An information Behaviour of School Management Teams at selected schools in uThukela District, KwaZulu-Natal

By

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2024

Declaration

I, **Ntombizodwa Elda Nzuza**, declare that:

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2. This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
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Signed: …… 

Supervisor: Dr Siyanda Kheswa

Signed: ……  ….

17 January 2024

Dedication

Firstly, this dissertation is dedicated to the Almighty God who loves me unconditionally.
Secondly, my late Mom and Dad, Mrs. Thokozile M. Nzuza and Mr. Makhosini A. Nzuza, who watch over me from heaven. I will always love them, and they will always have a special place in my heart. I wish you lived longer to witness your good teachings, excellent and special roles you played towards my upbringing.
Thirdly, my late sister, Thembisile F, Nzuza, you will always be remembered, and I know you are with me through all my success.
Finally, to all my wonderful family members who are still among us, my loving sister Duduzile aka Madudwana Nzuza, handsome nephew S'themba, beautiful daughter Ntombizethu and my gorgeous granddaughter Alondwe Nzuza. I love you so much.

Acknowledgments

I would like to show my sincere gratitude and gratitude to:

- The Almighty God, for giving me life, protection, opportunity, strength, and courage to start and finish this work.
- My sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Siyanda Kheswa, for his mentoring, patience, and the guidance that he showed me during the study. I would not have come this far without his enduring help and support.
  Dr Zawedde Nsimbirwa, for her encouragement and motivational conversations we had when I hesitated to start this journey. Thank you so much.
- My colleagues Mrs. Busisiwe Tshabalala, for her encouragement when things got tough and Mr. Skhumbuzo Hadebe, for his support. Your contribution to my success is highly appreciated.
- The Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal Province, for allowing me to conduct such an important study in the selected high schools of uThukela district.
- The School Management Teams of the selected high schools who participated in this study. If it weren't for your participation this study would not have been conducted successfully.
- My late parents Mr. M. A. and Mrs. T. M. Nzuza, for your wonderful love and raising me the way you did, without your good teachings and guidance, I would not be the person I am today.
- Lastly, but not least, my loving sister Duduzile, awesome nephew S'themba, my one and only adorable daughter, Ntombizethu, as well as my beautiful granddaughter, Alondwe Nzuza. Your unconditional love, support and continuous encouragement motivated me to work hard and complete this research.
- I would like to thank everyone who I may not have mentioned above by name, who also contributed to the success of this study. I really appreciate everything you did for this journey to be successful.

Abstract

All public schools are managed by the School Management Teams (SMTs). Principals who head the teams have the responsibility to lead their schools efficiently and effectively. The study aimed to assess the information behaviour of the SMTs of the selected schools in the uThukela district, KwaZulu-Natal. The poor performance of these schools for five consecutive years (2014 to 2018) aroused the interest of the researcher to investigate the problem experienced by SMTs. Determining the underlying factors that contributed to this extraordinary situation. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods were employed to identify the information behavior of the SMTs in response to improving poor matric performance. The use of more than one data collecting approach with open ended and semi-structured questions need qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods to anlyse and present the findings. The instruments adopted for collecting data from SMTs were six semi-structured observation checklists. Six face-to-face semi-structured interview schedules for principals. Self-administered semi-structured questionnaire was employed to collect data from 11 departmental heads and six from chairpersons of the School Governing Bodies (SGBs). The total number of the instruments completed and collected during the study were twenty-nine which gave the study a 100% response rate.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to capture quantitative data and thematic analysis was used on qualitative data. Results revealed that 100% of the respondents agreed that the major problem was the underperformance of their schools. The findings suggested that this was caused by a lack of parental support and a lack of learners' commitment to their schoolwork. It was noted that most of the roles and responsibilities of the SMTs were carried out accordingly. Results showed that respondents trusted and relied on Textbooks and Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs) as their sources of information and content delivery, but information gab was not fulfilled. Findings showed that the SMTs of the schools do not put emphasis on the importance of reading. SMTs do not encourage learners to read for information and enjoyment which develop into a reading habit. As such, learners lacked reading skills, they were unable to read and understand examination instructions and questions, hence, they failed dismally.

Recommendations were based on the provision of more funds by the Department of Education for one school, one library with resources and one librarian.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of acronyms

4IR	Fourth Industrial Revolution
ACESLM	Advanced Certificate in Education School Leadership and Management
ANC	African National Congress
ASK	Anomalous State of Knowledge
ATP	Annual Teaching Plan
CAPS	National Curriculum Statement
CDE	Centre for Development & Enterprise
COVID-19	Corona Virus Infected Disease 2019
DAAR	Drop All and Read
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DEAR	Drop, Everything and Read
DOE	Department of Education
DSTV	Digital Satellite Television
ELITS	Education Library, Information and Technology Services
EMIS	Education and Management of Information Services
FET	Further Education and Training
GET	General Education and Training
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Internet, Communication and Technology
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
KZNDOE	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education
LAC	Language Across the Curriculum
LAN	Learner Access Network
LTSM	Learning Teaching and Support Material
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NDP	National Development Plan
NPC	National Planning Commission
NRC	National Reading Coalition
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSLA	National Strategy for Learner Attainment
OBE	Outcome Based Education

PAM	Personnel Administration Measures
PPN	Post Provisioning Norms
PYEI	Presidential Youth Employment Initiative
RAC	Reading Across the Curriculum
SA – SAMS	South African School Administration and Management System
SA	South Africa
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers; Union
SAFSMS	SAF- School Management Software
SGB	School Governing Body
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMT	School Management Team
SONA	State of Nation Address
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UCLA	University of California Los Angeles
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
WAC	Writing Across the Curriculum
WCED	Western Cape Education Department
WIFI	Wireless Fidelity
WWW	World Wide Web

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Various stakeholders and role players consider education to be a basic need and a right for every South African citizen. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) under the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs. Angie Motshekga, also emphasised the importance of reading and writing, starting from Grade R to 12 using different reading programmes such as the Read to Lead Campaign (RLC), which was launched on 22 July 2015 to improve the reading abilities of all learners in South Africa (SA news 2015). The National Reading Coalition (NRC) was launched on 15 February 2019 to reduce inefficient overlaps and gaps in different forms of support for reading. This indicates that education is indeed a priority in this country. This statement was in line with and supported by the former president of South Africa, Mr. Jacob Zuma, during his announcement of 'Free Education for all' (Motshekga, 2015).

South Africa faces many challenges, one of which is the country's quality of education. The current president of the country, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, in the State of the Nation Address (SONA) on 20 June 2019, announced seven priorities that need to be achieved in the decade to come, one of them being education. This is one of the goals of the National Development Plan (NDP) 2012. The President was quoted saying, "South Africa must have a better educational outcome from primary to secondary schools. was quoted saying that 'in the next ten years, every 10-year-old child must be able to read for meaning, to improve the literacy level in primary schools ". On 13 February 2020, during SONA, the President was quoted saying that "The youth population has a greater chance of accessing education, and every ten-year-old child must read comprehensively. The introduction of robotics and coding will start from Grade R to 3 in 200 schools, which will be part of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)" (Ramaphosa, 2019 and 2020)''.

KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province has twelve districts, one being the uThukela district, located in the north-west of the province. UThukela district has three circuit managements, Bergville, Estcourt and Mnambithi Circuit Managements. UThukela district has

458 schools in total, 138 high schools with grade 12 as an exit class and 320 primary schools. High schools form 30,13% and primary schools form 69,87% of the total number of schools in the district. Out of 138 high schools in the district, about 20 high schools are situated in urban, semi-rural and townships, making about 14,49% and about 118 (85,51%) secondary schools in deep rural areas of the three circuit managements (uThukela district: Department of Education and Management of Information Services (EMIS), 2008).

Schools' performance is mostly determined using matriculation (matric) results. In the uThukela district, schools with matric results over 65% are known as overperforming schools, and those performing below 65% are known as underperforming schools. Information indicates that 29 high schools in the district underperformed in 2018. Of the 29 high schools, 23 had been performing inconsistently, while six had been underperforming for the past five years (uThukela district, Department of Education Examination Section and Assessment, 2019).

1.2 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA SURVEYED

The following is a short description of the area where the selected schools are located.

The current study is based on the assessment of the information behaviour of the SMTs in six selected schools from uThukela district, KZN. These schools are quantile one schools, meaning they are no-fee schools because of the locations' social and economic backgrounds. All six schools are in deep rural areas of the three circuit managements.

1.2.1 Schools A and B

Schools A and B are in Bergville, a small town in the Drakensberg Mountains' foothills and under UKhahlamba Municipality. Both schools are in deep rural areas and are surrounded by mostly poor communities. There are no clinics, municipal buildings, or public libraries in the surrounding areas of both schools. Most community members are not working. They depend on subsistence farming and livestock for their livelihood. School A is about 18 km away from Bergville town. About 40% of the people around School A are employed, and 60% depend on livestock and farming. Most people are uneducated, very few are government employees in different departments and the rest are unemployed. The school is under Amazizi Education Circuit Management. School B is about

28 km away from Bergville town. This school is under Emangwaneni Education Circuit Management, and most community members are unemployed.

1.2.2 School C

School C is in Estcourt, a small town in Inkosi Langalibalele Municipality. The school is in a deep rural area of Ntabamhlophe education circuit. It is about 44 km away from the town of Estcourt. The Imbabazane Municipality Library is about 21 km away from the school. Most of the people in the community are unemployed, and very few are employed in major cities. The community members depend on subsistence farming for survival.

1.2.3 Schools D, E and F

Schools D, E and F are in Mnambithi, under Alfred Duma Municipality. All three schools are in deep rural areas. School D is about 59 km from Mnambithi Town, School E is about 24 km away and School F is about 88 km away. Very few community members in these areas are employed in major cities, and the majority depend on livestock and farming.

1.3 BACKGROUND AND STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This section discusses the history and the nature of South African education before 1994 and after 1994 including, including education policies developed and implemented after that. It highlights some challenges nationally and specifically in KZN schools that differentiate ex-model C schools from other schools.

1.3.1—Background

This section discusses the nature of South African education specifically schools before democracy. It highlights differences between ex-model C schools and ordinary or public schools.

1.3.1.1 South African Education before 1994

Before 1994, the type of education needed learners to recall what their educators had taught them. It was more teacher-centered than learner-centered. Learners were not given the adequate capacity

to express and reveal their thoughts. They have no choice but to follow orders and instructions given.

Everard (2004) argued that the type of education used before 1994 was referred to as a ‘one size fits all” approach. Everard (2004) further supported the argument by saying that the previously used approach was inflexible and did not realise that different individuals and learners have different needs that must be considered regarding curriculum content and delivery methods, depending on their preferred learning abilities. There was a lot of inequality between ex-model C schools and the schools in black communities due to the apartheid regime. Learners in ex-model C schools received better education because of the schools’ infrastructures with many supporting educational structures, for example fully equipped laboratories and fully functional school libraries with resources that support the curriculum compared to learners in other community schools. Learners in ordinary schools learned applied subjects like physical sciences and biology theoretically without equipment and experiments because laboratories were not available (Everard, 2004).

Spaulls’ report, commissioned by the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE), (2013) revealed the inequality of education opportunities, and analysis in every South African democracy dataset of educational achievement. It indicated that the approach that was used was two different public-school systems in South Africa. One system accommodates a minority of wealthy learners. Learners’ performance is better in the schools because of the schools’ infrastructure and fewer learners in each classroom receiving individual attention. The other system incorporates the rest of the learners who form the majority. These learners mostly had low-income families, backgrounds and were overcrowded in the classrooms. The two education systems can be seen as the systems that separate learners by wealth, socio-economic status, geographic location, and background, as well as language. This inequality was shown by the results of Grade 3 learners from ex-model C schools obtaining higher marks on the same test written by Grade 5 learners from former-black schools (Spaull, 2013).

1.3.1.2 South African Education Post 1994

Since 1994, education has become one of the priorities for the democratic government in power. South Africa is facing many challenges, and one is to address the inequality of education in schools. For over 25 years, education has been at a crossroads. Several Ministers of Education have been trying to balance the differences and improve the quality of education. Every education minister

developed policies and strategies to change the education system to improve the quality of education. The implementation of Curriculum 2005 was viewed as a strategy that represented a new shift in education. It was thought that outcome-based education, with its terms of integration and lifelong learning, would change the system and provide equal access to education for all learners in South Africa (South Africa Department of Education, 1999a).

Inequalities in school library provisioning done by the Department of Education before 1994 resulted in widespread inadequate facilities, a shortage of trained personnel, and an unequal supply of resources in most schools. Education Library, Information and Technology Services (ELITS) as a directorate responsible for developing, the school libraries and reading promotion in KwaZulu-Natal starting from 2002. The directorate developed the KZN School Library Policy as a guideline on utilising the school library resources to promote reading. Almost half of the schools in KZN have library material provided by ELITS. Few schools have laboratories or science kits; few schools have libraries with resources but not fully functional due to different challenges faced by schools, one of which is that legislation pressing the Department of Education to provide school libraries and enforce the establishment of the library standards (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture 2003 and Du Toit and Stilwell, 2012).

School Library services in KZN have to be operational against the background and without the full support of the national policies or guidelines. ELITS, as a directorate responsible for school library services in KZN's Department of Education argued that it would not be possible to plan and effectively implement services in a previously disadvantaged sector. The directorate developed the provincial school library policy based on the national draft policy initiatives. The KZN School Library Policy promotes three school models that are cluster library, classroom or corner library and centralized models (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture, 2003).

1.3.1.3 South African education policies before 1994 and beyond

Before 1994, black learners were not allowed to attend white schools. These segregated schools had different education policies regarding the use of the medium of instruction. The resistance to language policy in black schools, where learners were forced to learn their subjects in Afrikaans, caused the 1976 uprisings. Many black schools demonstrated, and many learners lost their lives. Compulsory education was fully implemented among the white minority and lesser in Indian and Coloured communities (Wet, 2009).

After 1994, educational status was granted to eleven official languages. South African schools chose English over their home language as a language of instruction. The education department introduced two new policies, which showed an important shift in thinking in curriculum policy, implementation, and assessment. That was the end of the old Curriculum 2005, the Outcome Based Education (OBE) and the beginning of the new policy known as the Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS). The details of this policy were fully discussed in the National Education Act, No. 27 of 1996, which contains the approval of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) as an education policy starting from Grade R to 12. Secondly, the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996, contains the national procedures for assessing learners' achievement stipulation in the National Curriculum Statement Grade R to 12. The National Department of Education develops educational policies for the schools to implement without alteration. The question is whether the existing education policy and future policies bring about an education system which prepares learners and youth for participation in a democratic society and gives them the ability to be job creators rather than job seekers, work independently, and be contributing members of the society (Clarke, 2012: 238).

In 2003, ELITS in KZN developed and implemented the KZN School Library Policy against the socio-economic background of schools and without the full support of national policies. The purpose is to guide and establish the school libraries in the province and to support educators and library coordinators in the development and management of the school libraries. The policy promotes the three library models: classroom libraries, corner libraries, centralised libraries, and cluster libraries. The implementation strategy of the school library policy has challenges regarding the provision of starter collection to schools due to inadequate annual funding for the project. The project implementation funding did not increase, leading to fewer schools benefiting (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, 2007b; Du Toit and Stilwell, 2012).

1.3.1.4 Modern media and education

Selvam (2015) emphasised that we are living in a so-called 'Digi world' or Digital Era. Hence, computers with internet connections are in great demand. Learners find different learning resources on the internet and become active participants in their thirst for knowledge. The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) has taken its core: everybody is talking about e-education and e-learning which intend to play an important role in teaching and learning (Selvam, 2015: 8-22).

According to Brisk (2004) the media is a powerful and influential source of learning because it reflects the values and attitudes of society. Television is the most influential form of media because it influences stereotypes of different groups by portraying them in a certain way. Currently, the internet is another rich source of information due to its international reach, and the information superhighway can provide a more multicultural perspective. Internet communication discloses the way to the utilisation of different languages and the exploration of many cultures (Brisk, 2004: 134-135).

White Paper 7 provides a national policy guideline for the use of Internet, Communication and Technology (ICT) as a resource to support teaching and learning in both the General Education and Training (GET) and Further Education and Training (FET) bands.

Matlala (2015) argued that "the internet is the greatest advancement in the realm of information technology and has become a valuable instrument in the process of transforming the world into a global village". According to Matlala (2015) the internet has become one of the most vital communication tools, creating opportunities for people to present their thoughts and ideas more effectively. Learners can explore and access various sources of information, knowledge, and skills to resolve issues about the world in general. Using the internet, learners develop personally, and acquire different skills and confidence to approach different activities based on academic studies.

Matlala and Kheswa (2019) argued that there was no doubt that we are living in a digital information era, where the use of the internet is seen as a key tool for the learning environment. Matlala and Kheswa (2019) further stated that this is caused by the development of ICTs, which includes the utilisation of computers, smartphones, and the internet, which has brought a significant change in service and information provision in schools and education. The national DOE identifies the positive impact of ICT in education and fully supports the introduction and use of-ICT in schools. DOE stated that the ICT resources should be available to all schools and not be restricted. (Matlala and Kheswa, 2019: 1-3).

According to Kheswa (2010) the internet with electronic databases makes searching and retrieving of information faster and quicker. It allows learners to think critically and write logically and effectively. Internet users find it easier to search for information using search engines, particularly Google. Other internet users, including learners, use the internet for enjoyment and pleasure. They use the internet for social networking, using applications, such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and

WhatsApp, etc. Most people use the internet to send instant messages and e-mails to communicate worldwide.

Kheswa (2010) further said that the internet is mostly used by students through the Learner Access Network (LAN) at tertiary institutions, and they have free WIFI access. Students have Smart phones bought by their parents and data provided to access the internet for information retrieval and use. Very few learners at the high school level have cell phones with internet access because of the unavailability of data and connectivity. The majority of learners do not have cellphones because of their poor home background and the environment they come from (Kheswa: 2010: 2).

1.3.1.5 KZN Media Facilities Challenges

The following are some of the challenges faced by most of the schools in KZN compiled by ELITS advisors during school visits concerning the availability of media facilities:

The geographical location of the school is important because most of the schools are in deep rural areas. The social environment, that is, most of the community, is uneducated and has little encouragement to learners to use the media for educational purposes. Communication is a problem because there are no computers, tablets, or cell phones due to a lack of connectivity in the community. Very few schools have computer laboratories with computers or tablets with learning programmes. Schools with libraries are mostly in urban areas. There is no electricity or internet connection in most rural areas. Teachers are not trained in computer skills, and there are no solar devices in schools in deep rural areas, while there is a lack of adequate computer skills among members of SMTs.

1.3.1.6 Present South Africa

Molnar (2008) argued that learning in the 21st century needs the collaboration of computer-equipped schools and trained educators, teaching in a well-equipped classroom, and using technology effectively to support a conducive learning environment. The idea of the National Department of Education (DOE) is to use potential technology to change classrooms and support Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to develop learners with relevant skills that match the needs of the modern world. Learners must be able to access resources, locate the relevant

information, analyse and evaluate, integrate, present, as well as communicate information by applying it effectively where needed, especially in society (Molnar, 2008).

A media statement by former MEC for Education Mrs. Ina Cronje (2 April 2009) reported that close to R51 million was spent on computer equipment by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZNDOE) in 12 districts since 2008. The statement further said that in teaching in the 21st century, learners must get a computer boost, while educators and school managers must be exposed to existing technology. Included in the equipment received by 500 schools in the province were computers and printers for administration purposes, while 200 schools were connected to the internet, and approximately 6 000 educators were trained in basic computer literacy skills. In addition, there was an official handing over of 60 air-conditioned computer laboratories to protect the equipment from heat, dust and moisture in 60 schools. Each computer laboratory was equipped with 25 networked computers, laptops, a data projector and a smart board. (Ina Cronje, 2009)

In 2010, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) provided all schools with administration laptops and an Education Management System (EMIS) called South African School Administration and Management System (SA – SAMS). This system was developed and maintained computer application to meet all administration, management and governance of the school, which includes record keeping of everything about the school, reporting and statistical analysis of learner's marks and learner unit record information and tracking system (SA-SAMS and LURITS, 2010).

According to Murphy (2012), the Internet is a potential educational tool for the individual learner to increase freedom of expression from physical limitations of the real world and show vast places in a short space of time. He further argued that by using the internet, individuals can access high-quality learning opportunities and educational provisions regardless of the surrounding circumstances. The internet allows learning to take place on a so-called many-to-many, which is social in nature. The vital role played by the internet was demonstrated during the Covid-19 Lockdown period, where classes were conducted virtually, during which learning, and lecturing took place using the internet in many learning institutions. Meetings and presentations were conducted virtually to minimise social contact.

Spaull (2013) highlighted the status of South Africa as far as the quality of education since 1994. Spaull's (2013) study clearly shows that the current education system is failing most of South Africa's youth. The National Development Plan (NDP) published by the National Planning

Commission (NPC) in 2012 became a guideline for South Africa's progress, being acknowledged by government, businesses, stakeholders, scholars and the public. This document is both straightforward and comprehensive, giving equal treatment to the country's underperformance and suggesting a way forward. Education is one of those priorities that need considerable attention (Spaull, 2013: 13).

On 8 March 2019, The National Minister of Basic Education announced the multiple Examination opportunities in 2020. She said South Africa is in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, so the Department of Basic Education will introduce a robotics and coding curriculum from Grades R to 9. Robotics will have a strong foundation in engineering, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The curriculum will need maker spaces to provide hands-on, creative methods to encourage learners to design, experiment, build and invent. In Grade 9, learners will be taught how to build a computer from scratch. By introducing STEM-related subjects to schools, the minister is trying to bridge the vacuum caused by the old education system and move South African schools from the digital divide to the digital natives' era. The implementation of coding in the system will start by piloting 1 000 schools in 2020 in five provinces for Grades seven to nine. (SA news.gov.za).

According to SAFSMS (2017) the role of libraries in today's world is seen as a gateway to knowledge and culture. It plays an important role in society because its resources and services create chances for learning, supporting literacy and education. The school libraries play a major role in learner's life by serving as the storehouse of knowledge and developing the important and good habit of reading among the learners. School libraries help SMTs ensure that learners have equitable access to resources regardless of home chances or constraints. School libraries help positively impact learners' academic achievements in the sense that learners who read various library books can perform better during assessments and examinations (Rashidah, 2017).

1.3.1.7 The role of the school management teams

Schools are like any other organisation that operates under leadership or management. SMTs managed schools consist of the principal(s), deputy principal(s), departmental heads and SGB, specifically the chairpersons. The success and failure of the school lie in the hands of this team, depending on how they manage the school. This is a school-based management structure that runs

the schools and makes precise decisions concerning the success of the school (Department of Education, 2000: 2-5).

Clarke (2007: 222) said that learner performance could not be separated from well-managed schools. Well-managed schools have a system in place to measure and evaluate learning outcomes. Effectively managed schools are those that produce high academic achievements for at least more than two consecutive years. The SMTs have duties and responsibilities to ensure that the school operates effectively.

The following are some of the duties and responsibilities that need to be performed by the SMTs in each school discovered by advisors during school visits:

To properly plan activities that take place within the school, establish all required documents, and resources (textbooks, and other resources that support the curriculum), delegate duties, and teaching workloads to educators according to their specialisations and other schoolwork to relevant staff members. In addition to monitoring educators and learners' work, evaluate how the plans are implemented properly and built, as well as sustain human relations within the school. If the above duties and responsibilities are not performed accordingly, that might have a negative impact on learners' performance in all respects.

1.3.1.8 The importance of information behaviour

According to Bates (2010), Information behaviour is "The currently preferred term used to describe the many ways in which human beings interact with information, in particular, the ways in which people seek and utilise information". Previously, information behaviour was known as studies of use studies" or studies of "information seeking and gathering", or studies of "information needs and uses." This means that information behaviour and information needs are more the same terms used to seek, locate, and engage with information. It is a broader term in the field of Library and Information Science research which consists of information seeking behaviour and information searching behaviour.

It is used to attempt to understand the way people search for and use information in different spheres of life (Dr Prasad and Dr Jubi, 2023). This term is very important because it demonstrates peoples' actions when information need arises. It includes searching for information or with others (orally or

written) or engaging with any type of information resources. The term is all about how people who are thirsty for information search, find, evaluate, process, and use information to satisfy their needs. The SMTs of the selected schools are thirsty for knowledge and strategies to improve the poor performance of Grade 12 learners. Various ways have been used by the SMTs to find solutions based on the problem of underperforming schools but to no success. It is of great importance to evaluate the information before using it to ensure its relevancy and accuracy in meeting one's goals and needs.

Ford (2015) argues that a clear understanding of information behaviour research may assist in increasing the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the way information is accessed, selected, arranged, used, and delivered. Information behaviour can take place and be observed at the individual level and as people work in interaction with others in groups, organisations and societies (Ford, 2015: 14).

1.3.2 Statement of the research problem

Grade 12 learners of the six selected high schools have been underperforming for five consecutive years. This poor performance demonstrates the information gap within the SMTs of these schools. The underperforming pattern motivates the researcher to investigate and assess the information behaviour of the SMTs of the six high schools in trying to solve the problem. This study is conducted because of the importance of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) to learners for tertiary entrance and their future employment.

