISTRICT** by Z.D. Nzuza.

To the best of my knowledge, all the proposed amendments have been effected and the work is free of spelling and grammatical errors. I am of the view that the quality of language used is satisfactory.

Yours faithfully



DR S. GOVENDER
B Paed. (Arts), B.A. (Hons), B Ed.
Cambridge Certificate for English Medium Teachers
MPA, D Admin.