1.4 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The six selected high schools have been underperforming for five consecutive years.

This pattern shows an information gap within the SMTs and the schools in general. According to Belkin's Anomalous state of knowledge (ASK) approach (Kaniki, 2001: 195), any problem is viewed as an insufficient state of knowledge. This implies that the SMTs of the six selected schools have an inadequate state of knowledge which has contributed to poor matric performance in the past five years. This underperformance pattern is enough motivation for the study from an action and policy perspective, which drives this research. The results and findings of the study will assist other schools in the district to improve their academic performance.

Democracy brought many changes in South Africa especially in the education system, curriculum change, education policies, teaching methods, as well as the teaching and learning environment, among other educational matters. The whole process has not been easy to implement in our schools. Despite the chances brought by democracy, there is a need for improvement in education standards even today considering the results produced by some schools such as the six selected schools for the study (Prinsloo, 2005).

Most schools lack infrastructure and resources, while teachers and learners have no access to laboratories and libraries within the school that can support the curriculum and enhance their teaching and learning effectively.

KZN matric performance in some districts has shown a very slight improvement. In other districts, there has been no improvement. Instead, there has been a decline in the matric pass rate. The researcher strongly believes that there is an information gap that needs to be identified and met to solve the problem.

Poor matric academic performance in the six selected high schools for the past five consecutive years has aroused the researcher's interest to go deeper in assessing the problem experienced by the SMTs and finding the underlying factors that contributed to this extraordinary situation.

The KZN DOE uThukela district records revealed the fluctuating, but most importantly the declining performance of matric results between 2014 and 2018 in these selected high schools (uThukela District, Department of Education Examination Section and Assessment, 2019). The poor matric performance of these six schools contributed to the decrease in the pass rate percentage of the uThukela district. The decreased pass percentage of the district led to the reduced percentage of the KZN province which has a huge impact on learners' performance in South Africa as a whole.

1.5 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

This section highlights the purpose and the objectives of the study. The researchers' interest was motivated by observing poor learner performance in selected high schools, which signposted the researcher to assess the information needs of the SMTs to improve poor learners' performance in selected high schools.

1.5.1 Purpose

The purpose of the study is to assess the information behaviour of the SMTs of the six selected schools with a trend of underperforming for the past six consecutive years in the uThukela district, KwaZulu-Natal.

1.5.2 Objectives

The main research objective is to assess the SMTs' information behaviour and determine the factors that contributed to poor matric academic performance in the six selected schools in the uThukela District, KwaZulu-Natal.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following questions guided this study:

1. What were the critical incidents experienced by the SMTs of the six selected high schools in uThukela District and under what circumstances did they occur?
2. What channels of information were used by the SMTs to satisfy their information needs?
3. How were the information needs met?
4. What challenges were encountered by the SMTs when solving the problem?
5. What are the strategies that can be used to overcome such challenges?

1.7 DEFINITION OF THE KEY TERMS

The following are the key terms of the study:

Information behaviour is the way in which human beings interact with information or seek information and use that information (Bates, 2010).

A school management team is a group of people managing everything within the school using policies and procedures prescribed by the Department of Education (Molefe, 2013).

Underperforming schools are those schools that produce matric results below the expected levels (Western Cape Education Department, 2009).

1.8 PLANNING OF THE STUDY

The division of this study consists of the following chapters:

Chapter One contains an introduction, and overview of the project. This includes an introduction to the study, a brief description of the area survey, background, a statement of the problem and motivation for the study. The purpose and objective, research questions, as well as key terms used in the study and their definitions. Lastly, the theoretical framework for the problem under investigation uses Wilson's Model of information behaviour.

Chapter Two contains relevant literature related to the information behaviour of the school management teams in solving the problems experienced by the schools.

Chapter Three comprises a detailed explanation of the research design, population, sample size, research methodology employed in the study, and other data collection procedures.

Chapter Four details the research findings revealed by different instruments based on the data collected through the investigation.

Chapter Five represents all data interpretation and other information collected during the study, while all the findings will be discussed in this chapter.

Chapter Six encompasses a summary of the dissertation based on a critical integration of literature study findings, research findings, as well as conclusions and recommendations for future investigation.

1.9 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In this chapter, the researcher presented an introduction to the study, background information on how it relates to the research and a summary of the areas in which the study will be conducted, the motivation of the study, unpacking the reasons that prompted the researcher's interest in conducting the study, as well as the purpose and objectives of the study. Research questions that guided the

study will be answered after interpreting the data collected and presenting the findings. This chapter will be followed by Chapter Two, which discusses the relevant literature related to the current study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the details of relevant literature conducted by other researchers similar to or related to the current study. It will review the similarities and differences to the current study. "Information behaviour" is presently used to explain the various strategies people use to look at and connect with information in a special way and utilise that information. Bates (2010) refers to the term as an art and a skill used by library and information specialists in a broader sense in conducting studies relating to understanding the connection between the human being and the information. The concept and definition of information behaviour may differ from one researcher or person, context or situation to the other, depending on the context in which it is used and how the information seeker views it (Bates, 2010).

Choo et al. (2006) highlight that information behaviour occurs as an "information culture,'' meaning any information-seeking process involves values and procedures to be followed in an information environment or organisation. This clearly indicates that information behaviour occurs where there is information need.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are various theories upon which the research study can be constructed. The study adopts Wilson's 1996 model of information behaviour. It includes purposive information-seeking behaviour because the SMTs of the six selected schools actively and purposefully seek information due to a need to satisfy some goals, which contributes to poor matric performance. Wilson developed an information behaviour model in 1981, which left out some important stages in information behaviour. Empirical researchers showed that Wilson's 1981 model has gaps that need to be filled, such as the person-in context and the decision to search for information. Wilson's 1996 model is an upgraded model of the 1998 model. Wilson's 1996 model was purposefully adopted because the framework covers almost most aspects of the information behaviour of the SMTs, starting from the context of information need and ending up where the information user is acquiring the need in different institutions.

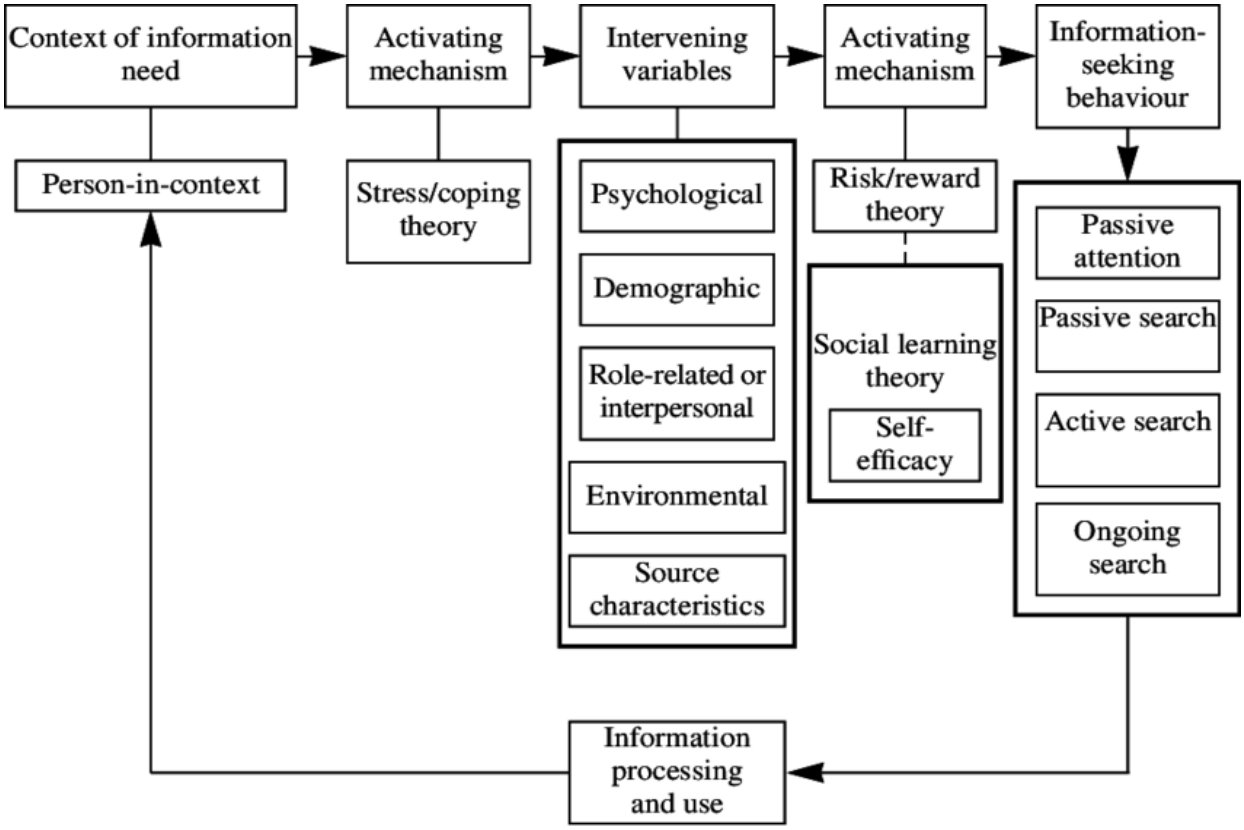

Figure 2.1 Wilson's 1996 Information Behaviour Model

Figure 2.1 shows that there is a context of information need or information gap experienced by the SMTs of the six selected schools for the past five years. This information need is a huge problem because it contributes to poor matric academic performance in the six schools. Kaniki (2001) argues that any issue is viewed as a poor state of knowledge known as Belkin's Anomalous State of Knowledge (ASK).

The framework indicates that the information need is aroused by independent variables for example, stress or coping theory. The information behaviour or need of the six selected schools is triggered by poor matric academic performance for the past five consecutive years. These variables can be controlled and manipulated by the SMTs of these schools based on managing the schools according to the departmental policies and performing their duties as expected.

According to the dependent variables for example, risk or reward theory can influence the social learning theory developed by the researcher by the name of Albert Bandura in the1960's. The SMTs of the six selected schools' dependent variables were used to change the management style and use

turn-around strategies to produce good matric academic performance. There are intervening or mediating variables between independent and dependent variables. The framework indicates examples of these mediating variables as psychological, demographic, role-related or interpersonal, environmental and source characteristics.

The SMTs of the participating schools have intervening variables, for example, psychological (attitude towards teaching Grade 12 and incompetency in the classrooms), demographic (the location of the schools in deep rural areas without educational structures that support the curriculum), interpersonal (family problems and poor health conditions), as well as environmental factors (political issues that affect the schools and socio-economic factors for example, low-income family backgrounds, as most community members are unemployed and depend on livestock and farming to sustain their livelihoods). Source characteristics (non-availability of teaching and learning resources for learners, such as laboratories and libraries within and outside the schools). Wilson's intervention variable is in line with and supported by Maslow's needs, which stress the importance of basic needs for every human being in performing their duties efficiently and effectively.

The framework activating mechanism creates the risk or reward theory. This theory leads to learning theory based on self-efficiency. One of the main concepts of social learning is self-efficacy. For the past five years, matric learners of the selected schools have believed they could produce good academic results, lacking the knowledge that they must possess high efficacy based on school learning and performance. Bruning et al. (1999) stated that "The most important and consistent finding in the research literature is that student self-efficacy is strongly related to critical classroom variables such as task engagement, persistence, strategy use, help-seeking, and task performance". The SMTs of the six selected schools must possess high self-efficacy related to flexibility and resistance to negative attitudes and improve poor matric academic performance.

The intervention variables pushed the information-seeking behaviour to develop as a result of a need observed by the information user who wants to satisfy it. Information-seeking behaviour can be passive attention leading to passive search, active search or ongoing search. Seemingly, for the past five years, the SMTs of the selected schools have passive attention to understanding the need for information behaviour within the schools. Sometimes the SMTs tried to use passive search to solve the problem, sometimes they used active search, but the information needed was never met.

There was an ongoing search that the SMTs of the selected schools were busy applying to solve the problem. The information-seeking behaviour leads to information processing and use. After the SMTs of the selected schools have applied different searches, the change of the information in any manner is observable by them. They have to retrieve, process and store the information to improve the poor academic performance of matriculants.

The concept and definition of information behaviour may differ from one context or situation to the other, depending on the context in which it is used. The SMTs of the selected schools have been observing the information needed for over five years within the context of the school environment without success. These school management teams need help in identifying the information gaps and strategies to solve the information needs within the context or school environment (Du Plooy, 1995: 5 and Wilson, 1999).

2.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

McMillan and Schumacher (2010**)** state that a literature review is an essential connection between the current knowledge and the research problem being investigated. The authors further said that it provides useful information about the strategy that can be integrated into the new study.

According to Punch (2005a: 265) reviewing the literature highlights the way the proposed study incorporates what has already been researched. Some scholars of information behaviour did acknowledge that there is no single way of information seeking, even though information seeking is a conscious effort to obtain information in response to a need or a gap in one's knowledge because others are intentional information-seeking and unintentional information discovers.

Kaniki (2001) says the information is an idea solving problems, answering questions and making decisions. He continues by saying that information need is a term related to information use. When there is a need for information, there is also a gap that needs to be filled with information to solve problems and answer questions. Any issue is viewed as a poor state of knowledge, known as an Anomalous State of Knowledge (ASK). The SMTs of the six selected high schools have inadequate knowledge which has contributed to poor matric performance in the past five years.

2.3.1 Information behaviour

A study by Bates (2010) on information behaviour conducted at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) stresses the importance of information behaviour in many ways from the 1930s up to the present. Marcia continued by saying, “Information behaviour is also the term of art used in library and information science to refer to a sub-discipline that engages in a wide range of types of research conducted to understand the human relationship to information”. Bates (2010) focuses on information searching strategies to locate relevant information in relevant sources. The use of the internet, the World Wide Web (WWW), as an information source to seek information. Bates (2010) emphasises the use of the internet as a quick way to locate information, supported by the gradual invention of digital devices and gadgets to stress the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

A study by Francis (2005) based on the Information behaviour of social scientists, surveyed the social sciences faculty at the University of Argentina. Francis (2005) discovered that social scientists preferred journal literature to support their studies and current advocacy activities. Social scientists prefer electronic resources to hardcopy formats. The author’s findings revealed that respondents preferred to search and retrieve information using technological resources and devices. This is possible for developed and developing countries where the internet connection and the availability of electronic media are not challenging.

Goodwin (2003) emphasised that blogs are relevant in serving as online personal journals because they allow students to share files and resources, publish information on the internet, and write for readers beyond the classroom. The author’s argument was supported by Seitzinger (2006), who highlighted that blogs are a very easy and usable tool in different fields with various purposes to enhance writing skills, encourage critical thinking with learning, and enable feedback. In addition, Lu (2007) revealed that Blogs could be utilised as e-portfolios for record-keeping of personal development processes, feedback, and achievements.

Bates’ study is relevant in a well-developed city like Los Angeles in the United States of America. In a country like South Africa, more specifically the uThukela District, there are many challenges regarding basic service delivery, such as adequate electricity supply, access to computers and libraries in most schools, and limited information-seeking strategies. The availability of smartphones in most places can be the alternative, as well as the availability of data, which is a major problem in South Africa due to a perceived high selling price compared to other countries.

Bates' study was based on the information behaviour within the social context and combined with cultural values and practice. The current study is similar in that both are based on social context, which is the schools and SMTs who are part of ~~society~~ and promote cultural values to learners. The information behaviour of the SMTs is pushed by the information needed to improve the poor matric academic performance. This is supported by Belkin's (1982) ASK, which views the problem as a poor state of knowledge.

Most school management teams use the same method of solving problems within the schools. Godbold (2006) emphasised that a shortcoming of some models of information behaviour was that they show a succession of stages of information seeking, where it is noticeable that the real behaviour is only sometimes a series. Godbold (2006) further proposed a new model of information behaviour with a concept of 'gap' to incorporate the views of other theorists. The proposed model identifies the methods in which an individual may search the gap using different modes of information behaviour beyond information-seeking and considers the communicator or information provider, the librarian.

Bates (2005) argued that 'people do not search for information using one query and method' as previously assumed in the literature on information retrieval. Bates (2005) prefers the accidental discovery of information and so-called Bate's 'berry-pick' methods, where information is haphazardly retrieved in small bits through a search process that evolves and changes depending on more goal-directed behaviour.

Information interaction can also have a negative impact on the user in the sense that one may ignore, deny, reject or overlook a piece of information. Others may discover that–nothing has changed, everything is the same.

Nwone et al. (2020) explored and analysed the trends of professionals' inactive and passive information behaviour in various information sources in teaching and research situations. The results showed that a lot of information seeking and information searching takes place in an information source where there is an information seeker and a source for information. The authors' study is more or less the same as the current study in that it intends to explore the pattern demonstrated by the SMT's behaviour of the six selected schools over five years in relation to Grade 12 learners' poor performance. The researcher argues that this is a clear indication that there were huge information gaps that the SMTs needed to fill in order to improve Grade 12 results.

2.3.2 Curriculum delivery

Educators in secondary schools, especially in the FET band, have their major subjects, so the SMTs should ensure that educators teach their specialised subjects in the relevant grade; by doing so, SMTs eliminate the problem of anxiety and unnecessary stress on the side of educators while decreasing the number of failures on the side of the learners. An educator who teaches what she knows better increases trust and creates a conducive learning atmosphere among learners.

Today's major concern about the teaching profession is that it needs to be advanced, developed, and continually upgraded like other careers. The use of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) as a tool to measure and evaluate the teacher's competency in the classroom is not adequate in giving educators relevant teaching knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to the content of the subject. It does not create a platform for educators to perform their duties accordingly and to their full potential. It all depends on the department to provide good leadership, managing and supporting the schools effectively (Department of Education, 2007).

According to Blum (2006) SMTs in schools have to give teachers help in specialised subject areas. Blum (2006) further said that SMTs have a role as team players involved in tasks that include creating and implementing policy within the schools and team leaders who are in charge of teachers and subjects within the department. This was supported by Nelly (2008), who emphasised that the main role of SMTs is to provide a sound educational environment that promotes quality teaching and learning.

Leithwood et al. (2010) suggested that the principal leads the turnaround initiatives by leading educators, parents, and staff in building capacity. The authors' suggestion was supported by Mullins (2010), who said that the school management should not use control measures to get good results but rather provide necessary support and empowerment towards educators.

Louw (2011) argues that these underperforming schools are found within a broken community distinguished by a poor background and negative socio-economic factors. Louw's (2011) findings revealed that underperforming is caused by a lack of parental involvement and interest, a learners progression policy that promotes learners who have failed either Grade 10 or Grade 11, which results in learners progressing to the next grade without acquiring adequate educational skills from

a previous grade, as well as a lack of support from the department in terms of resources to bring about improvement in the NSC results.

Lizer (2015) argued that continuous change in curriculum comes with a lot of challenges on the side of curriculum drivers, who are the educators. Practical implementation of curriculum change requires resources, the availability of space or classrooms, and a proper approach to enhancing its success. Above that, educators need knowledge, relevant methods, and a good attitude to align the change.

The first case of coronavirus was discovered in KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg in March 2020. The virus's rapid spread forced the president, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, to put the country on lockdown. African schools were closed for longer periods, which negatively impacted the schools (Ramrathan 2020) and Mahaye (2020). Schools losing contact time of teaching and learning for longer periods because of the coronavirus outbreak can result in part-time and/or permanent damage to the education system (Kekic, 2016). Thus, the recovery plan to save the academic year has to be adopted. Different teaching strategies like blended learning, where teaching and learning occur online through Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams and other Information Communication Technology (ICT) gadgets. This alternative online learning came with challenges because the majority of learners are less privileged due to poor connectivity in rural areas and the unavailability of smartphones, laptops and other gadgets that support the use of ICT. Above that, most learners are not used to this learning method. Learners are familiar with the face-to-face contact method of learning Le Grange (2020). Very few learners were part of the digital divide, meaning they had access to technology and technological skills. (Ramrathan, 2020 and Kekic, 2020).

Dziuban et al. (2018) added that the applicability of ICT in the education approach has been taken as a way forward to a broader curriculum change and coverage. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has disturbed curriculum implementation worldwide since 2019 and negatively impacted the South African Education system. About 25 weeks of curriculum coverage were estimated to be lost due to this pandemic and lockdown. Dziuban (2018) added that learning can be regarded as virtual learning and should occur where learners and educators are distant. (Onwusum et al., 2019).

Davis (2020) argued that COVID-19, concerning the closing of schools, exposed the digital divide and inequality between private schools and middle-class public schools in terms of accessibility of devices, connectivity, educators' support and parents' support.

Mbatha (2016) argued that the education curriculum is very important to the progress of the community and society as a whole. Mbatha (2016) revealed that various initiatives have been tried and failed to effectively implement the change that can achieve the education department's aims and objectives. Findings showed that curriculum planners and drivers assumed that educators have educational qualifications, expertise and adequate experience. Thus, they can implement curriculum changes without any problem, forgetting that they need continuous training in implementing these changes. It was revealed that a lot of work on curriculum reform cannot be placed on educators' shoulders, even though they are curriculum implementors and agents of such change (Govender, 2018: 9).

2.3.3 Learning within the school environment

For effective teaching and learning to take place within the classrooms. The SMTs have to be kept updated with the new academic developments. SMTs have to develop their staff professionally through continuous workshops.

Chatman (2002) and Herzberger (2005) argued that learning occurs in relation to an individual's perception of risk, reward and self-efficacy. The SMTs in these selected schools faced a required task to improve Grade 12 learners' performance, a low sense of self-efficacy and a high risk of information seeking to solve the problem. The thinking of the SMTs in such a situation is referred to as 'self-protective behaviour'. The SMTs have to protect their image, dignity, and schools from other schools that perform above the expected level. Chatman (2002) found that such self-protective behaviour negatively affects an individual's ability to access useful or helpful information to solve various problems.

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003: 73) argued that "the literature on schools with a poor culture of teaching and learning reveals that such schools have poor educators and learner's attendance, vandalism, substance abuse and poor learners' performance". Their arguments were based on teachers who are not adequately trained. There was a lack of participation from the stakeholders and ineffective management; thus, the principal should take ownership and accept the outcomes as they manage the school alone, ignoring SMTs and other stakeholders.

According to Farr (2011), data collected from previous studies showed that when the SMTs were strategically assessed, factors like classroom management, school environment, internal and

external, and academic performance appeared. Schools are centers of academic performance and achievement. Thus, educators are the core components of such accomplishments. Farr (2011) further said that school leadership helps manage and shape the flow of cultural information to support learners' academic progress using one or more of the six leadership strategies identified.

There should be changes in a normal school calendar, and school days allocated should be adjusted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Daily and weekly rotations of school learner attendance have a negative impact on curriculum coverage. This caused the Department of Education to revise the ATPs to meet the challenges of the situation (Hoadley, 2020).

It was reported that the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) argued that when the schools opened after the lockdown period, most schools and learners could not easily adjust to COVID-19 situations as their schools could not meet the COVID-19 regulations and protocols. Thus, educators teaching Grade 12s had to go beyond the call of duty to conduct classes during holidays, weekends, early mornings and late afternoons to catch-up on the time lost during lockdown. Grade 12 learners who did not pass in 2020 were given another opportunity to re-register and write their failed subjects under the Second Chance Programme in 2021 (SA news.gov.za, 23 February 2020).

2.3.4 School Management Teams: the principal

After 1998, the National Curriculum designed for schools was referred to as the 'one-size-fits-all approach'. Its structure was rigid and inflexible and did not accommodate learners with difficulties and challenges to learning. Learners have different information needs; therefore, the curriculum content should cater to that, together with an appropriate delivery method. School managers have to change and consider the conditions that help the schools cope with new developments that bring about specific changes (Everard, 2004: 177 - 253).

Fayola (2015) stated that there are five management principles, planning, organising, staffing, leading and controlling, which are still relevant and effectively used today. These five functions are part of practices and theories of effective, efficient and successful management in an organisation. Fayola's (2015) principle of management was supported by Bind (2019) when the author argued that Education Management is a goal-oriented process that involves group effort and well-organised activity and performance towards the achievement of some pre-determined goals in an educational

sector. Bind (2019) continued by saying that active coordinated strategy, one can achieve the institution's goals by effectively using the material and human resources in the educational environment.

The key responsibility of the school managers is to manage the schools and develop policies that are relevant to the needs of the school and the overall interest of the learners. Therefore, managers must have relevant management skills to efficiently and effectively perform the duties of a school manager (Molefe, 2013).

According to Mestry (2017) 21st century principals perform managerial roles and responsibilities which are more demanding, problematic, stressful, confusing and unclear. Mestry (2017) reported that principals' activities such as reporting, decision-making, handling of educators, learners, as well as parental matters. Mestry's (2017) leadership activities were supported by Naidoo (2019) when the author highlighted one of the reasons for the continuous decrease in learner performance and low educational outcomes in public schools is due to poor leadership shown by most principals. This is caused by the SMTs especially principals of schools that are underqualified, thus professional development is needed. To improve this situation in schools, principals were provided with the opportunity to register for the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership and Management (ACESLM) course. Research findings show that principals' leadership development is important for school improvement based on teaching and learning (Naidoo, 2019).

2.3.5—The role of reading in enhancing academic performance

The underperforming pattern of the six schools takes us back to the history of information behaviour research developed by Dr S.R. Ranganathan in the Five Laws of Librarianship. The study of information behaviour can create various networks in individual interactions and a large community and societal interaction with information.

Ranganathan (1931) emphasised the importance of reading, the information user in interacting with the information in all respect and developed the Five Laws of Librarianship which are still relevant even today and explained the law in the following order:

- Books are for use
- Every reader his/her book

- Every book its reader
- Save the time of the reader
- The library is a growing organisation

Deavers (2000), supported his idea and law in his study in England, where the author emphasised that a learner must be taught to read as early as in the foundation phase to develop a love for books. However, Deavers (2000) continued saying that getting good reading habits in the FET phase is difficult.

Deaver's (2000) study is similar to the current study because they are based on interacting with information to solve the serious problem of poor academic performance among learners.

Bashir and Mottoo (2012) argued that reading habits play an important role in learners acquiring meaningful knowledge. Their studies relate to the current one because they emphasised information behaviour in interacting, seeking and using the information to improve learners' performance.

Dadzie (2008), in his Ghana Library Journal where he stated that "Reading is the ability to understand words contained in a book or document and make use of the knowledge for personal growth and development". This means that reading makes meaning in any recorded information and contributes a lot to learners' academic performance.

Owusu-Acheaw's (2014) study titled "Reading habits among students and its effect on academic performance: a study of students of Kofordua Polytechnics, in Ghana" is focused on the reading habits that have a huge influence on academic performance.

Palani (2012), in his study in Ghana, says that reading effectively is essential in effective teaching and learning as it enhances the success of the educational process–and improves academic performance. His findings revealed that the majority of the participants acknowledged the vital role of reading. Palani's (2012) study confirmed that reading habits have contributed to academic performance; hence, reading and performance go together. His study focused on information behaviour based on reading to improve performance.

Rule (2017) argued that the Department of Education had lost the South African reading education plan. In order to correct that, we need to shift and move beyond the principal stage of reading as an

oral activity, where accuracy and pronunciation are being emphasised to view the reading activity as reading for meaning and comprehension. It was revealed that South Africa has performed very poorly worldwide in teaching literacy for the last 20 years. His findings showed that learners fail to interpret a sentence or give an idea where needed. He further said that educators do not have knowledge of teaching to read effectively. One of his recommendations was the implementation of 'Drop Everything and Read (DEAR)' and 'Drop All and Read (DAAR)'. His strategy was supported by Wallenberg (2018) and Paton-Ash et al. (2015) who highlighted that this reading strategy requires the creation of a reading period in every grade, developing of functional school libraries as a transformational space for avid readers and lifelong learning. In an effort to address the reading crisis and encourage parents to read at home, family reading programmes such as Read to Lead Champaign and–Family Literacy Project in KwaZulu-Natal must be developed internationally, which aims to motivate parents to support their children's literacy development and instill a love of reading in rural and poor communities (Willenberg, 2018 and Paton-Ash et al,2015).

2.3.6 The role of SMTs within the school context

SMTs have a special role in each school, such as leading the school in administration and academics. They have to be role models in all respects for the entire school community. If ~~the~~ SMTs lack the skills to manage the school, that school will gradually become a white elephant. Poor learners' academic performance will demonstrate this. SMTs must play an important role in formulating the policies and effectively implementing those policies.

Many studies have revealed that not a single method is the most effective in transforming schools and districts, but a combination of strategies is required to solve the problem faced by schools. Learners' poor performance can be a result of many factors within the school. SMTs should use data from standard-based assessments and classroom assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching.

Nzoka (2014) investigated the methods used by school managers to improve students' academic performance in schools in Embu North District, Kenya. Nzoka's (2014) research problem was that their secondary schools' performance had an average of D+, a failure symbol from 2001 to 2011 (Kenya National Examinations Council 2004). Nzoka 's (2014) findings showed that most principals, deputy principals and Head of Departments (HODs) had a bachelor's degree as their highest qualification. Very few HODs had a Masters in the whole district. Most of the Board of

Management members did not have managerial skills, which affects the monitoring of work, teaching, and learning. Some of the authors' recommendations were that school principals and deputy principals must have the required academic qualifications and undergone management training on leadership skills. This argument was prompted by some of the school managers being in managerial positions, not because of their competencies, but due to years of service, and others having been deployed in their respective positions.

Kimbui (2012) then suggested that all districts should have ongoing monitoring strategies for teachers and learners. Like Nzokas's study, the current research focuses on poor learner performance in secondary schools. Learners' failure rate is a serious issue in both studies, and the focus of Nzoka's (2014) study and the current study is based on the information behaviour of the SMTs, which are the school managers.

Heystek (2004) argued that the SMTs in schools are responsible for the professional management of the schools, including all aspects that support teaching and learning. The National Strategy for Learner Attainment (NSLA) guideline of 2007 indicates some measures that include the principals' redeployment for poor learner performance, and poor SMTs monitoring and evaluation of schools. Everard et al. (2004), added that the SMTs should plan and organise testing when improving the National Senior Certificate (NSC). His argument was supported by Subramoney (2016) when he highlighted the roles and responsibilities of SMTs within the NSLA school that differ from one school to another based on Grade 12 learners and the improvement of the NSC results affect the overall performance.

A study done by Ndou (2008) titled 'The role of School Management Teams in Curriculum Change' conducted at Tsilamba circuit, Limpopo Province, suggested that SMTs are expected to change the curriculum and ensure that the school culture is powerful, as well as supportive of-effective teaching and learning. The SMTs have to ensure that the school delivers according to its mission, vision, curriculum goals, and action plans. He further said that in some schools, SMTs find it difficult to translate changes and reform in the curriculum into action (DoE, 2000: 2 and 16). Ndou's (2008) findings indicated that curriculum change will be difficult to implement in most schools because of inadequate classrooms and shortages of teaching and learning materials. Ndou (2008) further recommended that the same study be extended to other districts in the province, increasing classrooms and teachers. Ndou's (2009) study is similar to the current study because they both focus

on the information behaviour of the SMTs in seeking information to solve the problem faced by the schools. These problems might be caused by working and/or environmental factors, which the current study seeks to explore.

Ndlovu's (2009) study titled 'The impact of management on learner performance: Nhlophenkulu area', was conducted in KwaNongoma, KwaZulu-Natal. Ndlovu (2009) indicated that the principal plays a managerial role in the school's success and is responsible for making the school function. The author further stressed that schools need to be managed like other organisations. All schools have specific duties and responsibilities assigned to them that need to be performed and achieved. If those functions are not performed accordingly, this negatively impacts the learners' performance. Ndlovu's (2009) study is related to the current one because they are both based on the management of learner performance by SMTs. Therefore, good school management produces good learner results. Learner performance cannot be separated from well-managed schools because well-managed schools have systems and goals to measure, assess their results, and evaluate their input and output.

The proposed study will focus on the SMTs as the target groups because they are permanent school managers. They have answers to research questions related to education, and as decision-makers and policy implementation facilitators, they have solutions to solve the problems pertaining to learners' academic performance. The study aimed to determine factors related to education that influence poor Grade 12 performance in these six schools (DoE, 2000: 5).

Maja (2016) reported that, South African education acknowledged the importance and existence of SMTs in schools. Thus, DOE developed the roles and responsibilities assigned to each team member. Those duties and roles were stipulated clearly in the Personnel Administration Measures (PAM) document. If SMTs lack understanding of these roles and responsibilities, this leads to confusion, instability, tension, and incompetency, which causes a decrease in academic performance. This premise was supported by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) based on some of the following roles and responsibilities of the principals and-SMTs:

To review the timetable in line with COVID-19 requirements, and taking consideration the following:

- Classroom sizes,

- Shift or learners' intervals,
- More than one assembly (depending on space),
- No extracurricular activities and
- Proper provision for screening of educators, non-teaching staff, and learners every morning (Western Cape, Department of Education, 2020)

2.3.7 The role of the Department of Basic Education in increasing the pass rate

The current development in education has considered performance above all else. Hence, schools that obtained below 65% of the total are referred to as underperforming. The Department of Basic Education (DBE) tried, to increase the pass rate in schools by developing many strategies and policies that schools need to implement. DBE highlights four important learning phrases: Reading Across the Curriculum (RAC), Language Across the Curriculum (LAC), English Across the Curriculum (EAC) and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC). To produce good matric results, every teacher is a language teacher, and reading must be part and parcel of teaching and learning for all teachers in all grades (Willams, 2014: 8-41).

The 2019 academic improvement plan of the Department of Education uThukela district was based on the ten pillars that guide its development and implementation. The district's strategy was to improve learners' academic performance in all grades. The following are the pillars of the 2019 improvement plan:

- Pillar 1: Total school functionality and productivity.
- Pillar 2: Effective teaching/learning and provision of support resources.
- Pillar 3: Radical programmes for inclusivity and support for struggling learners.
- Pillar 4: Teaching and analysing learners' attainment and interventions.
- Pillar 5: High-impact school monitoring and support.
- Pillar 6: Improvement of teacher quality and output.
- Pillar 7: Promoting the culture of reading with comprehension.
- Pillar 8: Compliance and consequences management.
- Pillar 9: Accountability as organizational culture.
- Pillar 10: Stakeholder consultation, engagement and management.

(uThukela district, Department of Education, 2019).

The Department of Education (2007: 3) declaration is that the effective professional development of educators for improving teaching practices and results depend mainly on leadership, which is capable of managing and leading the schools. This suggests that the DBE, as the employer, believes that teacher development policies in South Africa cannot be excluded from the core duties of the school SMTs. However, the challenge arises because the SMTs rely on district workshops that sometimes employ a so-called 'one size fits all strategy', not considering the uniqueness of the schools. Therefore, school effectiveness and backgrounds cannot be assessed uniformly. (Botha, 2010: 1).

Mhlanga, et al. (2020) reported that the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) launched its digital content in October 2019 to speed-up the fourth industrial revolution and implement paperless teaching and learning. The DBE partnered with a number of companies to provide services like Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp and DSTV to provide audio-visual learning during the lockdown period. When the schools opened, numerous COVID-19 infections were detected at schools, which caused schools to temporarily close for 14 days while the schools were dealing with this infectious disease. The schools which were unable to adequately deal with the COVID-19 pandemic were negatively affected academically. After all the DOE had done to maintain and/or improve the previous Grade 12 results. Basic Education Minister, Mrs. Angie Motshekga announced the overall 5.1% decrease in the Grade 12 results of 2020, compared to the Grade 12 results of 2019. In June 2021, the Minister of Basic Education, Mrs. Angie Motshekga, announced the cancellation of the Matric June Examination to make up for lost time. The National Minister of Basic Education added that the mid-year exam period should be utilised for none other than teaching to cover the curriculum. (Timeslive.co.za, 02 June 2021).

2.3.8 The use of ICT in South African schools

A study done by Mutekwe (2014) titled 'Perceptions of the School Management Teams on the Continuous Professional Development of Information Communication Technology Educators: A Human Capital Development Analysis of a South African School. Mutekwe's (20014) study targeted a total sample size of 10 educators and members of SMTs purposively sampled and used semi-structured individual interviews and observations as data collecting methods. Mutekwe's (20014) findings showed that the SMTs connect their leadership styles with a willingness for

effective organisational behaviour to ensure that their ICT educators were fully prepared for ICT teaching and learning to improve school effectiveness during the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This is not possible and is a big challenge in schools in deep rural areas, as well as townships without electricity and internet connectivity.

A study by Nzuza (2015) titled 'School ethos as influenced by school categorization: perspectives of school principals and teachers from five schools in uMgungundlovu District' focused on school or learner performance, that the influence of school ethos on school categorization in terms of funding due to funding (quintile ranking), geographical location (rural, urban township) and poverty (feeding scheme) among other things. Data collection methods that were used were semi-structured interviews, observations and document reviews. Nzuza's (2015) data collection methods were similar to the current study but differed in that only the principals of the sample schools were able to respond because they understood school categorization. The author's findings showed that the biggest challenge in running the schools was the autocratic and top-down approach the Department of Education applied to schools. As a result, principals have less input on how to run their schools. Principals are instructed, which causes a lot of misunderstanding and confusion within the school and leads to poor service delivery.

Ojo, et al. (2018) argued that the use of ICT in teaching and learning in secondary school is relevant to the current educational development in Africa. The authors emphasised that, "ICT-changed from being a technology of information and communication alone, to a driver of curriculum innovation and delivery system for both teachers and students.". This forced the DBE to categorise schools according to quintile rankings from one to five, starting from the poor of the poorest to ex-model c schools.

The KZN Department of Education budget policy statement presented by the Minister of Education Mr. Kwazi Mshengu, revealed the roll-out of modernizing teaching and learning methods and governance by making the schools innovative hubs of curriculum delivery, changes in the classroom set-up to e-learning. These two e-learning solutions are Microsoft Office 365 and Gamma solution. It started with integrating e-education and piloting to 54 selected schools in the 2021/2022 financial year.

The key characteristics of these schools will include the following:

- Access to digital content and cloud-based learning aids and applications.
- Access to internet services targeting 10 MB upload and download capabilities in all classrooms.
- Replacement of all chalkboards with interactive smart whiteboards.
- Media/computer centres.
- Fully equipped smart classrooms for virtual teaching.
- Digital libraries.
- Science laboratories.
- Resourcing all educators with laptops.
- Training all educators on the ICT in their lesson plan and delivery.

The minister further said that all new schools to be built and those to be renovated will be equipped with these digital features to enhance the fourth industrial revolution (KZN Department of Education, 20 May 2021).

The DBE introduced robotics and coding in 2019 to enhance the fourth industrial revolution starting from Grade R to nine. They believe the robotics curriculum will have a good and strong foundation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Learners at the primary school level will be able to build and use robotics through programming codes. Grade nine learners will be taught how to make a computer. Robotics will come with its problem of insufficient infrastructure, a lack of devices to be used by learners, and inadequate space where hands-on activities will take place. Another challenge will be a lack of teachers with knowledge of this curriculum or ICT skills (SANews.gov.za, 8 March 2019).

The KZN DOE launched the Quality of Learning and Teaching Campaign (QLTC) on 24 February 2020 to address reading for meaning and comprehension at the primary school level. The Minister of Basic Education in South Africa, Mrs. Angie Motsekga, was quoted saying, “Teachers will be the key to teaching the new subject called coding in schools”. Furthermore, stating that’, The department plans to train at least three teachers in each of the 16000 primary schools to teach the new subject” (SA News.gov.za, 25 February 2020).

2.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Many researchers conducted their studies on different topics related to learners' performance. Most of these studies focused on environmental, socio-economic and political matters, amongst other issues, that affect learners' academic performance. In addition, these studies mostly focused on learners as their target group. They neglected other stakeholders in the learning and teaching process, not taking into consideration that learners come to matric classes and leave for tertiary education. The challenges remain for the next crop of learners. Above that, other academic factors contributed to poor matric academic performance which the current study intends to discover. Chapter three seeks to explain the design, population sample size, research methodology employed in the research and other data collection procedures of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses mainly on research methodology and research design underpinning the study into the information behaviour of the SMTs of the selected schools in the uThukela district, KwaZulu-Natal. All the research methods adopted were discussed. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, "Research methodology can be defined as a particular way of studying something in order to discover new information about it or understand it better". It provides the foundation for choosing the approach and methods to use when collecting the study's data. It also shows the procedures used to identify, select, process and analyse the information about a topic. According to Sarantakos (2005: 129), the researcher must respond clearly to the question of "What will be studied and how will this be studied?". This is important to guide the study on the correct research method (University of Witwatersrand, 2015).

The chapter outlines the research paradigm, research design, research approach, population of the study, data collection instruments, data analysis procedure, validity and reliability of the research and ethical issues that guided the study. The researcher is prepared to use various methods of revealing the reality of the problem faced by the six selected schools. The current research adopted quantitative and qualitative methods. Using mixed-methods, the researcher will collect both quantitative and qualitative data and then determine how to blend or combine the two methods (University of KwaZulu-Natal, Faculty of Education, 2010: 20 – 21).

3.2 SELECTED HIGH SCHOOLS GRADE 12 RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES (%) FROM 2014 TO 2018

The six selected schools are in the deep rural area of the three circuit managements: two in Bergville, one in Estcourt, and three in Mnambithi Circuit Management. The researcher has decided to rename these schools as School A, School B (two at Bergville Circuit Management), School C, (one at Estcourt Circuit Management), School D, School E, and School F (three at Mnambithi Circuit Management) for confidentiality and to protect their identity and dignity (EMIS, 2008).

Table 1.1: Selected High Schools Grade 12 Results in percentages (%) from 2014 to 2018

School	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Average pass %
School A	43,33%	23,58%	43,33%	56,41%	50,57%	43,44%
School B	15%	16,67%	15%	57,14%	53,85%	31,53%
School C	11,36%	25,45%	11,36%	45,95%	40%	26,82%
School D	38,84%	58,77%	38,84%	60%	16,38%	42.57%
School E	20,69%	37,04%	20,69%	46,15%	33,33%	31,58%
School F	43,24%	12,12%	43,24%	54,29%	55%	41,58%

Source: DOE uThukela District (2019)

Results in Table 1.1 indicate that all six selected schools from uThukela district did not perform above the average of 50% for the past five consecutive years. Such poor matric academic performance, averaging between 26% and 44% from 2014 to 2018, was substantially below what could be expected. Therefore, the trends are an extraordinary situation that needs special attention by assessing the information behaviour of the school management team (SMTs) of these schools. Effectively managed schools are those schools that produce high academic achievements for more than two consecutive years. Learners' performance cannot be separated from the well managed schools, which have systems in place to compute and evaluate learner's outcomes (Clarke, 2007: 222).

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Bryman (2012: 30) states that a paradigm is "a cluster of beliefs and dictates for a scientist in a particular discipline that influences what should be studied, how it should be studied, how research should be done and how results should be interpreted". Killam (2013: 5) defined a research paradigm as "a way of thinking about or viewing the world and is a set of beliefs or worldview that is used to guide research or an inquiry". It allows the researcher to expose some assumptions related to the continuous information behaviour of the SMTs of the six selected schools from 2014 to 2018. This contributed to these schools underperforming for five consecutive years. This study adopted a post-positivist paradigm.

3.3.1 Post-positivism

According to Bisel and Adame (2017), post-positivism is defined as a name for a group of research assumptions that underlie some organizational communication scholars. While positivists believe that the researcher and the participants are independent of each other, post-positivists argue and accept that theories, background, knowledge and values influence what is observed during the study.

According to Alasuurtari, Bickman, and Brannen, (2008: 68-69), "Post-positivists must be a social researcher that is the epistemic dimension of sociological knowledge". The authors further argued that "The same reality represented in another vocabulary and through a biographical or ethnographic methodology would look different but still be true depending on reasoning and how we explain or understand the reasons for such differences".

According to the University of KwaZulu-Natal (2010: 20-23) post-positivists believe that there is only one truth about the world. This truth is universal, but the reality depends on how a researcher interprets it. Post-positivists followed objectivity by recognizing the likely effects of unfairness. Post-positivists assumed epistemologically that social reality or the truth is out there. The only thing for the researcher is to find the appropriate way to understand the reality of the truth by acquiring knowledge about the problems faced by the six selected schools. The researcher, from an ontological point of view, knows and understands that there is a truth that caused learners' poor performance. What is left is a method to be taken by the SMTs of the six schools to find out the truth about the problem.

Therefore, post-positivists argued that the way scientists think, work, and believe in their daily lives is not that much different. This argument motivates the researcher to choose post-positivism in the current study because the SMTs of the six selected schools experienced a pattern of poor matric results for five consecutive years (2014 – 2018) and need to uncover the truth about the problem by collecting data that can be utilized to quantify their information behaviour (UKZN, 2010: 20-21).

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Kumar (2005), a research design is a researcher's procedural plan, the researcher assumes to answer the questions accurately and effectively. It is the set of techniques and procedures used by a researcher to collect and analyse the variables specified in the research problem. This is

the strategy that needs to be constructed before the beginning of the study. It consists of two major stages, the planning stage and the stage of execution. It explains how the researcher intends to conduct the study and how the questions will be answered (Sarantakos, 2005: 104-106).

Bless, Higson-Smith, and Sithole (2013: 130) argued that 'Research design relates directly to answering research questions because the study is a project that happens over a scheduled time. It is unimaginable to start such an activity without a clear design".

Therefore, the research design refers to the overall strategy for systematically incorporating other survey elements to ensure the research problem is addressed effectively.

The research design will include ethnographic research designed to quantify factors influencing poor matric academic performance. According to Caulified (2020), "ethnography is a qualitative method for collecting data often used in the social and behavioral sciences". The researcher opted for ethnographic research because data will be gathered using observation and interview schedules as part of data collecting instruments. These two data-collecting instruments allow the researcher to have a conversation with principals as participants during semi-structured interviews and be part of the study when completing the semi-structured observation schedules.

Oliver (2010) outlined that the survey research method aims to gather data from a large population. The nature of the current study sought to use a survey design that involves collecting data from a sample of individuals through their answers to questions. It is the best method of gathering data from individuals in different settings.

3.4.1 Research method

There is no single and specific method prescribed for the research process. Methods to be used depend on the nature of the research. The use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches best serves this study. When the researcher uses both types of methods in one survey to address general or specific research needs, they also apply the triangulation method. The two approaches can somehow mix or combine during the study to form a mixed method. Using more than one research method increases the reliability of data (UKZN, 2010: 56 and De Vos, 2011: 106).

The current study is social in nature and requires the researcher to employ survey research, specifically the smaller scale survey, because it involves data collection from the members of the SMTs only of the selected schools. Sharp (2012:47-48) used a small-scale survey to explore the behaviour among people and look for relevant explanations to consider and use the records of the past surveys to explain and interpret possible patterns or trends to make a comparison. A small-scale survey involves the ways of carrying out the survey. Data collection usually consists of a questionnaire. The self-completion survey (questionnaire distributed by hand, post, email, or internet and completed by the respondents in their own time).

3.5 RESEARCH APPROACH

The study is carried out based on a quantitative non-experimental or post facto research design, which is to say, it will aim to process quantitative data collected from the SMTs of the selected schools. Quantitative and qualitative methods are equally important and useful in the research context because they complement each other and are not mutually separated.

A qualitative approach was used to interpret the data collected from the questions, which is typically more descriptive in this study. The researcher seeks to examine the data mostly by administering questions to Deputy Principals, Departmental Heads and chairpersons of the School Governing Bodies, while face-to-face interviews and completion of the interview checklist will be conducted with principals only.

3.5.1 Quantitative research

According to Kumar (2005: 12), the quantitative approach is classified as “the structured approach” because everything that forms the research process, namely objectives, design, sample and measuring instruments, is predetermined. The current study was carried out using a quantitative method to get numerical or statistical data based on the information behaviour of the SMTs of the six selected schools. Data collected from the respondents (SMTs) will be analysed, interpreted and compared to give the meaning of the exact behaviour of the SMTs of the six schools. This methodology relies upon measurements, counting and the use of many scales. Numbers are essential because they form a coding system by which different cases and variables may be compared. Systematic changes in the score are easily analysed, interpreted or given meaning based on the real

world that they represent using descriptive and inferential statistics (Bless, Higson-Smith, & Sithole, 2013: 58).

The purpose of choosing this method is to measure and evaluate variables and give figures that will enable judgments based on the level of variables in question, which is further needed in processing and comparison. The researcher tends to collect measurement and frequency data according to a very specific set of steps. In so doing, the researcher attempts to remain as objective and neutral as possible (Clarke, 2007:50).

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 94-97), the quantitative approach should demonstrate or be used to answer questions about relationships between measured variables to explain, predict and control phenomena. It should determine, establish, confirm, or validate relationships and come up with generalizations. A quantitative researcher is more on deductive reasoning that moves from general to specific.

3.5.2 Qualitative research

Cresswell (2007: 37-39) argues that qualitative researchers gather data where participants experience the problem under study. The advantage of qualitative research is that data is collected in multiple forms rather than relying on a single data source. This form of research makes an interpretation of what they see, hear, and understand.

Clarke (2007: 50) emphasises that some of the main criteria of qualitative methods are a shortage of strict structure, untidily planned designs to construct reality in action, voice language, and gathering thick descriptions, a presentation of data in the form of words and pictures, no social distancing with the respondent, and sensitivity of the context. It is a fact that there is some information that cannot be recorded accurately using quantitative data. Therefore, the qualitative method involves language that provides a more sensitive and meaningful recording of human experience. In such cases, words and sentences are used to qualify and record information about the world's reality. In this study, the words might come from semi-structured observations from the researcher, face-to-face interviews with the principals, and written responses to open-ended questions (Bless, Higson-Smith. and Sithole, 2013: 58).

According to Kumar (2005: 10), the qualitative approach should be classified as unstructured because it allows flexibility in all aspects of the research process. An unstructured approach is more appropriate to expose the nature of a study's problem, issue, or phenomenon.

3.5.3 Mixed methods

Bless, Higson-Smith, and Sithole (2013: 58) argue that no single method is prescribed to be carried out by the researcher in one study in social research. Therefore, multimethod research includes the use of more than one method of data gathering in a research study. Mixed-method research involves collecting, analyzing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data in one study.

Gillham (2007: 22) argues that both quantitative and qualitative methods can be used in combination. The researcher should use them in order because each method facilitates the other.

In this study, the researcher allowed respondents to describe their experiences by including some open-ended questions in a questionnaire with large quantitative-style items. Simultaneously, there are also ways in which text can be coded to give numbers. Thus, mixed-methods research tries to combine the advantages of quantitative and qualitative methods and avoid their disadvantages at all costs.

The problem under investigation demands that both approaches be used in the same study to confirm or elaborate on each other. The use of both types of methods can be called the triangulation method. The researcher used two methods to address general or specific research needs and enrich or refine the study.

In this study, the researcher will use mixed methods by gathering both quantitative and qualitative data and then combining or mixing the two types to produce accurate results. Bless, Higson, and Sithole (2013) believed that there is no single method prescribed to be used by the researcher in one study. Hence, more than one method can be employed in social research. By using more than one method, the researcher believes that it will be appropriate to reveal the truth out there in schools from participants who will be independent of each other. The combination of the two methods can take place at different research points. It can happen during data collection, with both data being collected simultaneously. The researcher decided to use more than one data-collection approach because. the questionnaires to be completed have some open-ended and semi-structured questions.

Responses collected from respondents will be mixed and be used to analyse, interpret and present the findings. Quantitative and qualitative methods can also occur when data is combined during the data analysis or interpretation phase (Bless, Higson and Sithole, 2013; Bisel and Adame, 2017 and University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2010).

3.6 THE POPULATION OF THE STUDY

According to Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2011) "the population is the study subject, which consists of individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events or the conditions to which they are exposed". Therefore, the population consists of all people in the targeted site. If the targeted population has many units, sampling must be done because the researcher cannot survey the whole population.

The population upon which this study was based in each school was the principal, deputy principal(s), HODs, SGBs, teaching staff or educators, non-teaching staff, and learners of the six selected schools at uThukela District, KwaZulu-Natal. The number of SMTs in the school depends on the enrollment of learners, which varies from eight to nine members. School D and School F have nine members of the SGB committee. Other schools have eight members who make a total of 50. The population size of the SMTs for the study was 72.

3.6.1 Size of the population

The population of the SMTs of the six schools is reflected in Table 2.1 below:

Table 2.1: Population size of the study

N=72

Research participants	Principal	Deputy Principal(s)	HODs	SGB members
School A	01	0	02	08
School B	01	0	01	08
School C	01	0	02	08
School D	01	01	04	09
School E	01	0	01	08
School F	01	02	03	09
Totals	06	03	13	50
Population size	**72**			

3.6.2 Sampling

It is not practical to survey the entire target population in this study. Hence, a sample that represents the population was selected. Due to the population size of the SMTs formed by six selected schools, sampling is required. Sarantakos (2005: 152) highlighted that sampling allows the researcher to study a relatively small part of the target population and get data representative of the entire population.

Sapsford (2007: 51) highlighted that sampling is about getting several people to respond to a survey, so that a valid generalization can be deduced on the population under investigation based on the responses given by the sample population. Therefore, the sample is the group of people who participate in the study. This research element is based on capturing data representative of the broader context of the issue. Researchers often utilise a sub-group of individuals within a specific area of interest, rather than collecting data from those who might be available or relevant (Wood and Smith, 2016).

Sarantakos (2005: 164) pointed out that in these techniques, the researchers purposely select or choose respondents, in their opinion, who are relevant to the study. The choice of the respondents is guided by the assessment of the researcher's judgment. For this reason, it is also known as judgmental sampling. There are no procedures involved in the actual choice of the respondents. The vital selection criterion is solely based on the respondent's knowledge and expertise hence, the study's suitability and relevance.

It is up to the researcher to choose where and when the study is conducted and its participants. This study adopted a purposive sampling strategy, where participants were selected based on their position within the school management team. The principal, deputy principal(s), HODs and ~~a~~ chairperson of the SGB in each school participated in the study. Six chairpersons of the SGBs from six selected schools were purposefully selected to participate since they represent their respective SGB committees in the school decision-making body.

3.6.3 Sample unit

Surveying the entire population can require time and a lot of financial resources. Therefore, it is up to the researcher to survey a suitable sample size of the population.

According to Sarantakos (2005: 117), sample size mainly depends on the underlying methodology (quantitative research needs a larger sample than qualitative research).

According to the nature of the project or study, some research topics need large, and others require small sample sizes, as well as time, availability and research resources. The intensity of the research determines the sample size, the more intense and in-depth the data gathering method is, the smaller the sample size required. The sample size of this study does not correlate with the given population. After all, not all the SGB members were part of the respondents because in a school context, not all SGB members sit in the school's decision-making body; it's only the chairperson. Hence, the chairperson is purposely chosen to represent other members of the SGB as the one who makes decisions in school matters, including related financial issues. The population of this study is 72 and has an acceptable sample size of 28 participants.

The sample size of the six selected schools was purposively chosen and reflected on Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Sample size of the SMTs from six selected schools

N=28

Research participants	**Principals**	**Deputy principal(s)**	**HODs**	**SGB members (Chairperson)**

School A	01	0	02	01
School B	01	0	01	01
School C	01	0	02	01
School D	01	01	04	01
School E	01	0	01	01
School F	01	02	03	01
Totals	06	03	13	06
Total number of Sample size	**28**			

3.7 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Brink et al. (2006) placed emphasis that without high-quality data-gathering strategies, the validity and accuracy of the research results and conclusion are easily challenged and questionable.

Data collection tools are the devices or instruments used to collect data, such as paper questionnaires or computer-assisted interviewing systems, Brink et al. (2006**)**. Case studies, checklists, interviews, observations, surveys or questionnaires are sometimes used to collect data. The researcher specified how the participants were approached, how data was gathered, and how collected data was returned to the researcher. It is important to note how research personnel and conditions were handled to collect data without bias and distortion.

This study adopted a semi-structured observation schedule, face-to-face interview schedule and self-administered questionnaire with close and open-ended questions as data-gathering instruments, allowing the respondents to formulate their answers the way they want, thus facilitating the mixed-method approach in collecting and analyzing data.

3.7.1 Semi-structured observation schedule

Thomas (2011: 165) refers to observation as the key method for gathering data. However, they differ due to the kind of observation in which the researcher systematically looks for a specific type of behaviour and the researcher in which they are informally but strategically in and among, recording essential facets of what is happening.

Sharp (2012: 83-85) added that "observation is used in education if the purpose is to capture something of the dynamic and complexity of particular activities and events as they unfold right before your eyes". The main aim of observation was to gather detailed information about what people do in a research place by exploring their behaviour, interactions and other behaviour in detail, while maintaining an acceptable level of standardization. Therefore, observation is a principal means of gathering information or providing supplementary information for clarification or triangulation.

Sapsford (2007: 122) stated that the researchers have to work out precisely what they intend to observe and position themselves where a clear view can be obtained without interrupting the school procedures.

In this study, the researcher carried out the semi-structured observation using the design form or schedule. The researcher can record what is being observed, such as the operational status of each school during teaching and learning hours. The punctuality of both learners and educators in the morning, discipline, respect, and honouring of periods. The researcher used the checklist to record the operation of the schools. The researcher will answer other questions in writing based on what has been observed. Since observation will be mixed with a questionnaire (questions) in the checklist, the mixed-method approach will be automatically probed (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis, C. and Bezuidenhout 2014: 58; De Vos 2011: 186).

Sharp (2012) identifies the techniques for recording actions, interactions and other behaviour during an observation. They are taking notes, writing what is happening right there in front of the researcher. Use frequency or tally counting table (for example, recording how often a specific activity, interaction or behaviour happens using a simple tick chart). Interval sampling, for example, writing on a chart what is happening at a particular time interval**).** Photographs taking, for example, capturing still images of actions, interactions and behaviour as they occur. Audio-visual recordings, recording all that is being said to analyse at a later stage. Taking notes is easier to do, it provides an ongoing record of activities and events and allows the researcher to record critical incidents, interruptions, as well as unpredictable behaviour without too much difficulty.

3.7.2 Semi-structured interview schedule

Thomas (2011: 163) pointed out that a semi-structured interview provides the structure with the list of issues to be covered, and the researcher is at liberty to follow up on some points as needed. This instrument was most relevant in this study because it is a commonly used interview arrangement in most small-scale social research.

Thomas (2011: 163) states an interview schedule is "a list of issues that one intends to cover". It provides the structure that reminds the researcher not just of the issues but also the potential questions, possible follow-up questions and probes, which may encourage the interviewee to say more about these follow-ups. Some probes may be verbal (for example, go on) or non-verbal (for example, nod, frown, smile or tilt of the head).

Sapsford (2007: 127) points out that it is important and the researcher's duty to keep the procedures, especially the presentation of questions, as similar as possible and understandable for all respondents and to ask the questions and the respondent to respond to them.

A semi-structured interview schedule was used to gather both quantitative and qualitative information from the six participating schools' principals. The interview session was in the form of closed and mostly open-ended questions, follow-up questions for clarity and other relevant answers to the survey were recorded in writing which is the mixed-method approach. By doing so, a mixed-method approach was probed (Thomas, 2011: 163).

The interview schedule was divided into six sections, demographic details, relations with the community, information needs and relations with the SMT, school governance and relations with educators, and challenges and solutions.

3.7.3 Self-administered questionnaire

Thomas (2011: 165) describes a questionnaire as "a written form of questioning and the questions may be closed or open". Semi-structured questionnaires are questions that will be closed-ended (quantitative), and some are open-ended (qualitative) that need further explanation from the respondents.

Sapsford (2007: 121-122) pointed out that when an interview is administered, the questions are presented or asked one at a time, but this is not needed with the self-completion questionnaires which the respondents fill in themselves and have the freedom to start with any question in the schedule.

In this study, the self-administered questionnaire was chosen because of its relevance, richness and reliable source of data collection. The current study wanted to gather quantifiable information and the respondents (SMTs) behaviour in seeking, interacting and utilizing the information in their schools to solve the problem. The questions that appeared in the questionnaire should cover the research objectives and research questions to get valid answers and avoid specification errors at all costs (Alasuurtari, Bickman, and Brannen, 2008: 315).

Sarantakos (2005: 239 - 240) highlighted that questionnaire differ according to their nature and how they are administered. The author further stated that the questionnaire should be constructed based on the standards and principles, including three parts, the cover letter, the instructions, and the main body. He pointed out the questionnaire format, which he refers to as the logical order in which questions are organised within the context of the questionnaire.

The questionnaires of this study were made up of Section A, which focused on demographic information of the respondents, for example, gender and age. Section B, dealt with the information behaviour of the respondents in their respective schools. Section C, focused on the information channel used by the SMT. Section D, focused on information needs/gaps experienced by the schools. Section E, focused on challenges encountered by the SMT on a daily basis. Section F, focused on strategies/solutions to challenges.

Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect information from the deputy principals, departmental heads and the chairperson of the governing bodies of the six schools. Written questioning was accomplished through questionnaires, administered to the respondents at school and returned to the researcher after completion. This is also called a self-completion questionnaire. The researcher has personally distributed the questionnaires to the participants to complete in their offices. The questionnaires were to be collected from the participants after that. (Refer to Appendices 3 and 4).

3.7.4 Pre-testing and distribution of the instrument

Sarantakos (2005: 255) describe pre-tests as small tests of a single part of a research instrument mostly used to check its mechanical structure. The author added that sometimes a small sample is selected for pre-testing. The respondents are requested to answer all or part of the questionnaire, and then the results are analysed and interpreted. Pre-tests are data-collecting instruments employed mostly by quantitative researchers before the data collection begins. Sarantakos (2005) further emphasized that a pre-test is carried out to check the suitability of the questionnaire.

Pre-testing is done on subjects not part of the study to see whether they understand the questions. The questionnaire provides the information the researcher intends to achieve. Therefore, pre-testing is important to avoid unclear or misleading questions (Bryman, 2012: 15 and Sarantakos, 2005: 255).

A pre-test aims to eliminate problems that the researcher may not have foreseen when designing the instrument. Data collected during the pre-testing will not be used in an actual finding, but rather to find and correct any mistakes on the questionnaire.

Sarantakos (2005: 256) highlighted the aims and importance of the pre-testing to increase the reliability of answers, increase the validity of factual reporting, increase the validity of answers describing subjective state, set up whether respondents are accessible, show the site is convenient, demonstrate whether the methods of data gathering generate enough information (either too little or too much), prove whether the plan is well constructed and check whether the changes or adjustments are required.

According to Fowler (2002) the researcher has to be very careful and clear in designing the questionnaire to avoid multiple questions, ambiguous questions, question design and error, poorly defined terms and incomplete or inadequate wording.

The SMTs of the three secondary schools that were not part of the research did pre-testing for this study. The three schools form 50% of the participating schools. The reasons for choosing these secondary schools were that they all have Grade 12, are located in deeply rural areas, and are categorised as quintile one and two, the same as the schools under investigation. This was done to ensure that the questionnaire was designed properly, the questions were clear, and the respondents

understood the questions without any problems. The researcher requested permission from the principal using a University of KwaZulu-Natal approved gatekeepers' letter before the study commenced. On the day of the study, the researcher introduced herself explained the day's purpose and explained the ethical issues. The researcher then distributed the questionnaires to the deputy principal(s) and head of departments and conducted a face-to-face interview with the principal. The three important parts of the questionnaire were put in an envelope, inclusive of a cover letter, the instructions and the questionnaire. The principal was requested to convey to the chairperson of the SGB to avail themselves on data collecting day. The respondents completed all the questionnaires in different offices and were collected by the researcher afterwards.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The purpose of data collection is to solve the research problem. After the data gathering was completed, analysis was done. Data analysis can be defined as a process of examining, cleaning up, changing and moulding data to discover useful information, inform conclusions, and support decision-making. It is as simple as transforming data into information.

Sharp (2012: 103), data analysis requires taking what you have collected apart, assessing it in detail and then grouping it all back together in a more compressed and meaningful way. Before data was coded, each completed questionnaire was scrutinized to check for completeness, missing data, errors in the responses, reliability, relevance, ambiguity, and comprehensiveness, the process is called data cleaning.

For this study, quantitative data from the questionnaire was captured or coded on to the computer or system for analysis, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS is software built and designed for statistical analysis of social science data (Arkkelin,2014). Each data and variable from each questionnaire were captured in the SPSS system to facilitate the analysis process. The computer program was used to create a visual output of data in different graphs, diagrams, charts and tables. Statistics were used to describe and unpack different patterns that speed up the interpretation and percentage distribution in frequency or tallies.

Sarantakos (2005: 346) argued that analysis was done after data collection in quantitative research. Data was collected from a qualitative approach and was carefully organized, analyzed and interpreted using content analysis. Data were categorised based on the themes. After reading each

open-ended response more than once, the theme was developed, and the pattern was revealed to correct interpretation. Therefore, the responses to open-ended questions were analysed and reported using textual and graphic representations.

3.9 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity and reliability are the terms used to assess the quality of the research. They both show how well a method or technique measures a study. Validity and reliability are important in this study because they ensure the researcher uses the correct methodology and research instruments in the data collection process. Properly designed questionnaires and accurate construction of the questions increase the validity and reliability of the responses. This guaranteed consistency, trustworthiness and neutrality during the research process to improve the reliability of the results**.**

3.9.1 Validity

Alasuutari, Bickman and Brannen (2008: 281) referred to validity as a typical presentation of accuracy or a degree to which a test measures the construct it is supposed to measure. Validity refers to how accurately a method measures what it is intended to measure. If the research has high validity, it produces results corresponding to real properties, characteristics, and variations in the physical or social world. It is vital to consider reliability and validity when the researcher creates the research design, plans the methods to be used, and writes up your results, especially in quantitative research (Middleton, 2019).

Sharp (2012: 74) argued that while validity and reliability of interview responses are affected by professional status, self-presentation such as appearance and personal involvement such as attentiveness and style. According to Sapsford (2007: 7) “A research argument is said to be valid to the extent that the conclusions drawn from the data logically follow from them”.

It means that validity is about the accuracy of a measure of the study. The research results must be reliable before they are valid.

3.9.2 Reliability

Sapsford (2007: 15) stated that “Reliability is the stability of the measures to the extent to which repeated measurement yields constant results, over a reasonably short period, during which change

would not be expected to occur, or supposedly identical measuring instruments yield identical results".

According to Alasuutari, Bickman and Brannen (2008: 281), reliability refers to the quality or facts of being exact and accurate of a measurement instrument. The score of the study must be reliable before it can be valid. Therefore, reliability is defined as consistency.

High reliability is one indicator that the measurement is valid and accurate. If a method is not reliable, it likely means it is not valid. This means that reliability is about the consistency of a measure of the study.

For the current study to be reliable and valid, the results must answer the research questions and reveal the researcher's intentions for carrying out the study. This means that the study was conducted properly. The researcher followed all the UKZN research procedures from the beginning of the study up to the end.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Thomas (2011: 68-77) emphasized that ethics are things to consider when studying right and wrong. The study should be done ethically and properly from the beginning until the end. All the appropriate steps need to be taken to protect all the participants and institutions interests, status values, and beliefs, including the researcher's harm, physical, social, psychological and professional wellbeing (Sharp, 2012: 22).

The most important ethical rule of social research is that it must not cause any harm either physically or emotionally to the participants. All the participants must know the general agreement about what will be accepted and not accepted before the commencement of the research process (Babbie, 2007: 27).

Struwig and Stead (2001) refer to ethics as a system of morals or rules of behaviour.

The researcher explained the ethical procedure of the whole process to respect the autonomy of all the participants to fully understand what needed to be done. Rubin and Babbie (2005: 71) argued that participating in a research process is voluntary. A mutual agreement must be reached between

the researcher and the participants. The participant is free to withdraw at any given time if they choose to do so (Durrheim and Wassenaar, 2001: 66).

The current study followed all the guidelines of the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics Committee. UKZN Gatekeeper's letters were used to ask permission to conduct a study in the district and selected schools. The researcher ensured professional practice and ethical standards. The permission to conduct the research was obtained from the District Director, and the participants (the principals, deputy principals, HODs and the chairperson of SGBs). All participants remained anonymous. Their names were not revealed during and after the research (the participants in their questionnaire responses were not asked to write their names). Their privacy and confidentiality were guaranteed.

3.11 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

Chapter three explained the study's methodology by highlighting what was used by the researcher to gather all relevant data and information for the study. The population and the researcher picked the mixed-method approach, where both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in one study to collect data. Different data collection instruments were used to gather information relevant to the study. The quantitative data was analysed through SPSS, quantitative data was analysed using text, and both methods, tables, and graphs, were used to interpret data. To check the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, the researcher opted to do the pre-test in three secondary schools in deep rural areas, such as the participating schools. According to the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics Committee guidelines, all the ethical considerations of the study were followed. The next chapter organised and arranged the presentation of the findings revealed by different instruments.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the method used and the findings based on the data collected from samples during the research process. The study aimed to investigate the information behaviour of the SMTs in selected schools in uThukela District, KwaZulu-Natal. Data was collected in six high schools using observation checklists, principals' interview schedules and semi-structured self-administered questionnaires for departmental heads and chairpersons of SGBs.

The researcher used a semi-structured observation schedule to observe the normal functionality of schools.

Semi-structured interview schedule for principals as top management personnel of the school with semi-structured questions was used and completed by the researcher, and follow-up questions for clarity where needed were applied.

Self-administered, semi-structured questionnaires were distributed, the researcher waited and collected them afterwards from the departmental heads and chairperson of the SGB.

Research results were presented according to sections in the observation checklist, interview schedule and self-administered questionnaires. The research findings are presented in the form of discussions, tables, bar graphs and pie charts.

The research design was used because it gives the most valid, accurate and reliable answers to research questions. For this reason, this study is purposefully undertaken to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What were the critical incidents experienced by the SMTs of the six selected high schools in uThukela District and under what circumstances did they occur?
2. What channels of information were used by the SMT to satisfy their information needs?
3. How were the information needs met?
4. What challenges were encountered by the SMTs when solving the problem?

5. What are the strategies that can be used to overcome such challenges?

4.2 RESPONSE RATE

According to Sharp (2012: 47-48), small-scale survey research was designed and used to explore behaviour among people and look for explanations to consider them. Therefore, a small survey was used to achieve the highest practical rate of responses.

It was used to ensure that survey results are representative of the target population so that they can be used with confidence to inform decisions.

At the beginning of the study, due to the nature of the study, a small group of 72 respondents was purposefully selected from the population. The sample size was supposed to be 28 participants, including three deputy principals of two schools. No data was collected from the three deputy principals of the two high schools because those posts were vacant in the respective schools. According to Post Provisioning Norms (PPN), which is the process that determines the number of educators allocated to each school and ensures that an adequate educator-learner ratio exists in classrooms. Due to the PPN, all deputy principals' posts were frozen, and the DOE downgraded others due to a decrease in learners' enrolment.

Data was collected from the six high schools using a self-administered questionnaire distributed and administered by the researcher.

Six observation checklists to check the overall functionality of the school were prepared and completed by the researcher in each school. Six semi-structured interview schedules for principals were compiled and conducted in each school. Eleven (11) self-administered, semi-structured questionnaire was hand-delivered to Departmental heads. Six (6) semi-structured questionnaire was distributed to the chairpersons of the SGBs.

Six (6) observation checklists were carefully completed, six (6) semi-structured principals' interviews were successfully conducted and all seventeen (17) completed semi-structured questionnaire for departmental heads and chairpersons of the SGBs was returned. It means that all 29 data-collecting instruments were completed and returned. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), 50% and 70% response rates are adequate or fairly good and very good. For the study at

hand, all distributed questionnaires were returned for this study, giving a response rate of 100%, which was exceptionally excellent. This response rate was attributed to the questionnaires being hand-delivered by the researcher, as well as waiting for the respondents to complete the questionnaires and collecting them after completion. SGB questionnaires were translated into IsiZulu because the chairpersons' mother tongue is isiZulu; as such, English could have been difficult to understand. All SGB chairpersons had a choice to complete either the IsiZulu or English versions. The data collection process began in August 2021 and ended on 24 September 2022. This chapter will present research findings, but not evaluate and interpret them.

Note:

Percentages were rounded up to one decimal place.

N = the number of respondents that responded to a specific question

4.2.1 RESULTS PRESENTATION

This section summarises the data collected and presents the findings of the study in line with the research questions. Some findings are reported in written text, others in tables and graphs.

4.2.2 OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

This part of the section presents findings observed by the researcher during the site visit of the six high schools.

4.2.2.1 State of cleanliness/tidiness of the schools

While the researcher was visiting the sites for observation, out of six schools' grounds and premises, three (50%) were good in terms of cleanliness, two (33.2%) were in satisfactory condition, and one (16.7%) was in poor condition.

The infrastructures of the six schools were as follows: two (33.3%) schools had good classrooms and building infrastructure.

Table 4.1 Cleanliness

N = 6

Cleanliness	**Good**		**Satisfactory**		**Poor**		**Total**	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Grounds and Premises	3	50%	2	33.3%	1	16.7%	6	100%%
Classrooms and buildings	2	33.3%	4	66.7%	-	-	6	100%

4.2.1.2 Safety and security

Security guards were at their gates in three (50%) schools and none in the other three schools. Some schools had visitors register at the gate, while other schools did not. Five of the six schools (83.3%) had proper fencing and lockable gates. In addition, a contractor was busy removing an old fence in one (16.7%) school.

In all six (100%) schools, pedestrians did not have designated gates; as such, used the gates for vehicles. Therefore, vehicles and pedestrians used one gate to enter and exit the premises.

Table 4.2: Safety and Security

N = 6

Safety and Security	Yes		No		Missing data		Total	
	Frequency	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Does the school have a security guard at the gate?	3	50%	-	-	3	50%	6	100%
Do outsiders sign the gate entering register?	2	33.3%	2	33.3%	2	33.3%	6	100%
Is the school properly fenced?	5	83.3%	-	-	1	16.7%	6	100%
Does the school have a gate for the vehicles?	6	100%	-	-	-	-	6	100%
Does the school have a gate for pedestrians?			6	100	-	-	6	100%

4.2.1.3 Punctuality

In six (100%) schools, non-teaching staff arrived early, four out of the six schools' educators arrived on time and others arrived late.

Learners in four schools came before time; in other schools, they came immediately after the bell rang. Three schools' educators were honouring their first period while others were not in their classrooms during the first period.

Table 4.3: Punctuality

N = 6

Punctuality	Good		Satisfactory		Bad		Missing data		Total	
	Frequency	**%**	**Frequency**	**%**	**Frequency**	**%**	**Frequency**	**%**	**Frequency**	**%**
Educators school time	4	66.7%	1	16.7%	1	16.7%			6	100%
Non-teaching staff	6	100%	-	-	-	-			6	100%
Learners' school time	4	66.7%	-	-	1	16.7%	1	16.7%	6	100%
Teachers' honouring of period	3	50%	-	-	-	-	3	50%	6	100%

4.2.1.4 Respect

Educators greeted each other in 50% of the schools and the additional 50% sometimes greeted each other. Learners of all six schools demonstrated respect for educators. In four (66.7%) schools, learners informally greeted each other all the time and in two schools (33.3%) occasionally greeted each other.

After the bell rang, there was no movement of learners in two schools while there was in one school visited. Sometimes, a few learners were moving during teaching and learning time.

Table 4.4: Respect

N=6

Respect	All the time		Sometimes		Not at all		Missing data		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Do educators greet each other?	3	50 %	3	50%	-	-	-	-	6	100 %
Learners demonstrate respect for educators	6	100 %	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	100 %
Learners greet each other	4	66.7 %	2	33.%	-	-	-	-	6	100 %
Movement of learners during teaching and learning hours	1	16.7 %	1	16.7 %	2	33.3 %	2	33.3 %	6	100 %

4.3.2 PRINCIPALS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The interview checklist was divided into five sections. Section A looked for the demographic details of the respondents. Section B focused on the principals' relations with the community. Section C dealt with the respondent's information needs and relations with SMT. Section D focused on school governance and relations with educators. Section E dealt with challenges the principal encountered during the management of the school. Section F concentrates on the solutions to solve those problems.

Note:

Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 were demographic information of the respondent. They have multiple questions and multiple responses.

Questions 7, 8 and 9 were based on relations with the community.

Questions 10, 11, 12, 13 14, 15, 16 and 17 investigated the human needs and relations of the SMT.

Questions 18, 19 and 20 focused on school governance and relations with the educators.

Questions 21 and 22 were focused on challenges the principals encountered and solutions to overcome those challenges.

4.3.2.1 SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

Demographic details required the respondents to provide their circuit management, gender, age range, positions in their schools, the period in this position in general, and the period in the position in the respective school.

Q 1 Circuit Management

The respondents were asked to indicate their Circuit Management (Question 1). The results are shown in Table 4.5 below. Circuit Management was in the uThukela District, Bergville, Estcourt, and Mnambithi. Out of six responses, there were two (33.3%) of the schools in Bergville, one (16.7%) was located at Estcourt, and three (50%) were situated at Mnambithi Circuit Management.

Table 4.5: Circuit Management

N = 6

CMC	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Bergville	2	33.3%
Estcourt	1	16.7%
Mnambithi	3	50%
Total	**6**	**100%**

Q 2 Gender of respondents

Question 2 asked the respondents to specify their genders. Table 4.6 below illustrates the results. Out of six respondents, one (16.7%) was female and five (83.3%) were male respondents.

Table 4.6: Gender of the respondents

N = 6

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Female	1	16.7%
Male	5	83.3%
Total	**6**	**100%**

Q 3 Age range

In question 3, respondents were asked to indicate their age range. Table 4.7 shows that one out of six respondents, (16.7%) was between 30 and 39 years old. Three (50%) respondents were between 40 and 49 years. Two (33.3) respondents were above 50 years.

Table 4.7: Age-range

N = 6

Age-range	**Frequency**	**Percent**
20 - 29	0	0%
30 – 39	1	16.7&
40 – 49	3	50%
50 +	2	33.3%
Total	**6**	**100%**

Q.4 Principals or Acting principals

Question 4 asked the respondents to indicate their positions in the schools. The results in Table 4.4 shows that all respondents were permanent principals of their respective schools.

Table 4.8: Principals or Acting Principals

N = 6

Position	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Principal	6	100%
Acting Principal	0	0%
Total	**6**	**100%**

Q.5 Years in this position

Respondents were asked in (Question 5) to specify the years of experience in the principal position. Table 4.9 below shows that out of six respondents, two (33.3%) have 0 to 3 years as principals. Two (33.3%) have 4 to 6 years as principals. One (16.7%) respondent has 7 to 10 years of experience. One (16.7%) respondent has 7 to 10 years of experience. One (16.7%) respondent has ten years and above as principal. This shows that there are few respondents with many years of experience as principals of schools.

Table 4.9: Years in this position

N = 6

Years in a position	Frequency	Percent
0 – 3 years	2	33.3%
4 – 6 years	2	33.3%
7 – 10 years	1	16.7%
10 + years	1	16.7%
Total	**6**	**100%**

Q.6 Years as principals in current schools

Question 6 asked the respondents to indicate the number of years as principals in the current schools. Table 4.10 below shows that out of six respondents, three (50%) respondents have between 0 to 3 years as principals of their current schools, and two (33.3%) respondents have between 4 to 6 years as principals of their current schools. Only one (16.7%) respondent has ten or more years of experience as principals of their current schools.

Table 4.10: Years in current schools

N = 6

Years in school	Frequency	Percent
0 – 3 years	3	50%
4 – 6 years	2	33.3%
7 – 10 years	0	0%
10 + years	1	16.7%
Total	**6**	**100%**

4.3.2.2 SECTION B: RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

Q 7 Principals' relations with the community

The respondents were asked in Question 7 to explain their relations with the community, and they all emphasised that they have good human relations.

Schools A and E were used for community meetings. The community mostly used Schools B, C D and F for different functions and celebrations. Schools A, B, C, D, E and F were used for church services.

Q 8 Condition of the school after being used

In Question 8, respondents of schools A, B, C, E, and F were asked to highlight the state of their schools after being used by the community for different functions. They said that the community left the school clean and in good condition. Respondent of School D said they found the school in a bad state. Some of the windows and door handles were broken.

Q 9 Human relations with the SGB

Question 9 asked the respondents to indicate their human relations with the members of the SGB and they all said they were supportive, cooperative, and worked well with them. All parent components of the SGB started in 2022. Hence, they worked well with them so far.

4.3.2.3 SECTION C: INFORMATION NEEDS AND RELATIONS WITH THE SMT

Q 10 Roles of the SMT

Question 10 asked the respondents to state the roles of the SMT within the school. Based on the respondents' responses of the six schools, all SMTs carried out their duties and responsibilities as expected and accordingly. As they were in management positions, they managed the whole school, checked and monitored educators' work, and monitored the implementation of DOE policies.

Mobegi (2010), states that principals ensure adequate departmental monitoring and involvement in classrooms to ensure that different teaching methods and strategies are used, and that teaching, and learning take place simultaneously.

The respondents emphasised that SMT made serious decisions where needed and had the capacity to discipline educators and learners.

Q 11 SMT Turnaround Strategies

Respondents were asked to explain their school turnaround strategies. School A emphasised that they need a fixed turnaround strategy. The school changes from time to time depending on the situation at that particular time. They changed approaches informed by Learning, Teaching and Support Material (LTSM) to suit their predicament. School E respondents highlighted that they had a turnaround strategy for each term, which focused on certain subjects failed by learners in the previous term. Respondents of Schools B, C, D and F said that their turnaround strategies focused on discipline, curriculum coverage, monitoring learners' exercise books and written homework. Above that effective teaching and learning took place within their classrooms.

Q 12 Compliance of SMT and their performance

Respondents were asked about the level of compliance displayed by the SMT in their performance. They all have more or less the same full compliance responses and were performed as expected. Their management roles and responsibilities were shared and performed accordingly.

Q 13 Duties

In Question 13, respondents were asked how they carried out their duties. The responses of all six respondents clearly indicated that they were all satisfied with how the SMTs carried out their duties. Some of the duties they carried out well were checking educators' files and learners' exercise books to ensure that educators were following the ATPs as designed by the DOE. The respondents were satisfied that the SMT ensured that effective teaching and learning occurred in all classrooms and that SMTs were Chief Invigilators during internal examination sessions.

Q 14 Channels used by SMT to satisfy their information need in response to matric performance

Question 14 required respondents to indicate the channels of information used to satisfy their information needs in response to matric performance. All respondents emphasised that they adhered to effective teaching in the morning, afternoon, Saturdays and holiday classes. They tried their best to make more information and resources available and accessible to educators and learners by networking and requesting assistance from over-performing schools. Educators of six schools attended all workshops organised by district advisors. Schools A and E highlighted that they used Internet Pharrell 24 to download previous question papers for revision purposes.

Q 15 Conduct of the SMST

In Question 15, respondents were required to explain how the management teams conducted themselves. Respondents of these schools repeatedly emphasised that their management teams were well presented and organised to perform efficiently. They were always punctual at school and honoured their teaching periods. They all ensured that effective classroom teaching, learning and assessment occurred. They have good communication skills among themselves. A School E respondent mentioned that his school management classrooms were very professional and ensured that all duties were carried out effectively and efficiently.

Q 16 Reading Circular No. 51 of 2020

In Question 16, respondents were asked to elaborate on the SMT views about implementing of Reading Circular No. 51 of 2020 implementation DAAR and the reading strategy. School A respondent mentioned that the school did not implement the circular in the first term due to challenges faced by the school. School B, C, D, E and F respondents replied without hesitation that they did not implement the circular because of the notional time for each subject which took all the notional time.

Q 17 Role of a school library in assisting matric

Question 17 was asked to investigate the role of the school library in assisting matric performance. School A highlighted that the school has a central library with old and outdated library books. There are no Municipality libraries in the vicinity of these six high schools because of their locations. Public libraries are found in towns of the three circuit managements. Schools B, C, D, E and F respondents highlighted that they have no idea because their schools have no libraries and no

connectivity within and around the school to access the Internet to access e-library and have access e-books.

4.3.2.4 SECTION D: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND RELATIONS WITH EDUCATORS

Q 18 Principals' relations with educators

Question 18 required respondents to explain how they relate to all educators. All respondents indicated they relate very well because their educators were disciplined and did their work as expected. School A mentioned that their educators were committed to their teaching loads, but sometimes one engagement with educators who deviated from what was expected took place. School D respondents said their educators sometimes lacked respect because they were extra-unionised. They were fully protected and relied on their rights for everything, sometimes at the expense of learners' rights.

Q 19 Matric educators' competence

Question 19 was asked concerning the competence of educators teaching matric. All six respondents said they strictly checked that matric educators were qualified and teaching their specialised subjects in the FET phase, especially in Grade 12. They highlighted that their matric educators were punctual and honouring their teaching periods except when valid reasons were presented for their absence.

School C respondent highlighted that he had one educator who was not competent in teaching his specialised subject. Still, he has experience teaching this subject because he has been teaching it for several years.

Q 20 Governance/management

Question 20 required respondents to elaborate on the governance of the school. They all complied with the School Improvement Plan (SIP) in place and maintained respect, discipline and order within the schools. Monitoring, departmental heads' files because all six schools have no deputy principals. They all ensured that DOE policies were implemented as expected. They supported non-teaching staff and teaching staff in their teaching and learning activities. All the respondents

highlighted that they were overloaded because their schools did not qualify to have deputy a principal due to low learner enrolment.

4.3.2.5 SECTION E: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Q 21 School challenges

In Question 21 respondents were asked to indicate the challenges they encountered when trying to increase matric performance. They all mentioned that Grade 12 learners did not do justice when doing their schoolwork. They did not submit their tasks on time, some did not do homework, and there was a shortage of educators, which led to educators being overloaded by teaching more subjects and grades. Some educators found themselves teaching the FET and GET phases. They all emphasised that their learners lacked a learning culture, did not get adequate support from their parents and some educators were not competent to teach in the FET phase. Some were not teaching their specialization subjects especially in Grades 10 and 11.

School A: Respondent highlighted the lack of electricity supply as a problem during examination time and the lack of photocopying machines.

School B: Respondent mentioned a lack of resources, a shortage of educators, and insufficient photocopying machines.

School C: Respondent emphasised that progressed learners were not taking their schoolwork seriously. They had poor backgrounds from primary schools and their parents were not cooperative and supportive.

School D: Respondents mentioned the issue of finance, insufficient resources, long distance travelled by learners and external dangers faced by learners.

School E: Respondent highlighted a lack of monitoring of study sessions due to a shortage of educators and security risks encountered by learners traveling home after study time.

School F: Respondents emphasised the unavailability of a science laboratory for practicals and experiments, while a lack of teaching aids to clarify the content was the biggest challenge at the school.

Q 22 Solutions to overcome school challenges

Question 22 required solutions to overcome challenges faced by the respondents.

School A: Respondent mentioned that the school opted for pre-paid electricity to solve the electricity problem.

School B: Respondent asked for assistance from neighbouring schools and used extra classes to cover the ATPs.

School C: Respondent mentioned that their focus was on progressed learners and learners who obtained Level 1 on their subjects to do remedial work and extra-activities.

School D: Respondent said that the school had asked the district to provide learner transport and increase school allocation (Norms and Standards allocation) to solve the problems faced by the school.

School E: Respondent stated that the problem would be solved if the PPN appointed local educators to monitor studying after school hours.

School F: Respondent highlighted that the school needed science kits since they had no physical science educator to teach science classes.

4.3.3 DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

Data collected from 11 departmental heads using a semi-structured questionnaire was summarised and presented in this section.

4.3.3.1 SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

This section was important in revealing and understanding ~~the~~ respondents' profiles. Circuit Management, the gender, age range, current status, period in position, teaching matric and subject specialisation of the respondents were unpacked in Questions 1 to 9.

Q 1 Circuit Management

Respondents were asked which Circuit Management they belonged to between Bergville, Estcourt and Mnambithi. Most respondents, six (54 %), indicated they belonged to Mnambithi Circuit Management, while three (28 %) indicated that they belonged to Bergville Circuit Management, and lastly, two (18 %) indicated that they belonged to Estcourt Circuit Management.

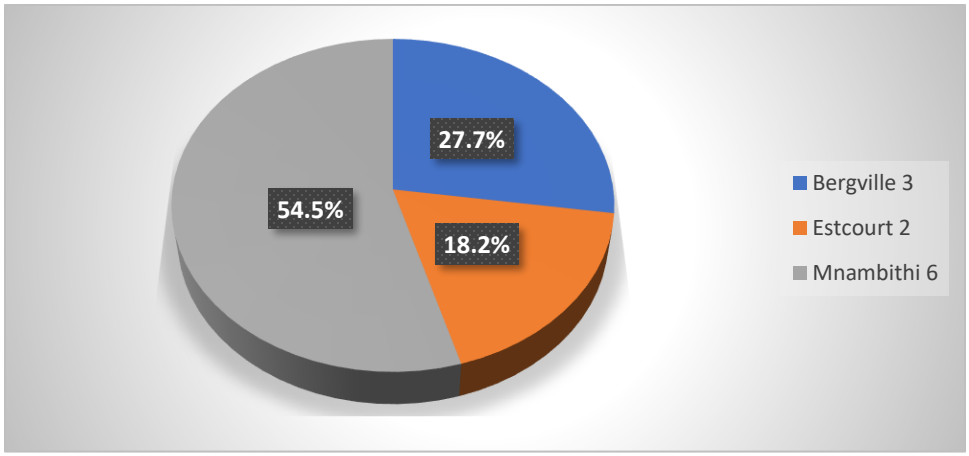

Figure 4.1: Circuit Management

N = 11

Q 2 Gender

In this question, respondents were asked to indicate their gender to understand better the respondents who participated in the study. Figure 4.2 below shows that out of eleven respondents, six (54.5%) were female, and five (45.5%) were male.

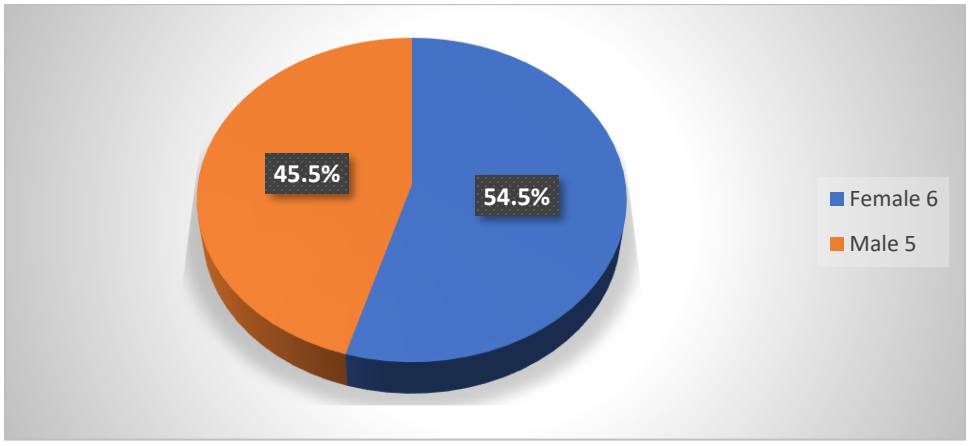

Figure 4.2: Gender of respondents

N = 11

Q 3 Age-range

Respondents were asked this question to indicate their age category during the time of the study. This question was asked to ensure the maturity of the respondents that helped the principals in the decision-making processes. Figure 4.3 shows that three (27.3%) of respondents were between 30 and 39 years old, while three (27.3%) were between 40 and 49, while five (45.4%) were 50 years and above.

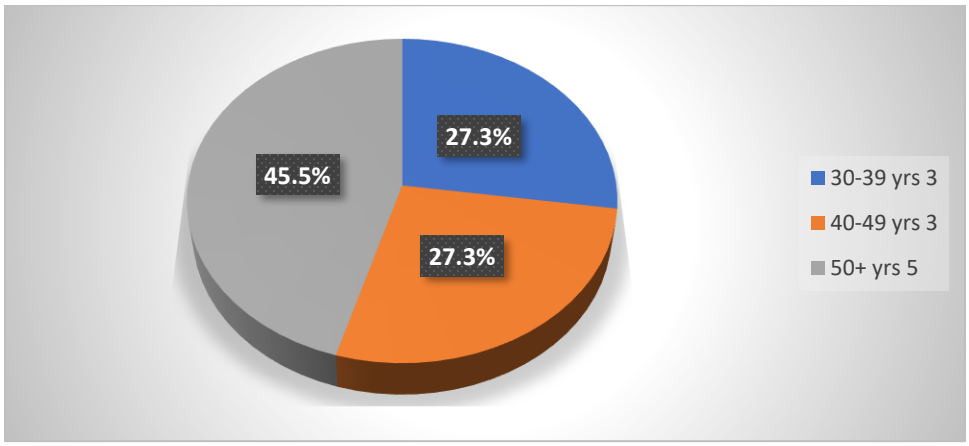

Figure 4.3: Age - range of respondents

N = 11

Q 4 Current Status – Position

This question was asked to ensure the respondents' current position in the SMTs. Ten (90.9%) out of eleven (100%) indicated they were permanent departmental heads in their schools, and one (9.1%) was acting in the position.

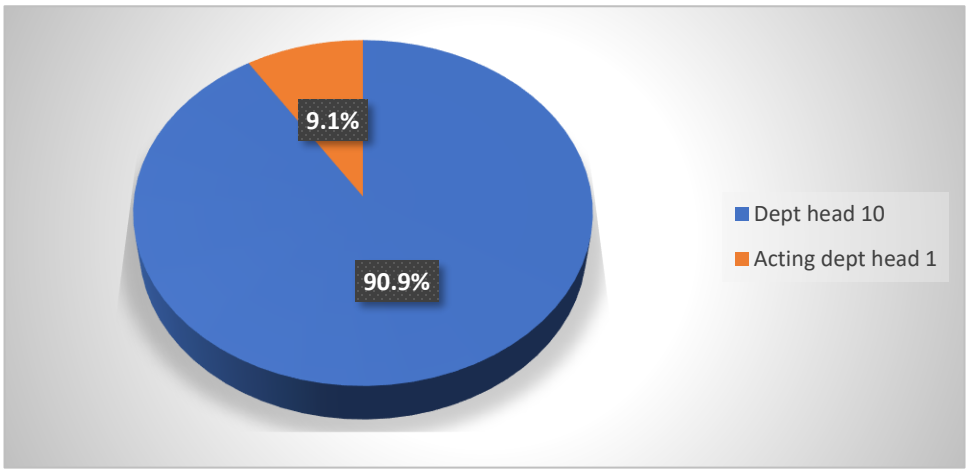

Figure 4.4: Current status

N = 11

Q 5 Period in this position

In this question, respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they had held their departmental heads' positions. This question was asked to determine their experience in their current positions. Figure 4.5 indicates that 27.2%of respondents were between zero and three years, 18.2% were between four to eight years, 18.2% were between seven to ten years and 36.4% were ten years and above.

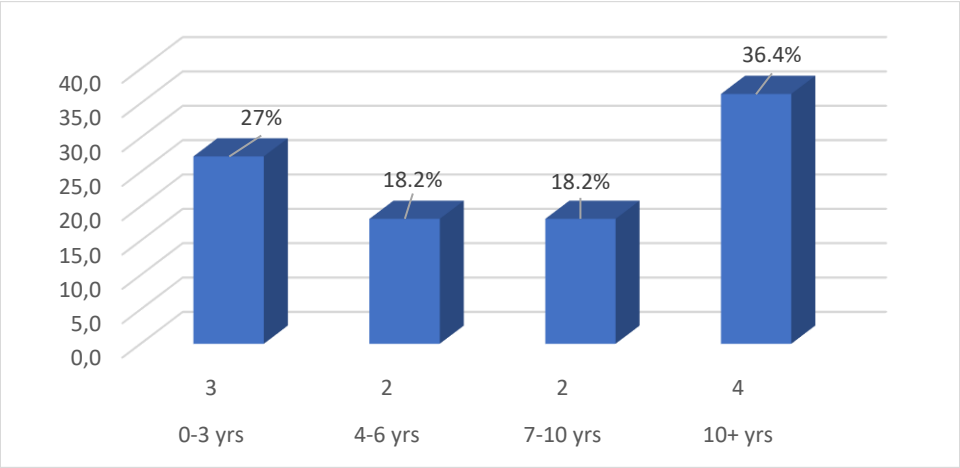

Figure 4.5: Period in this position

N = 11

Q 6 Teaching matric

All eleven (100%) respondents were teaching matric during the time of data collection. This question will help learners who among the SMTs contributed to matric poor performance from 2014 to 2018.

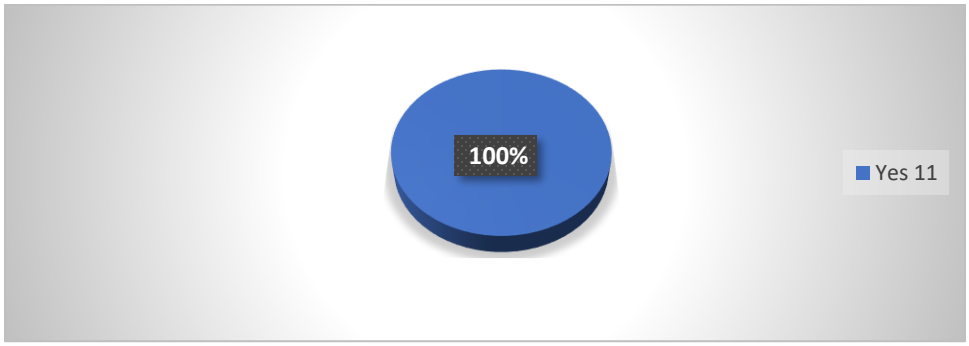

Figure 4.6: Illustrate educators teaching matric

N = 11

Q 7 Respondents were asked to indicate the subject (s) they taught in matric.

Table 4.11 indicates almost all eleven (100%) respondents were teaching gateway subjects in matric. Two respondents were teaching two subjects in Grade 12.

Table 4.11: If the response to Q6 is YES, indicate the subject(s)

Subjects	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Accounting	2	18.1%
Business Studies	1	9.1%
Business Studies and Economics	1	9.1%
Economics	2	18.1%
English first additional language	1	9.1%
Geography	1	9.1%
Life Orientation	1	9.1%
Mathematics	1	9.1%
Physical Science	1	9.1%
Total	**11**	**100%**

If your response to Q 6 is YES, please answer Q 8, Q 9 and Q 10.

Q 8 Is the above-stated subject(s) part of your specialization?

Respondents to this question were asked to indicate if the subject(s) indicated in Q7 were specialised/major subject(s). All eleven (100%) said yes, as shown in Figure 4.7.

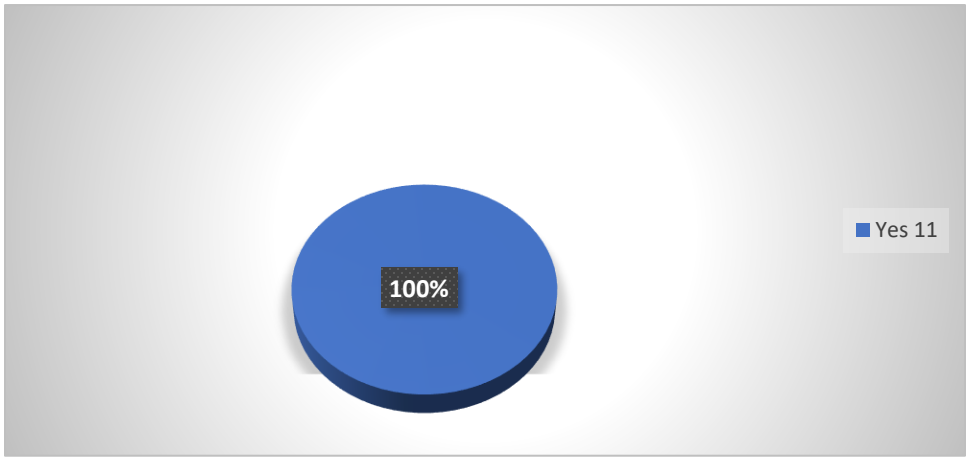

Figure 4.7: Subject of specialization

N = 11

Q 9 Period taught this subject(s) in Grade 12

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they have been teaching in matric. This question was asked to determine if respondents had enough experience in teaching matric. Figure 4.8 shows one (9.1%) respondent indicated zero to three years, while one (9.1%) indicated four to six, while five (45.5%) respondents indicated seven to ten years and four (36.4%) respondents had eleven years and more teaching Grade 12.

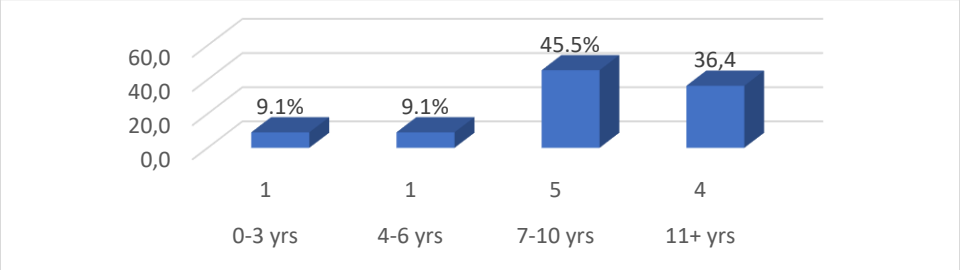

Figure 4.8: Period of teaching the subject in Grade 12

N = 11

Q 10 Years of teaching Grade 12 the subjects indicated on Q 7

In question 10, respondents were asked to indicate the number of years teaching their subject(s) specialisation in Grade 12. This question was purposefully requested to establish their experience teaching their major subjects in Grade 12. Figure 4.9 shows three (27.2%) respondents indicated zero to three years, two (18.2%) indicated four to six years, two (18.2%) indicated seven to ten years, and four (36.4%) showed eleven years and more.

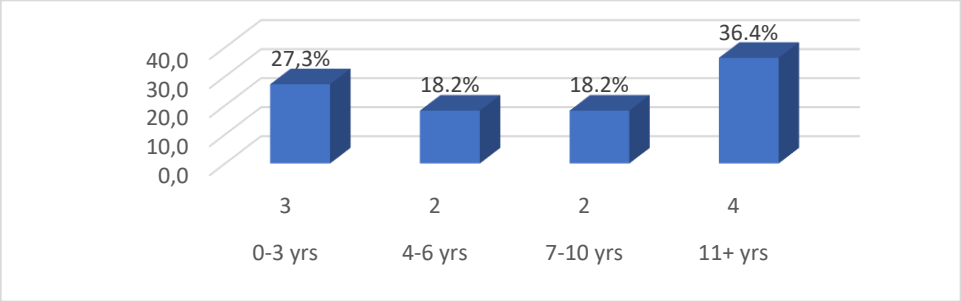

Figure 4.9: Years of teaching this subject

N = 11

4.3.3.2 SECTION B: INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR

Q 11 Information behaviour concerning the management of the school

In Question 11, respondents were asked to indicate their information behaviour concerning school matters. Multiple responses were indicated as shown in Table 4.12 below. The majority of respondents indicated checking and monitoring different school activities, including supporting and

managing the writing of examinations, including monitoring curriculum implementation, discipline, and respect, were their information behaviour regarding school matters.

Table 4.12: Information behaviour concerning the management of the school

N = 11

Information behaviour	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Monitoring educators' files	11	14.3	100%
Managing the writing of examinations	10	13	90.9%
Monitoring curriculum implementation	11	14.3	100%
Ensure effective teaching	11	14.3	100%
Encourage the regular usage of the school library	1	1.3	9.1%
Support, discipline and respect	11	14.3	100%
Checking written work on learners' exercise books	11	14.3	100%
Checking curriculum coverage	11	14.3	100%
Total	**77**	**100**	**700%**

Q 12 Major problems experienced regarding matric classes of 2014 to 2018.

Respondents were asked to indicate the major problems they experienced regarding matric classes from 2014 to 2018. All eleven (100%) respondents indicated the underperformance of Grade 12 as their serious problem from 2014 to 2018.

Q 13 Condition you experience the above situations you have ticked on Q 12?

Respondents were asked this question to determine the condition in which the problem took place. Table 4.13 shows the different responses from respondents as they were individuals with different opinions. The majority of the respondents indicated a learner-progressed policy and inadequate parental support.

Table 4.13 shows the conditions the participants experienced during the above situations

N = 11

Condition	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Learner's absenteeism	7	14%	63.6%
Learners late coming	7	14%	63.6%
Learners are not serious at all	8	16%	72.7%
Learners not submitting their tasks and homework	5	10%	45.5%
Lack of respect	4	8%	36.4%
Learners progressed policy	10	20%	90.9%
Inadequate support from the parents	9	18%	81.8%
Total	**50**	**100%**	**454.5%**

Any other – please specify

Faction fights, Community protest

4.3.3.3 SECTION C: INFORMATION CHANNELS

Q 14 Channels of information used by the SMT and educators to satisfy their information needs based on poor matric performance

In Question 14, respondents were asked to indicate the channels of information they used by teaching staff to meet their information needs with regard to matric performance. They indicated

different channels of information as shown in Table 4.14. All eleven (100%) respondents indicated textbooks, Annual Teaching Plans and study guides.

Table 4.14: Channels of information used by the SMT and educators

N = 11

Channels of information	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Textbooks	11	18%	100%
Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs)	11	18%	100%
Study guides	11	18%	100%
Books: non-fiction (factual)	2	3.3%	18.2%
Journals	2	3.3%	18.2%
Newspapers and magazines	3	4.9$%	27.3%
Smart phones	6	9.8%	54.5%
Internet	4	6.6%	36.4%
Dictionaries	8	13.1%	72.7%
Encyclopedias	3	4.9%	27.3%
Total	**50**	**100%**	**554.5%**

Any other – please specify

Previous question papers

Q 15 Forms of information delivery you prefer in Grade 12

Respondents were asked to indicate the forms of information delivery they preferred in Grade 12. Ten (33.3%) respondents indicated printed, and eight (26.7%) indicated oral. In comparison, five (16.7%) stated audio, while another five (16.7%) indicated audio-visual and two (6.7%) indicated online sources as their channels of information delivery.

Table 4.15: Forms of information delivery preferred in Grade 12

N = 11

Forms of information delivery	N	Percent	Percent of cases
Oral	8	26.7%	72.7%
Printed sources	10	33.3%	90.9%
Online sources	2	6.7%	18.2%
Audio sources	5	16.7%	45.5%
Audio-visual sources	5	16.7%	45.5%
Total	**30**	**100%**	**272%**

Q 16 Resources used to find the information you need

In this question, respondents were asked to indicate the resources they used to locate sources to respond to their information needs. Table 4.16 shows different book publishers indicated by respondents, of which Via Africa and Heinemann Publishers were mostly used.

Table 4.16: Resources used to locate information needs

N = 11

Resources	N	Percent	Percent of cases
Maskew Miller Longman	4	11.8	40%
Macmillan Education	4	11.8	40%
New Dawn Publishers	1	2.9	10%
Shutters and Shooter Publisher	5	14.7	50%
Via Africa	6	17.6	60%
eBook Publishers	1	2.9	10%
Oxford University Press	4	11.8	40%
New generation	3	8.8	30%
Heinemann Publishers	6	17.6	60%
Total	**34**	**100**	**340%**

Any other – please specify

All copy Publishers

New Era

Printed handouts

Q 17 Getting/accessing the sources of information used in the classroom

This question required respondents to indicate places where they accessed the sources of information they used in the classrooms. Table 4.17 shows cell phones as indicated by all (100%) respondents, followed by colleagues within the school and colleagues from other schools, indicated by eight (23.5%) respondents in comparison, three (8.8%) indicated storerooms within their schools, and two (5.9%) stated school libraries and municipal libraries respectively.

Table 4.17: Accessing the sources of information used in the classroom

N = 11

Access to information	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Storeroom within the school	3	8.8%	27.3%
School Library	2	5.9%	18.2%
Public/Municipality libraries	2	5.9%	18.2%
Cell phone	11	32.4%	100%
From your colleague	8	23.5%	72.7%
From colleagues from other schools	8	23.5%	72.7%
Total	**34**	**100%**	**309.1%**

Any other – please specify

Workshops, for example, JIT workshop

From the subject advisor

Q 18 Enforcing the use of libraries to get additional information.

In this question, respondents were asked if they enforced the use of libraries to get more information. Table 4.18 indicated that the majority of eight (72.7%) indicated No, while two (18.2%) responded Yes, and only one (9.1%) stated sometimes they were enforcing the use of libraries.

Table 4.18: Enforcing the use of libraries to get additional information

N = 11

Enforcing the use of library	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Yes	2	18.2%
No	8	72.7%
Sometimes	1	9,1%

4.3.3.4 SECTION D: INFORMATION NEEDS

Q 19 Format of sources preferred to satisfy information behaviour

This question was asked to check which format of sources they preferred to satisfy their information behaviour. Eleven (39.3%) respondents indicated printed, six (21.4%) indicated audio-visual, five (17.9%) indicated electronic, while three (10.7%) indicated online, and the other three (10.7%) indicated audio sources preferred to meet their information behaviour.

Table 4.19: Format of sources do you prefer to satisfy your information behaviour

N = 11

Format of sources	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Printed sources	11	39.3%	100%
Electronic sources	5	17.9%	45.5%
Online sources	3	10.7%	27.3%
Audio sources	3	10.7%	27.3%
Audio-visual sources	6	21.4%	54.5%
Total	**28**	**100%**	**254.5%**

Q20, Are you satisfied with finding information when searching for, using preferred sources?

In this question, respondents were asked to indicate if they were satisfied with finding the information using their preferred when searching for information. All eleven (100%) respondents indicated they were not always satisfied.

4.3.3.5 SECTION E: CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Q 21 Problems faced in locating the information to improve Grade 12 performance.

Respondents were asked to indicate problems they encountered when locating the information to improve Grade 12 performance. Various challenges were indicated by respondents when finding information. The majority of the respondents stated the unavailability of school libraries among other problems.

Table 4.20: Challenges faced in locating information

N = 11

Challenges	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Shortage of teaching staff	2	6.2%	20%
Shortage of textbooks	1	3.1%	10%
Shortage of teaching and learning aids	4	12.5%	40%
Unavailable of school library	8	25%	80%
Inadequate water and no electricity	5	15.6%	50%
Inadequate information resources	5	15.6%	50%
Poor teaching and learning environment	7	21.9%	70%
Total	**32**	**100%**	**320%**

Q 22 Challenges experienced when solving the matric performance problems

Respondents were asked to indicate challenges they encountered when solving the matric performance problem. Respondents indicated different challenges, as shown in Table 4.21, in

solving the matric problems, of which eight (27.6%) were parent support and seven (24.1%) were the most indicated.

Table 4.21: Challenges experienced when solving matric performance problem

N = 11

Challenges	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Inadequate support from the district	1	3.4%	10%
Parent's support	8	27.6%	80%
Learners' lack of cooperation and commitment	3	10.3%	30%
Learners' high rate of absenteeism	4	13.8%	40%
Tasks and homework not done	3	10.3%	30%
Learners lack reading skills (read for meaning and comprehension)	7	24.1%	70%
Use of substance abuse (drugs and alcohol)	3	10.3%	30%
Total	**29**	**100%**	**290%**

4.3.4 SGB – CHAIRPERSON

Data collected from School Governing Bodies of the six schools were presented in this section.

4.3.4.1 SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Demographic information in any study has a clear picture of the respondents regarding backgrounds, gender, age, positions and years in their positions.

Q 1 Circuit Management

Dependents were asked to indicate the circuit management in which they came from. This question was asked purposefully to ensure they were part of the community in which their schools were

located. Five (50%) indicated they came from Mnambithi, three (33.3 %) from Bergville and one (16.7%) came from Estcourt Circuit Management.

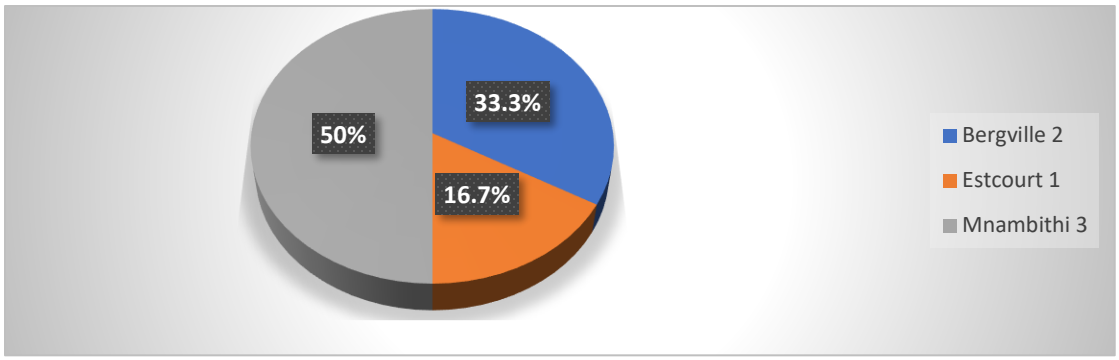

Figure 4.10: Circuit Management

N = 6

Q 2 Gender

In this question, respondents were asked to indicate their gender as the head of SGB committees. Figure 4.11 below shows that four (66.7%) stated that they were males, while two (33.3%) were female Chairpersons of the SGBs of the six schools

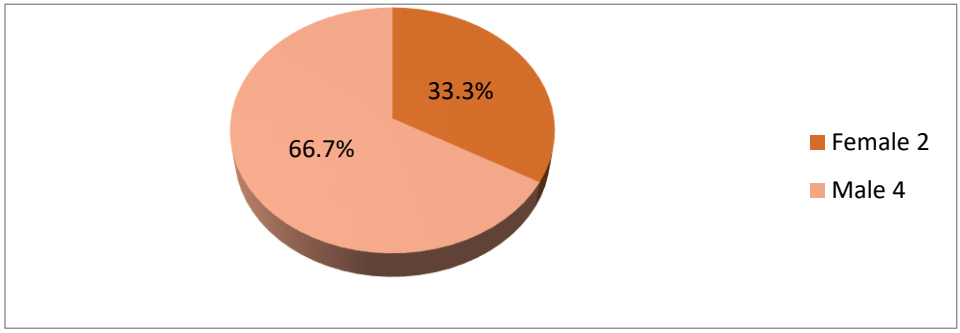

Figure 4.11: Gender of respondents

N = 6

Q 3 Age-range

Respondents were asked to indicate their age categories. The majority of four (66.7%) were between the ages 40 and 49 years old, as shown in Figure 4.12, while two (33.3%) respondents were 50 years and above.

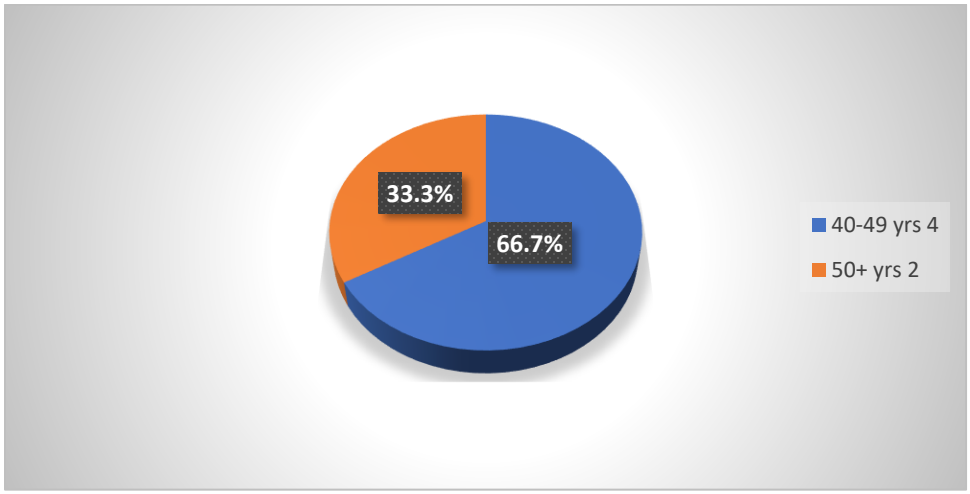

Figure 4.12: Age range of respondents

N = 6

Q 4 Current status or position

Respondents were asked to state their status in their schools. All six (100%) indicated that they were elected chairperson of the SGBs in their schools.

Q 5 Period in the position?

In this question, respondents were asked to indicate their period in their positions. Four (66.7%) out of six (100%) have three or lower years, while one (16.7%) has four to six years and one (16.7%) has seven to ten years as chairperson of the school governing bodies.

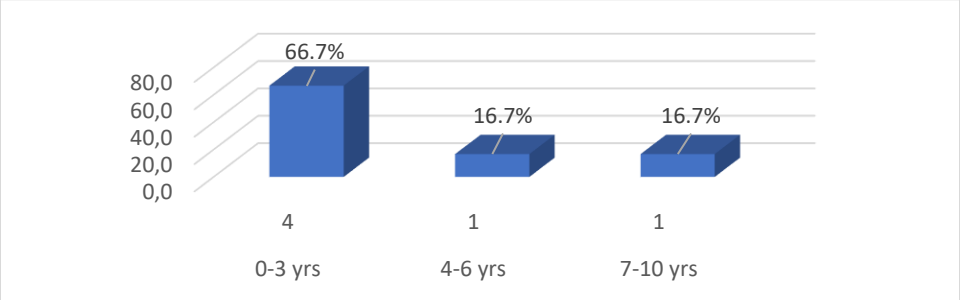

Figure 4.13: Period in the position

N = 6

4.3.4.2 SECTION B: INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR

Q 6 Major problems experienced or discovered by you concerning matric classes from 2014 to 2018.

Respondents were asked to indicate the major problems experienced regarding matric classes from 2014 to 2018. All six (100%) respondents indicated the underperformance of Grade 12 as their serious problem.

Q 7 Causes of the above response

In this question, respondents were asked to indicate the causes of underperformance of matric classes from 2014 to 2018. Three (50%) respondents said they were not sure about the problem. In comparison, two (33.3%) indicated that learners and one (16.7%) indicated that both educators and learners were the cause of the underperformance of matric in their schools.

Table 4.22: Causes

N = 6

Causes	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Learners	2	33.3%
Both educators and learners	1	16.7%
I am not sure	3	50%
Total	**6**	**100%**

Q 8 Conditions experienced that contributed to the above situations you have ticked on Question 6

Respondents were asked to indicate the conditions experienced that contributed to the underperformance of matric during these years. Two (33.3%) showed a shortage of educators, two (33.3%) indicated parents were not involved in learners' work and progress, one (16.7) stated that learner absenteeism and late arrivals, while one (16.7%) indicated learners progressed policy.

Table 4.23: Conditions experienced in the above situations

N = 6

Conditions	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Shortage of educators	2	33.3%	40%
Parents not involved in learners' work and progress	2	33.3%	40%
Learners' absenteeism and late coming	1	16.7%	20%
Learners progressed policy	1	16.7%	20%
Total	**6**	**100%**	**120%**

Any other – please specify: ***Poor performance of educators***

Q 9 School functionality reports and progress

Respondents were asked to indicate if they regularly received school functionality and progress reports for their schools. Out of six (100%) respondents, five (83.3%) said Yes, they were updated with all the school progress, while one (16.7%) said No, they were not updated with the school functionality reports.

Table 4.24: School functionality reports and progress

N = 6

Did you get school functionality reports and progress	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Yes	5	83.3%
No	1	16.7%
Total	**6**	**100%**

Q 10 Channels of information used by the SMT and educators to satisfy their information needs based on poor matric performance

In this question, respondents were asked to indicate the channels of information used by the SMTs of their schools. The majority of respondents indicated textbooks while others indicated ATPs were used to satisfy their information needs.

Table 4.25: channels of information

N = 6

Channels of information	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Textbooks	4	80%	80%
ATPs	1	20%	20%
Total	**5**	**100%**	**100%**

Q 11 Form of information delivery preferred in Grade 12

Respondents were asked to indicate the form of information delivery they preferred. Three (42.9%) respondents preferred oral communication, while four (57.1%) preferred Information Communication Technology (ICT).

Table 4.26: Forms of information

N = 6

Forms of information	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Oral	3	42.9%	50%
ICT	4	57.1%	66.7%
Total	**7**	**100%**	**116.7%**

Any other, please specify: ***Expertise***

4.3.4.4 SECTION C: INFORMATION NEEDS

Q 12 Most resources used in this school to increase Grade 12 performance

In this question, respondents were asked to indicate the most resources used in their schools to increase Grade 12 performance. The majority of respondents mostly indicated newspapers. Out of six (100%) responses, one (12.5%) respondent indicated non-fiction books, one (12.5%) stated newspapers and magazines, and one (12.5%) indicated dictionaries and encyclopedias.

Table 4.27: Most resources that can be used

N = 6

Resources	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Textbooks	5	62.5%	100%
Non-fiction/factual books	1	12.5%	20%
Newspapers and magazines	1	12.5%	20%
Dictionaries and encyclopedias	1	12.5%	20%
Total	**8**	**100%**	**160%**

Q 13. SMTs and educators' access to sources of information to be used in the classroom

Respondents were asked to indicate if their SMT and educators had access to the sources of information to be used in the classroom. They have multiple responses of which storeroom within the school was indicated by the majority of respondents, followed by information from colleagues of other schools. School libraries, public/municipality libraries and colleagues within their schools were indicated by only one respondent, respectively.

Table 4.28: SMTs and educators' access to sources of information

N = 6

SMTs and educators' access to information	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Storeroom within the school	5	50%	83.3%
School Library	1	10%	16.7%
Public/municipality libraries	1	10%	16.7%
From your colleagues	1	10%	16.7%
From colleagues from other schools	2	20%	33.3%
Total	**10**	**100%**	**166.7%**

4.3.4.5 SECTION D: CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Q 14 Problems encountered by SMTs when locating the information to improve Grade 12 performance

Respondents were asked to indicate problems encountered by SMTs when locating the information to improve Grade 12 performance. More than one response was indicated that involved infrastructure, shortage of educators, textbooks, and learners who were not diligent in doing their schoolwork as shown in Table 4.29.

Table 4.29: Problems encountered by SMTs when locating the information to improve Grade 12 performance

N = 6

Problems encountered by SMTs	**N**	**Percent**	**Percent of cases**
Shortage of teaching staff	2	18.2%	33.3%
Shortage of textbooks, teaching and learning aids	1	9.1%	16.7%
Lack of parent's support	1	9.1%	16.7%
Unavailable of school library	1	9.1%	16.7%
Inadequate water and no electricity	2	18.2%	33.3%
Learners not doing their tasks and homework	2	18.2%	33.3%
Department of Education's lack of support	2	18.2%	33.3%
Total	**11**	**100%**	**183.3%**

For any other, please specify: ***Long travelling distance to schools***

Q 15 Strategies that SMT members can use to overcome the challenges faced by Grade 12

This question required respondents to indicate strategies that SMT members can utilise to overcome challenges faced by Grade 12 learners. Two (25%) respondents indicated encouragement of parents to be supportive and be part of their learners' education. Four (50%) respondents, who were the

majority, indicated encouraging educators to do their work honestly and as expected, while two (25%) mentioned supporting and helping principals in decision-making processes.

Table 4.30: Strategies that can be used by SMT members to overcome the challenges faced by Grade 12

N = 6

SMT strategies	N	Percent	Percent of cases
Encourage parents to be supportive and be part of their children's education	2	25%	40%
Encourage educators to do their work honestly, effectively and as expected.	4	50%	80%
Support and help the principal in their decisions to improve learners' performance	2	25%	40%
Total	**8**	**100%**	**160%**

For any other, please specify: ***Teamwork***

Q 16 SMTs in encouraging the culture of reading additional resources can make a difference and improve learners' performance, especially Grade 12

In this question, respondents were asked to indicate if SMTs encouraged the culture of reading, as an additional resource that can improve learners' performance in Grade 12. Out of six (100%) respondents, four (66.7%) indicated that they agree, while one (16.7%) indicated that they are not sure if this will improve performance. One (16.7%) indicated that they decided not to respond to the question, due to unspecified reasons.

Table 4.31: SMT in encouraging the culture of reading additional resources can make a difference and improve learners' performance, especially in Grade 12.

N = 6

Encourage reading culture	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Agree	4	66.7%
Not sure	1	16.7%
No response	1	16.7%
Total	**6**	**100%**

4.4 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter presented the study's findings with a total of 29 completed and returned data collection instruments. Findings obtained from the Observation checklist completed by the researcher were presented. A semi-structured principals' interview schedule was conducted by the researcher. The researcher distributed semi-structured self-administered questionnaires to the heads of departments and chairpersons of the SGBs, waited for and collected the questionnaires afterwards. The whole process gave the researcher a 100% response rate. This survey was in six high schools and targeted SMTs ~~only~~. Findings were presented using a qualitative approach in the form of discussions. Other findings were presented using the quantitative approach in the form of figures and tables where numbers were involved in frequencies, bar graphs and pie charts. A mixed approach automatically emerged where both approaches were combined to quantify the findings. A discussion of all the findings will be conducted in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 focuses on the discussion of the interpretation of the results presented in Chapter 4. The study aimed to investigate the information behaviour of the School Management Teams in selected schools in uThukela District, KwaZulu Natal. This investigation was completed to contribute additional information to similar literature studies done previously. Related literature studies served as references to this study.

This study was social in nature, while a survey was incorporated because the data was purposefully collected in a small sample. The theoretical framework (Wilson's 1999 Information Behaviour model) in Chapter 1 was used to clarify and highlight the SMT's information-seeking behaviour in these six schools.

This study was aimed to underpin the following questions:

1. What were the critical incidents experienced by the SMTs of the six selected high schools in uThukela District, and under what circumstances did they occur?
2. What channels of information were used by SMTs to satisfy their information needs?
3. How were the information needs met?
4. What challenges were encountered by the SMTs when solving the problem?
5. What are the strategies that can be used to overcome such challenges?

The discussion of findings was based on the research questions and research objectives. These findings were based on a sample of 23 respondents and six observation checklists. All the questionnaires were manually distributed to and collected from 23 respondents plus six observation checklists, which means a 100% collection level was achieved. The response rate of this study was an excellent (100%), which allowed the researcher to make valid and reliable research generalisations about the 72 population of the study.

The findings presented in Chapter 4 were based on the four data collection instruments used by the researcher, namely, the Observation Checklist, Semi-structured principals' interview schedules, Semi-structured questionnaires for departmental heads and chairperson of the SGBs.

5.2 OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

The researcher carried out six site visits on different days before the school bell rang in the mornings. The aim was to observe morning school activities before and immediately after the school bell rang. The researcher performed this activity by completing the observation checklist in each school. Upon visiting all six schools, the researcher observed the schools' cleanliness, safety, security, punctuality, and respect. (Refer to Appendix 1)

5.2.1 State of cleanliness/tidiness of the school

When visiting School, A, C, and F**,** the researcher observed that there were no proper playgrounds. Neither the premises nor the playgrounds were user-friendly for learners to play different games.

Only three (50%) schools had good grounds and premises. Two (33.3%) had satisfactory grounds, and one (16.7%) had grounds and premises which were in poor condition. The researcher believes that only a physically healthy body can produce or sustain a healthy mind for learners to acquire and understand what they have been taught in the classrooms. This is supported by one of Maslow's hierarchy of Physiological needs namely, basic need (health), which says if the basic needs of a person are satisfied, then that person can perform better (McLeod, 2023)

Two (33.3%) of the schools had good, proper classrooms and building infrastructure. Four (66.7%) had satisfactory building infrastructure that needed to be refurbished.

5.2.2 Safety and security

Three schools (50%) had security guards at the gate and three (50%) had no security guards at the time when the researcher visited the schools for observation.

Two schools had gates and entering registers, which the researcher signed before entering the schools. Two had no registers, visitors just enter and leave the school as they wish. Two have no

entering registers. There was nothing at their gates. This means some of the schools have no records of people visiting them.

Five of the six schools were properly fenced, and one had contractors who were busy fencing the school, starting at the gate. This is also supported by Maslow's hierarchy of safety and security needs quoted by updated McLeod 2023, which need to be satisfied for any normal human being to do better.

All six schools have one gate for both vehicles and pedestrians.

5.2.3 Punctuality

According to Global Indian International School (2023), punctuality or being on time is a skill and a habit that every human being needs to learn and practice. Being punctual teaches learners the value of time and assists them in managing time effectively and achieving their goals in life.

During the researcher's visit, in four schools (66.7%) punctuality was good on the educators' side. This indicated that educators did take time seriously. One (16.7%) school had a number of educators who arrived late, which is not acceptable in any workplace. One school (16.7%) had a problem with educators using one vehicle, and a tyre puncher delayed them. None of the non-teaching staff came late in all the six schools visited. Their punctuality was 100%, and they set a good example for their learners.

Learners in four schools, namely, schools B, D, E and F, came before the bell rang, which was good behaviour for the school to function well. School A had a few learners who arrived late, while School C had a group of learners who arrived after the bell rang due to a tyre puncher problem experienced by a vehicle utilised to transport pupils to school.

The researcher observed in three schools that all educators were in their respective classes during the first teaching period, which was an indication that they had honoured their teaching and learning time. This is why the DOE continuously emphasises the importance of honouring educators' contact time with learners. In three schools, most classrooms were noisy and chaotic, which indicated that educators were not present in the classroom and did not honour their first period of teaching and

learning with learners. If this behaviour continues within these schools, it might negatively impact the learners' academic performance.

5.2.4 Respect

According to Human Resource News (2018) respect is an activity that comes in many forms, and they're all fairly easy to show once you've committed. The researcher observed that educators greeted each other informally in three schools. This behaviour demonstrated by some educators of the three schools shows that their human relations were good within the workplace. In the other three schools, some educators just passed without saying a word to each other. Many reasons have led to this type of behaviour, such as bad human relations, to mention a few.

Most of the learners of the six schools greeted the educators they met in the school, around the school premises and other elderly people they met within their schools, including the researcher on her way to the office of the principals (Human Resources News, 2018).

Human Resource News (2018) further said that showing respect is not only for supervisors, but everybody in a workplace should demonstrate respect for others. This human behaviour shows that the SMTs of these schools taught, emphasised and exercised respect for their learners. This indicates that learners have good human relations, which contributes a lot to the smooth functioning of the schools.

The majority of learners informally and joyfully greeted and hugged each other in four schools, and few learners greeted each other informally in two schools. This might be caused by learners encountering learners from different grades at the gates.

The researcher observed no movement of learners in one of the schools. Almost all learners were in their classrooms during the first teaching and learning period. In one school, a few learners moved from their classrooms to other classrooms and from their classrooms to the staffroom. Learners moved from their classrooms with their educators to other classrooms due to internal arrangements between educators regarding their subjects.

5.3 INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The researcher conducted a face-to-face interview with the principals of participating schools. The interview questions were divided into six sections (A – F). The results will follow that order and pattern.

5.3.1 Section A: Demographic data of the respondents

In Question one to six, demographic information, such as their circuit management, gender, age range, current position,-years in the position in the school and other schools, was asked. It is very important for a researcher to ask these questions at the beginning of the data collection process so that the researcher has a clear understanding of the background of each respondent that might have contributed to the research problem.

5.3.1.1 Circuit Management of the school

There are three circuit management systems in the uThukela District: Bergville, Estcourt and Mnambithi. Table 4.5, (Chapter Four), respondents of schools A and B said that their schools were under Bergville, respondent of school C said that his school was under Estcourt. Respondents of schools D, E and F noted that their schools were under Mnambithi, the biggest circuit management within the district, with many schools compared to the other two. This indicates that although the study targeted the six purposefully selected schools, random sampling automatically applied because schools in all three circuit managements were represented.

5.3.1.2 Gender of respondents

Based on the findings in Table 4.6 (Chapter Four), five (83.3%) respondents were males and one (16.7%) was a female. There was gender inequality displayed by the findings represented in the previous chapter because there were more male respondents than females. This means that gender equality as a basic human right is being violated by gender-based discrimination. (Akala, 2019) argued that women are still not fairly and fully represented in higher education in Kenya and South Africa, regardless of changes in law and policy over the years. This discrimination in terms of gender inequality is automatically displayed in the six participating schools (Akala, 2019).

5.3.1.3 Age-range

Table 4.7 (Chapter Four) shows that there were no respondents (0%) within the age range of 20-29. One (16.7%) respondent was aged between 30 and 39. Half of the respondents (50%) were between 40 and 49, and two (33.3%) were above 50. Results show that there were few young educators in senior positions, many in the middle and few older educators with experience in top management. This is an indication that the majority of older people have existed within the system based on their age or might have exhausted minds to think critically and come up with new and constructive ideas to develop their schools.

5.3.1.4 Principal or Acting Principal

All respondents (100%) of the six schools were full-time or permanent principals**.** This shows that they have the power to make precise decisions for their schools. They are the ones who are accountable for everything good or bad, which occurs at their schools. Unfortunately, all six schools have no deputy principals to help and work hand in hand with the principals. Hence, principals relied on the departmental heads. This means that they carried out all the duties and responsibilities of schools assigned to them, including accounting to parents and DBE (Govender, 2018).

5.3.1.5 Years in this position

Findings in Table 4.9 (Chapter Four) show that two (33.3%) respondents had less than three years as principals, two (33.3%) had 4 to 6 years as principals, one (16.7%) had between 5 to 10 years as a principal and one (16.7%) had more than ten years as a principal at schools in general. This shows that there were a few respondents with many years of experience as principals. Occupying a senior position without experience might have challenges that may affect managing the schools and making decisions and, which could negatively impact on learners' performance.

5.3.1.6 Years as principals in the current school

As seen in Table 4.10 (Chapter Four), three (50%) of the respondents have less than three years, two (33.3%) have 4 to 6 years in the current schools, and one (16.7%) have ten or more years in the current school. This clearly shows that 5 (83.3%) of 6 (100%) respondents were new in their schools. This indicates that the majority of the respondents were not the principals of their schools

from 2014 to 2018 when poor matric performance occurred. They might have been employed at other schools as deputy principals or as departmental heads at these schools or other schools. Thus, the metric's poor performance in these schools in the past years happened when most respondents were not in-management positions.

5.3.2 SECTION B: RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

Schools are for the community, and communities are schools because learners come from the community, which is part of the schools. Hence, there is only one school with learners. Therefore, it is very important for the schools to work hand in hand and have a good relationship with the community.

5.3.2.1 Respondents' relations with the community

Respondents of all six schools emphasised that they had good relations with their communities. In addition, respondents of Schools A and E highlighted that their communities requested their schools to hold community meetings and other gatherings. Respondents of Schools B, C, D and F said that the community mainly utilised their schools for different functions and celebrations such as weddings, community meetings and church services. Hence, schools are for the community.

5.3.2.2 Condition of the school after being used by the community

Five (83.3%) respondents stated that they found their schools in a good state. The community ensured that they left the school premises clean. Only one (16.6%) respondent of school D said that they mostly found things like door handles broken and the school premises dirty with papers all over the schoolyard. The behaviour demonstrated by the community of School D shows that they did not take ownership of the school.

5.3.2.3 Human relations with all members of the SGB

According to Pakade and Chilenge-Butao (2021), "School Governing Bodies are the nerve centres of schools in South Africa". In an SGB committee, the parent component represents all the parents of the learners in that particular school. Thus, parents are a community with which all the SGBs have good relations. All respondents (100%) said SGB members were supportive and cooperative.

The respondents highlighted that they worked harmoniously with all members so far as they were newly elected in their positions, respectively.

According to the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996, all SGB members must serve the school for three years and be changed after that using an election process (SASA 1996).

5.3.3 SECTION C: INFORMATION NEEDS AND RELATIONS WITH SMT

The six selected underperforming schools for five consecutive years (2014 to 2018) raised a concern that led the researcher to investigate the SMTs of these schools to identify the causes for concern. This implied that the SMTs did not have enough state of knowledge, which contributed to poor performance in matric.

According to PPN policy under The Employment of Educators Act of 1998, which determines the number of educators allocated to each school. (So far, the ratio is 1:35, meaning one educator against 35 learners (Septon,1998). The researcher found out, during interviews with the principals that all six schools currently have no deputy principals because of their lower learners' enrolment, which does not qualify their schools to have deputy principals' posts.

5.3.3.1 Roles of the SMT

Based on the responses of school A to F respondents, all SMTs carried out their duties as expected. They managed the whole school, checked and monitored educators' work, and monitored the implementation of different policies, see Question 10 (Chapter Four). It is the principal's duty to ensure adequate departmental monitoring and involvement in the classrooms to facilitate other teaching methods and strategies being used in teaching and learning Mobegi (2010). All the respondents were satisfied with the roles played by their SMTs as part of school management. But nothing was said about implementing different strategies within the school that could solve the problem of poor matric performance.

5.3.3.2 SMTs' turnaround strategies

School A respondent said that they had no fixed turnaround strategy. The school was subject to change at any given time, depending on the situation at that time. According to researchers' knowledge and in a school situation, turnaround is done at the beginning of the year to rectify all

the mistakes and gaps identified in the previous year to improve results. Seemingly, school A ended up having many Improvement Plans (IP), which did not improve results as the underperforming pattern existed for over five years.

School E respondent said that they have a short-term turnaround strategy. Each term had its strategy where they all focus. Having more than one IP indicates that the respondent was not sure which plan was suitable to solve the school's biggest problem faced by the school and improve matric performance.

School B, C, D and F highlighted that their turn around strategies were based on discipline, curriculum coverage, monitoring and learners' written work. Based on the responses highlighted by the six responses, no respondents mentioned the high rate of learners using social ills.

5.3.3.3 Satisfaction with the compliance and performance of the SMT

Respondents of the six schools were happy to say that their SMT members demonstrated high compliance, commitment and performance rate. Their roles and responsibilities as part of management were shared equally and carried out perfectly. This shows that all SMT members displayed active and high information processing and use.

5.3.3.4 Satisfaction of carrying out of SMTs' duties

Responses of the six respondents indicated that they were more than satisfied with how their SMTs handled and carried out their duties. Some of their duties were to check educators' files and learners' exercise books to ensure that ATPs were followed accordingly. All respondents were also satisfied that their SMTs ensured that effective teaching and learning always took place in all classrooms.

5.3.3.5 Channels of communication used by SMTs to satisfy their information needs in response to matric performance

All respondents said they adhered to effective teaching in the mornings, afternoons, Saturdays and holidays. In addition, they ensured that more information and resources were available and accessible to both educators and learners. Their educators attended all workshops or trainings organised and conducted by the district officials. School A and E respondents indicated they used Internet Parel 24 to download previous question papers for revision and other documents. Based on

the responses of the respondents. Having done everything expected of them, the issues persist, without solutions.

5.3.3.6 How did they conduct themselves as management teams?

Respondents of the six schools emphasized that their management teams presented themselves very well in front of their learners. Punctuality, and honouring of teaching periods were always their priority They said that their SMTs were not absent without valid reasons. Effective teaching and assessment were done according to the expectations of DOE.

5.3.3.7 Implementation of Reading Circular 51 of 2020-DAAR

All six respondents said without hesitation that they did not implement the circular because of the amount of time it takes to facilitate each subject, notional time. This circular emphasised that all schools must have two hours and a half specifically for reading in each class every week. This reading time can be separated into 5x30 minutes per grade, per week. Referring to (5.3.3.1 of Chapter Four), respondents said their SMT implemented all departmental policies as expected. The reading circular and reading strategies were part of the departmental circulars that need to be strictly enforced like other circulars. Since reading has no formal assessment, the top management of the six schools decided to ignore this circular by not implementing it in their school.

5.3.3.8 Role of the school library in assisting matric.

According to the researcher's knowledge and understanding, a library is a place or a room with resources to read for enjoyment, get information, and research certain topics. In a school situation, a school library is a building or a classroom with resources for learners to read for enjoyment, for research and to get additional information on different subjects. Accordingly, a school library supports the curriculum.

Out of six schools, only one (16.7%) school has a library with old, outdated library books and many textbooks. Five (83.3%) schools have no libraries. School A respondent was a language educator. He clearly understood the importance of using a library to support the curriculum and the importance of reading. Still, he made an excuse of honouring notional time that does not allow the

school to have a reading-period. As such, the school library was not functional and was being used as the staff room.

5.3.4 SECTION D: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE IN RELATION WITH EDUCATORS

Each SMT must maintain good relations with teaching staff so that effective teaching and learning occur in a non-threatening and conducive environment.

5.3.4.1 How do you relate with all educators in general

Maintaining good relations is very important in the school sector. Educators are the ones who contribute to the smooth functioning of the school and produce good results. Respondents of the six schools indicated that they have good relations with almost all educators. School A respondent mentioned that his educators were committed to their teaching and learning. Sometimes, he had a one-on-one engagement with a culprit when there was a need. School D respondent highlighted that some of their educators lack respect, and managing such behaviour is difficult because they were extra-unionised. They put their democratic rights first in everything they do, at the expense of learners.

5.3.4.2 Are you satisfied with the competence of educators teaching matric?

Respondents of schools A, B, D, E and F highlighted that they were strict in checking those educators teaching matric were qualified and they were teaching their specialised subjects. They further said they were punctual and adhered to their teaching periods. School C respondent noted that he had one educator who was teaching the unspecialised subject due to a shortage of educators, but he had been teaching the subject for an extended period. School C seemed to have allowed an unspecialised educator to teach in Grade 12, which might contribute to the problem faced by the school.

5.3.4.3 How is governance or management concerning the school?

All six respondents said that it was not easy to manage all the duties and activities of their schools since there were no deputy principals. They tried their level best to balance everything with the help from the departmental heads. They all highlighted that they managed and checked departmental heads' files and work, which was supposed to be done by the deputy principals as part of their duties

and responsibilities. They do their best to manage all the duties and responsibilities, as well as smooth functioning of the school. They all ensured that the DOE policies were implemented accordingly. According to Post Provisioning Norms (1998), which have not been revised yet, schools with 500 learners enrolled must have a deputy principal. These six schools have learners below 500, hence their schools have no deputy principal posts (Sephton, 1998).

5.3.5 SECTION E: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Every workplace has its own challenges, and every challenge has its own solution. This study was aimed at unpacking challenges that caused the six schools to underperform from 2014 to 2018, as well as to suggest some solutions.

5.3.5.1 Challenges encountered when trying to increase matric performance

Respondents of the six schools mentioned that they had many challenges since they managed ~~to~~ quintile one schools in deep rural areas.

They all said that Grade 12 learners did not do justice when doing their schoolwork. They did not submit their tasks on time, and some did not do their homework. There was a shortage of teaching staff which led to one educator teaching more than three subjects and more grades. Some educators found themselves teaching both in the FET and GET phases. They all emphasised that their learners lacked a culture of learning and did not get adequate support from their parents. A lack of resources, unavailability of electricity, no study monitoring, long distance walking by learners to and from school and poor primary school background. Respondents emphasised that their schools have no laboratories for practical work or experiments, and no teaching aids to clarify the content, which were the biggest challenges in their schools.

5.3.5.2 Solutions to overcome school challenges

It is a fact that some challenges have immediate solutions, and others might take months and years to solve. Respondents of these schools mentioned that they had to install and use pre-paid electricity to solve the electricity problem. Physical Sciences and Life Sciences educators must have science laboratories and kits for experiments. Respondents said that the problem would be solved if the PPN

appointed local educators who would monitor studies after school hours. Respondents mentioned that the school must have a good relationship with the neighbouring schools for assistance.

5.4 DEPARTMENTAL HEADS

The study has departmental heads as the majority of the respondents whose responses played an important role in determining the cause of underperformance in the six schools.

5.4.1 SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

This part of the study discusses the profile of the respondents of each school concerning their demographic features, which were circuit management, gender, age range, current status or position, period in the position, teaching matric, subject specialisation, period of teaching the subject in Grade 12 and years of teaching that subject(s) in Grade 12. Respondents who participated in a semi-structured, self-administered questionnaire made a total of 11.

5.4.1.1 Circuit Management

Based on the findings presented in Figure 4.1 (Chapter Four), there were three (27.3%) respondents at Bergville, two (18.2%) at Estcourt and six (54.5%) at Mnambithi. This indicates more respondents who were departmental heads at Mnambithi Circuit Management compared to the other two circuit managements. Mnambithi was followed by Bergville, as well as Estcourt circuit management, with fewer respondents.

5.4.1.2 Gender

Out of six schools, findings presented in Figure 4.2 (Chapter Four) indicate that there were six (54.5%) females and five (45.5%) male respondents. This shows that there were more females and males who answered and completed the questionnaire. Thus, there are more females in the middle and lower positions than males. Most males occupied higher positions such as principals and deputy principals.

5.4.1.3 Age-range

Figure 4.3 (Chapter Four) indicated that there were three (27.3%) respondents with an age range of between 30 and 39 years, three (27.3%) between 40 - 49 years and five (45.5%) with 50 years and

above. This clearly indicated that most departmental heads are older educators, above the age of 50. The number of middle-aged and younger educators in six selected schools was more or less the same.

5.4.1.4 Current status/position

Out of 11 (100%) respondents, 10 (90.9%) respondents were in permanent positions as departmental heads of their schools and only one (9.1%) respondent was an acting departmental head. This was shown by the findings presented in Figure 4.4, (Chapter Four). Thus, the majority of the respondents have full responsibility for leading their departments and making precise decisions in their schools. They have powers vested in them based on their roles and responsibilities to be accountable and make constructive decisions that can allow educators in their departments to use various strategies in order to improve their matric results.

5.4.1.5 How long have you been in this position?

Referring to Figure 4.5 (Chapter Four), there were three (27.3%) respondents with 0 – 3 years, two (18.2%) with 4 – 6 years, two (18.3%) and four (36.4%) with 7 – 10 years as departmental heads. This shows that the majority of respondents from six schools have occupied departmental head positions for 10 years or more. This is followed by respondents who had fewer or fewer service in their position and lastly, there were fewer respondents with ten years of service as department heads.

5.4.1.6 Do you teach matric?

One of the requirements of a departmental head position/post in a secondary school is to be able to teach at least one subject in Grade 12. Figure 4.6 (Chapter Four) showed that all 11 (100%) respondents were teaching different subjects in Grade 12. This implies that all the departmental heads of six schools contributed to poor matric performance.

5.4.1.7 If 'Yes' indicates the subject(s)

Based on the findings of the six selected schools presented in Table 4.11, (Chapter Four), there were two (18.2%) respondents teaching Accounting, one (9.1%) teaching Business Studies, one (9.1%) teaching both Business Studies and Economics, two (18.2%) teaching Economics, one (9.1%) teaching English First Additional Language (FAL), one (9.1%) teaching Geography, one (9.1%)

Life Orientation, one (9.1%) teaching Mathematics and one (9.1%) teaching Physical Sciences. These statistics and responses show that all 11 departmental heads taught critical subjects in Grade 12 at different schools, greatly impacting poor matric performance. These were learners' chosen subjects based on their future careers and must be passed with 50% and above, including two languages. Since these schools underperformed, it means their Grade 12 learners failed these subjects, which lowered the overall pass percentage. Hence, they were previously labelled as T60 schools and are currently known as T75 schools.

5.4.1.8 Is the stated subject (s) part of your specialisation?

Figure 4.7, (Chapter Four) clearly indicates that all respondents were teaching their subjects of specialisation in Grade 12 except one respondent who mentioned that because of a shortage of educators, there was an educator who taught a subject that did not specialise in but using the experience of teaching at FET phase.

5.4.1.9 How long have you taught this subject(s) in Grade 12?

Figure 4.8 (Chapter Four) shows that one (9.1%) respondent taught a subject in Grade 12 for three years. One (9.1%) has 4 to 6 years of teaching a subject in Grade 12. Five (45.5%) respondents have 7 to 10 years of experience and four (36.4%) taught their specialised subjects for more than 11 years. This shows that only two respondents (18.2%) had less experience teaching their specialised subjects in Grade 12. Almost five (45.5%) respondents have adequate (7 to 10) years of experience in teaching their subjects. Four respondents had more than enough experience teaching their subjects in Grade 12. Respondents who had 7 to 11 years of experience and above had the necessary knowledge, and experience in teaching their subjects in Grade 12.

5.4.1.10 How long have you taught Grade 12 the subject(s) indicated in Q 7 in this school?

Findings presented in Figure 4.9, (Chapter Four) indicate that three (27.3%) respondents have 0 to 3 years, another three (27.3%) have 4 to 6 years, two (18.2%) have 7 to 10 years and four (36.4%) have 11 years and above in their schools teaching their specialised subjects in Grade12. When the researcher thoroughly analysed the findings, she discovered that more than three respondents were not part of Grade 12 during the poor performance from 2014 to 2018. Some may have been post-level one educators in this school or other schools, and some may have been departmental heads in

other schools. Six respondents are likely to have contributed to poor matric performance from 2014 to 2018 because they were teaching matric during this period.

5.4.2 SECTION B: INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR

In this section, the departmental heads uncovered their information behaviour concerning managing their schools, and their information channels used based on poor matric performance. The major problems of these schools unfolded, as well as the conditions they were experiencing when the major problem occurred.

The underperforming pattern of matric learners of the six high schools for five consecutive years motivated the researcher to investigate the causes of this pattern, (see Chapter One, 1.4).

5.4.2.1 Information behaviour concerning managing the schools

Clarke (2007: 222) argued that learners' performance cannot be separated from well-managed schools, as well as having systems in place to compute and evaluate learners' outcomes.

Table 4.12 (Chapter Four) shows the findings based on the information behaviour concerning school management. All 11 respondents highlighted that they managed their schools very well by monitoring educators' files and curriculum implementation. They all said that they ensured effective teaching, as well as exercised discipline and respect within their schools. In addition, they checked written work on learners' exercise books and the curriculum coverage.

5.4.2.2 What was the major problem(s) experienced or discovered concerning matric classes of 2014 to 2018?

Schools that were managed effectively usually produced high academic achievements for more than two consecutive years Clarke (2007). Six selected schools lacked that because they were underperforming for five successive years. This indicates that SMTs of these schools have a loophole in managing their schools.

All (100%) respondents knew the major problems faced by their schools. They all said that underperforming learners were their schools' major problem. They further highlighted challenges

faced by departmental heads in their schools, which were minor compared to the learners' performance.

5.4.2.3 Under what conditions do you experience the situations mentioned in Q12?

Findings in Table 4.14 (Chapter Four) show that not all the respondents answered this question and sub-questions. This indicates that they lack information to solve the problems they experienced in their schools. The majority of respondents highlighted that they experienced underperforming learners because of their absenteeism from schools and late arrivals in the morning. They also said that their learners were not serious about schoolwork. Very few respondents said they did not submit their tasks and homework. Learners progressed policy allows learners to proceed to the next grade if they have repeated a grade in a phase. The Promotion and Progression Policy states that learners cannot spend more than four years in one phase. Above all this, the majority of respondents are concerned about inadequate support from parents. The triangular cooperation (educator-parent-learner) relation does not exist in these schools. They highlighted that there were a lot of faction fights and community protests.

5.4.3. SECTION C: INFORMATION CHANNELS

There are many sources of information and information channels where a person who is thirsty or hungry for information can access it to satisfy their behaviour and needs. What is important is that a person admits and is aware that information is needed, and information channels need to be used.

5.4.3.1 Channels of information used by the SMT and educators to satisfy their information needs based on poor matric performance.

All eleven respondents (see Chapter Four, Table 4.15) agreed that their information channels were textbooks, ATPs and study guides. This means they were using these sources to satisfy their information needs because DBE prescribed them. Two out of 11 respondents agreed on using books like non-fiction (factual) and journals. Three respondents preferred encyclopedias, magazines and newspapers. An average number of respondents preferred to use the Internet and smartphones. Eight of them still believed that dictionaries could also be used to satisfy their information needs. The question is how can all these sources satisfy their information needs concerning poor matric performance? In addition, they relied on previous question papers to satisfy their information needs.

Clearly, their channels of information did not solve the problems they had over a number of years. This tells us that if these six schools keep relying only on these sources, poor matric performance will remain in their schools for years.

5.4.3.2 Forms of information delivery preferred by Grade 12

In Table 4.16 (Chapter Four), findings show that the majority of respondents delivered information using oral and printed sources, which were mostly textbooks. Five of the 11 respondents delivered their information using audio and audio-visual sources. Only two respondents preferred using online sources. They highlighted they preferred these sources and Grade 12 learners. The challenge highlighted was the unavailability of gadgets and connectivity because their schools were located in deep rural areas. Load shedding in these years greatly contributes to poor teaching and learning, negatively impacting learners' performance.

5.4.3.3 Resources used to find information

See Table 4.17 (Chapter Four); not all respondents answered this question and its sub-question 1. Four respondents used Maskew Miller Longman, McMillan Education and Oxford University Press. Via Africa and Heinemann Publishers were used by six respondents for information searching. Four respondents used Shutters and Shooters Publishers. Three respondents used New Generation. Only one out of 11 used New Dawn publishers and eBooks. In addition, some respondents used all copy Publishers, New Era and printed hand-outs. Among the respondents' answers, the majority of schools used printed copies of DBE-prescribed textbooks to find information. They had done that for years but had no success satisfying their information behaviour based on improving matric results in six schools.

5.4.3.4 Accessing the sources of information used in the classrooms

Table 4.18, (Chapter Four) reflects the findings from all 11 respondents about accessing information. All 11 respondents accessed their information using cell phones which is good because we live in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4^{th} IR) era, where ICT gadgets are of vital importance. Eight of them relied on their colleagues within their schools and neighbouring schools to get the information. Two respondents stated that they used school and public/municipal libraries to access the information. One of the two respondents was not truthful because only one out of six schools

had a school library with old and outdated library material, see Table 4.12 (Chapter Four) and the response of principal's interviews Q17 (Chapter Four). Hence, there is no way they can access information from the school library. They may both access information from municipal libraries after school or during weekends and holidays because there were none of these facilities in the vicinity of their schools. Three respondents got information from the school storeroom. In addition, information shows that these schools trusted their workshops and subject advisors to get information to be used in their classrooms for teaching and learning. This indicates that all the schools relied on second-hand information to be used in their classrooms.

5.4.3.5 Enforcing the use of libraries to get additional information

We use libraries to read for enjoyment, contact information, and to read for meaning and comprehension. Table 4.18 (Chapter Four) presents three frequencies in enforcing the use of libraries to get additional information.

Out of 11 respondents, two said Yes, they encouraged learners to use libraries for more information. Eight respondents said they did not force learners to use libraries for additional information. Only one said that sometimes learners were forced to use libraries to access more information. Based on the responses, respondents did not see the need to use libraries. Since their schools have no libraries, they did not know the importance of allowing learners to access additional information from public libraries. This means that these schools do not practice promoting reading as a fundamental and basic need for any subject.

5.4.4 SECTION D: INFORMATION NEEDS

Currently, we are on the 4th IR where the use of ICT is of vital importance. Schools are advised to encourage learners to use their gadgets to access information from different sites.

5.4.4.1 Format of sources preferred to satisfy information behaviour

Out of a total of 16 responses from 11 respondents, they all preferred using printed sources to satisfy their information needs. They preferred these sources because of their schools' location in deep rural areas. Six preferred audio-visual sources and five preferred electronic sources. Three respondents preferred to use online and audio sources to satisfy their information behaviours. All

respondents' preferred sources need electricity and a network to be fully operational. These six schools have no internet connectivity, and some have no access to electricity because of their location in deep rural areas. Those schools with a lack of access to electricity cannot be fully functional due to load shedding.

5.4.4.2 Satisfied with finding the information when searching preferred sources

Refer to Table 4.21 (Chapter Four), all 11 respondents said that they were not always satisfied when finding the information, they needed by searching for information using their preferred sources. This shows that their preferred sources did not have adequate information they were always searching for. This is an indication that additional sources were needed to satisfy their information behaviour. This means that prescribed textbooks and other sources of information have limited information. Hence more sources are required in order to fulfil their information needs. These sources can be found in the school libraries or public libraries.

5.4.5 SECTION E: CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

Challenges arise that need information to be solved. In this study, a pattern of poor matric performance in a period of five consecutive years is the biggest problem that requires information to be solved.

5.4.5.1 Problems faced in locating information needed to improve Grade 12 performance

Out of 32 responses from the respondents see Table 4 .22, (Chapter Four), eight were about the unavailability of school libraries, seven were about a poor teaching and learning environment, five were about inadequate access to information resources, and five mentioned a lack of water and electricity. Four emphasised a shortage of teaching and learning aids. Two revealed a shortage of teaching staff as a problem encountered and said that a shortage of textbooks was the problem faced by them in locating the information to improve Grade 12 performance. With reference to the above responses the biggest problem faced by the respondents was the unavailability of school libraries and inadequate information resources to access information. Therefore, school libraries with resources are needed in each school where learners and educators must visit and have access to additional resources and information to resolve the issue of poor matric performance.

5.4.5.2 Problems experienced when trying to solve the problems, especially matric performance

The question yielded 29 different responses. Eight respondents highlighted that the biggest challenge was the lack of support on the parents' side. Seven emphasised that the learners' lack of reading skills, like reading for meaning and comprehension, was the challenge they experienced when solving matric poor performance problems. Four respondents highlighted the rate of absenteeism which was very high. Three respondents said that learners' lack of cooperation and commitment were the challenges experienced when solving matric poor performance problems. The remaining seven responses were based on inadequate support from the district, tasks and homework not being done. Lastly, the use of substance abuse was a challenge in trying to solve poor matric performance.

5.4.6 SECTION E: STRATEGIES/SOLUTIONS TO THE CHALLENGES

There are many strategies that could be used by SMTs to solve poor matric performance at the six schools.

5.4.6.1 Strategies that SMT members can use to overcome the challenges faced by Grade 12

Respondents of six schools believed that in order to solve the difficulties of underperformance of Grade 12 in their schools, active involvement of parents and support must be emphasised, as management of substance abuse and a maximum of 88% contact time with learners. Giving Grade 12 more classwork and homework could be the solution. Provision of learner transport by the DOE, improvement of the school structure and school library and addition of educators, as well as the engagement of parents on learners' performance and coming up with amicable solutions that can solve this problem.

5.4.6.2 Ways SMT of improving learners' performance

Respondents highlighted that having more teaching and learning time can improve learners' performance. Strictly supervising and monitoring educators and learners work can make matric results better.

Encouraging extra-classes, winter classes including learners with barriers and curriculum coverage can improve learners' performance by providing technological teaching aids like access to the internet in schools. Free supply of tablets loaded with scientific experiments and the delivery of science kits and equipment can improve matric performance. Based on the analysis of their ways of improving performance, some respondents did not mention anything about strategies to overcome the challenges they stated (see, 5.4.6.1) above. This shows that they are uncertain about ways to improve, which can lead to the problem continuing if there are no solutions.

5.4.6.3 Other comments/suggestions

Based on the comments made by the respondents they all emphasised the active involvement of parents in their children's schoolwork and other matters. Enforcement of learners pass percentage from 60% to 100%, level 5 to 7, will make learners' performance. Attending all workshops by educators for their subjects is also important. Improvement of internet connection and use of extra hours to develop quality performance. Parents should be involved in their children's schoolwork, but they did not teach learners or develop strategies that can improve matric poor performance. Strategies must be designed and developed by the SMTs of these schools, and then parents support that. SMTs cannot see that almost all the good and relevant ways of managing their schools were done up to this time; however, major problems remain. This means that the root of the major problems had not been identified, and the solutions they mentioned could not solve the problem.

5.5 CHAIRPERSON OF SGB

According to SASA SGBs are an important structure to ensure the smooth running of schools.

The nature of the study does not involve all members of the SGB to participate. Only the chairperson of the SGB participated because they were the only members who sat in the schools' decision-making body and made decisions based on school matters like financial-and other important issues. According to SASA (1996), SGBs had been given powers to govern the schools' finances.

5.5.1 SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

This section deals with circuit management because a member of the SGB of the particular school might come from another circuit management, provided they have a learner in that school. It also focuses on gender, age-range, current status and period as an SGB member.

5.5.1.1 Circuit management

Figure 4.10 (Chapter Four) indicated that three of the respondents came from Mnambithi, two from Bergville and one from Estcourt Circuit management. This indicates that all respondents are members of the communities where their respective schools are located.

5.5.1.2 Gender

Figure 4.11, (Chapter Four) clearly indicates that out of six respondents, four (66.7%) were male and two (33.3%) were female. We cannot disregard the fact that the majority of learners of a particular school come from the surrounding community, and these homes are led by males as the heads of the households. This shows that some people in rural communities elected males purposely because they still believe that males are the ones who are supposed to lead and occupy leadership positions.

5.5.1.3 Age-range

Results presented in Figure 4.12, (Chapter Four), show that four (66.7%) respondents were between 40 and 49 years old, and two (33.3%) respondents were 50 years old and above. This shows that almost all respondents were mature enough to make any decision regarding school matters, including the way forward in improving learners' performance. Their age range quantifies that they may have been parents of high school learners, especially in Grade 12.

5.5.1.4 Current status/position

All respondents are full-time members of the school governing bodies; see Figure 4.24 (Chapter Four). All of them were elected as chairpersons of the SGB in 2021 for a period of three years. According to Section 31 (1) of the South African School Act of 2010, members of the SGB must

serve the school for a period of three years: thereafter, an election, must be conducted to elect new members.

5.5.1.5 Period in this position

Based on Figure 4.13, (Chapter Four), out of six respondents who answered this question, four (66.7%) of them had 0 to 3 years in this position, one (16.7%) had 4 to 6 years, while one (16.7%) had 7 to 10 years as chairperson of the SGB. This indicates that four respondents had been elected as chairperson of the SGB in the 2021 elections, they were new in this position and had inadequate experience. Two (33.3%) of the respondents had between 4 to 10 years of experience. Hence, they can make precise decisions based on their experiences as members of the SGBs. A member of the SGB can be re-elected for a second time during elections, provided they have a child in that particular school (SASSA 1996).

5.5.2 SECTION B: INFORMATION BEHAVIOUR

The pattern of underperformance in the six schools from 2014 to 2018 motivated a researcher to underpin the study to find out the causes of this behaviour.

5.5.2.1 What are the major problem(s) experienced/discovered by you with regard to matric classes of 2014 to 2018?

All six respondents indicated underperformance, see, Table 4.25, (Chapter Four). It was clear to any member of the SGB that their schools' matric results from 2014 to 2018 were very bad. Schools were referred to as T60, a term used for those schools with matric that performed below 60%.

5.5.2.2 Causes of underperformance

Table 4.26, (Chapter Four), shows that two (33.3%) respondents pointed to learners as the main cause. One (16.7%) respondent stated that educators and learners contributed to such performances. Three (50%) respondents were not sure about the real cause of Grade 12 underperformance from 2014 to 2018. According to the researchers' point of view, based on respondents' responses, three respondents who were not sure about the real cause of underperformance came from the four respondents who were a chairperson of the SGB for the first time. They lack experience and knowledge of the historical background of the schools when it comes to learners' performance.

5.5.2.3 Conditions experienced that contributed to the above situation you indicated in Question 6

Table 4.27 (Chapter Four) shows that all the respondents experienced different situations. Two (37.3%) of them also experienced a lack of parental involvement in learners' work and progress. Two (37.3%) experienced a shortage of educators. One (16.7%) experienced absenteeism and late arrivals by learners. One (16.7%) respondent pointed out that the DOE contributed to the Learner Progressed Policy and poor educator performance. Multiple responses for one question indicate that each of the respondents had perceived the situation from different angles and had their own answers to that.

5.5.3 SECTION C: INFORMATION CHANNEL

When problems arise at schools, SGBs needs to be informed to ensure that relevant information channels are followed to solve the problem.

5.5.3.1 School reports and progress

As indicated in Table 4.28 (Chapter Four), five (83.3%) of the respondents got school functionality reports and the progress of learners and educators. One (16.7%) did not get school progress or other school-related activities. This shows that none of the SGB components in SMTs got updates and reports about what was going on within the schools, including the operations and functionality of their schools.

5.5.3.2 Channels of information used by the SMT and educators to satisfy their needs based on matric performance

Table 4.26 (Chapter Four) shows that four (80%) of respondents used textbooks to satisfy their information needs during teaching and learning. This is the majority of respondents showing their reliability and consistency in using textbooks as a source of information. Only two (20%) mentioned the use of ATPs to satisfy their information needs based on matric performance.

5.5.3.3 Forms of information delivery do you prefer in Grade 12

Four of six respondents preferred delivering their information or content using ICT gadgets. This could be a challenge because their schools are in deep rural areas where electricity and connectivity are the challenges. Two respondents chose oral information delivery in Grade 12. One respondent preferred both verbal and ICT which shows that these forms of information delivery can be used simultaneously or can be altered depending on the type of content an educator has prepared for that particular lesson.

5.5.4 SECTION D: INFORMATION NEED

SMTs' information needs are met by trying the following strategies.

5.5.4.1 Most used resources to increase Grade 12 performance

Out of six respondents, five mentioned the use of textbooks to improve Grade 12 results. This is the majority number of respondents who highlighted those textbooks, maybe because they are always there at their schools. Textbooks are ordered by the school using LTSM from the DBE catalogue given to all schools. One respondent mentioned the use of newspapers, magazines, dictionaries and encyclopedias, as well as textbooks to increase Grade 12 performance. Some respondents mentioned the use of newspapers and magazines to increase Grade 12 performance. The question is how these resources can contribute to pass performance because their schools have no libraries where learners can store and access magazines and newspapers.

5.5.4.2 Locating the sources of information to be used in the classroom

The respondents indicated more than one place to access information; see Table 4.32 (Chapter Four). Five respondents highlighted that they located information from their storeroom and colleagues within their schools and accessed information from the school library. Two said they got information from colleagues from other schools, and one said that they accessed information from the school library and public/municipality libraries. From the places mentioned above regarding information location, it is well said that most respondents located the information within their schools and other mentioned libraries. Their schools have no libraries, and there are no municipality

libraries in surrounding areas of their school locations. This shows that they know the importance of libraries and reading, the problem is they lack an implementation strategy.

5.5.5 SECTION E: CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

The SMTs encountered different challenges when they were trying to improve their poor matric performance.

5.5.5.1 Problems encountered by the SMT when locating the information to improve Grade 12 performance

Table 4.33, (Chapter Four) shows that respondents provided multiple responses. Two respondents mentioned a shortage of teaching staff and textbooks. Two highlighted inadequate water supply and no electricity, and two mentioned learners not doing their tasks and homework. Two also highlighted the lack of support from the DOE and parents. It is obvious that respondents mentioned general problems they encountered even at their homes because they have limited information about what their schools' functionality.

5.5.5.2 Strategies that SGB members can use to overcome the challenges faced by Grade 12.

Two respondents suggested that encouraging parents to support their children's education can solve the challenges faced by Grade 12. Four respondents mentioned that educators must be encouraged to do their work honestly, and effectively as expected. Two of them highlighted the support and help principals make decisions regarding school matters that can improve learners' performance.

5.5.5.3 SMT in encouraging the culture of reading to improve Grade 12 performance

Mulauzi and Munsanje (2013), highlighted that the starting point of reading promotion and creating a good reading culture is the library through which reading resources are accessible to learners. Table 4.34 (Chapter Four) shows that four (66.7%) out of six respondents agreed that encouraging learners to read can improve learners' performance, especially in Grade 12. One respondent indicated that they were not sure, and one decided not to respond to that question because they had nothing to say about that particular question. The majority of the respondents had seen the need to encourage learners to read for meaning to understand examination questions and answer as they were taught.

5.5.4 Other comments or suggestions

General comments or suggestions of the respondents were based on the DOE. They suggested that the DOE should speed up the process of providing schools with quality teachers as requested by principals. This process should occur even though there is an educator without adequate teaching skills in that subject and learners quickly understand what they have been taught.

5.6 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter analyses all the findings presented in the previous chapter. All of the responses were grouped accordingly and thoroughly analysed and interpreted. Observation checklist results of the six selected high schools presented in (Chapter Four), were analysed and interpreted. Principals' face-to-face interview schedules' results presentation were analysed and interpreted according to their sections. The results of the self-administered semi-structured questionnaire of 11 departmental heads grouped per section were also analysed, and interpretations were made. Lastly, the results of the self-administered semi-structured questionnaire of the chairpersons of SGB were grouped according to sections and responses, as seen in Chapter Four, and were also analysed and interpreted.

In the next Chapter, the conclusion and recommendations will be offered.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the information behaviour of the SMTs in selected schools in the uThukela district. The six selected high schools were underperforming for five consecutive years (2014 – 2018). The pattern showed an information gap within the SMTs and the schools in general to solve this problem, which this study aimed to identify.

This chapter provides a summary of the study, conclusions and recommendations. Findings and recommendations were based on the analysis, interpretations, and presentation of results covered in Chapters Four and Five.

6.2 REVISITING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research objective was to assess the information behaviour of SMTs and determine factors that contributed to poor matric academic performance in the six selected schools in the uThukela District. This objective was achieved by different responses revealed by the following questions that guided this study:

1. What were the critical incidents experienced by the SMTs of the six selected high schools in uThukela District, and under what circumstances did they occur?
2. What channels of information were used by the SMT to satisfy their information needs?
3. How were the information needs met?
4. What challenges were encountered by the SMTs when solving the problem?
5. What strategies can be used to overcome such challenges?

6.3 CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the responses from 29 respondents, a discussion of the findings presented in the previous chapters and the following conclusions were revealed.

6.3.1. THE ANSWER TO THE MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

The findings showed that all participants of the six schools experienced the same major problem of poor matric performance. They had no strategy or systems in place to solve the problem. Their channels of communication were not adequate to solve the problem. Seemingly, they were stereotyped and kept on relying on their ATPs and the DOE textbooks as solutions. Having done all their duties efficiently and effectively, the problem of poor matric performance was still there. This means that what they trusted and believed would not solve a problem faced by their schools.

This study revealed that all 6 (100%) principals were satisfied with the roles played by their SMTs as part of school management, such as managing the whole school, checking and monitoring educators' work, and watching the implementation of different policies. Therefore, all the principals were satisfied with their compliance with their SMTs in ensuring the smooth running of their schools and how they carried out their duties (Mobegi, 2010).

It was also revealed that the DOE Promotion and Progressed Policy, which all public schools should implement, contributed a lot to the poor performance of learners in the matrices. Learners progressed from one phase to the next without meeting the pass requirements just because they had been in that phase for several years. This contributed a lot to Grade 12 poor performance because some learners found themselves in the following phases without fully meeting all pass requirements of the previous phases. This results in a high failure rate in Grade 12 (Mogale and Modipane, 2021).

6.3.2 REFLECTION OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

This dissertation started with Chapter One, i.e., an introduction that clearly gave a brief description of the area surveyed and the respondents' background. The research problem and motivation of the study were presented. This chapter outlines the study's objectives, purpose and research questions.

Chapter Two was all about the related literature reviews based on the information behaviour of the SMTs of selected schools. Wilson's (1996) Information Behaviour Model was explored to demonstrate the SMT's information-seeking process to solve poor matric performance. Related studies reviewed in this chapter were conducted internationally; others were conducted in Africa, South Africa, and the KwaZulu-Natal province.

Chapter Three focused on the research methodology used in this study. The research paradigm, design and approach were outlined in this chapter. The nature of the study determined the kind of

approach and research instruments adopted to collect data. This study adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods. The instruments adopted for collecting data from SMTs were six semi-structured observation checklists. Six face-to-face semi-structured interview schedules for principals. A self-administered semi-structured questionnaire was employed to collect data from 11 departmental heads and six chairpersons of the School Governing Bodies (SGBs). The total number of instruments completed and collected during the study was twenty-nine, giving the study a 100% response rate. The population size and sample unit of the study were highlighted. The validity and reliability of the study were done using pre-testing instruments from schools that were not part of the study. SPSS software was employed to analyse quantitative data, while thematic content was used to analyse qualitative results. Ethical processes to be followed were outlined in this chapter.

Chapter Four presented the results of the study of 29 SMT members in six selected schools in the uThukela district. The results were presented using figures, tables, bar graphs, and pie graphs and had enough responses to answer the research questions. A 100% response rate collected from respondents increased the sufficient reliability of the results.

Chapter five unpacked the findings of the study as outlined in Chapter 4. The discussion in this chapter mainly focused on all the research questions the current study aimed to answer. At the same time, the information needs of the SMTs of the six schools, challenges encountered and solutions to those problems were discussed. The findings suggested that this was caused by a lack of parental support and a lack of learners' commitment to their schoolwork. It was noted that most of the roles and responsibilities of the SMTs were carried out accordingly. Results showed that respondents trusted and relied on textbooks and Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs) as their information and content delivery sources, but the information gap was not fulfilled.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

National, Provincial Department of Basic Education, District, and schools

The Minister of Finance must increase the DOE budget for the provinces to allocate proper funds to the most crucial departments, like the Department of Basic Education. The Provincial Department of Education should allocate bigger funds to needy directorates and sub-directorates. Schools need much support from the National, Provincial and District levels. All school, vacant posts should be filled so that educators cannot be overloaded. All vacant district advisors' posts should be filled to ensure the maximum support of schools by different subject advisors. All schools must have proper

laboratories fully equipped with relevant chemicals where experiments are done practically for science subjects. The provincial DOE should increase the Education Libraries Information and Technology Services (ELITS) budget so that all schools receive library books for learners to read for information and meaning. Each school must have a central library or convert a classroom into a central library for both educators and learners to access information and to read for enjoyment and comprehension. All schools must receive adequate support in all subjects, and all problems educators face in different subjects must be addressed immediately. Learners' transport should be provided to prevent learners from walking longer distances to and from schools. Adequate workshops or trainings must be conducted to capacitate educators on developing new subjects.

6.5 NEW KNOWLEDGE TO THE FIELD

Information behaviour exists anytime, anywhere; people with an information gap can try to locate information with no success. They can seek information in the wrong location. SMTS of the six schools had the information needed to increase learners' performance, but for five years, they searched for the wrong sources of information. This showed they lacked the skills to locate, search, and evaluate the relevant information for their problems. They were repeating the same strategy, which did not solve their problems.

These schools had to practice reading every day as Reading Circular No. 51 of 2020 states that each grade must have at least 2,5 hours per cycle just for reading for meaning. Learners cannot write if they cannot read. Learners cannot master any language if they cannot read and write. Therefore, reading creates critical thinking, forms a foundation for lifelong learning and improves academic performance. Education Reading Strategy 2020 – 2025 emphasised the implementation of Reading Across the Curriculum (RAC): "A reading strategy to promote reading awareness, skills for reading with comprehension, practical involvement, community participation and change of practice" (KZNDOE, 2020)

6.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The following related studies should be conducted in future:

1. An information behaviour of the SMTs of overperforming in uThukela district, KwaZulu-Natal.

2. An information behaviour of educators producing quality matric results and improving learners' performance.
3. The role of libraries in supporting the curriculum and improving learners' performance.

6.7 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter presents the most important findings and conclusions, which aim to explore the Information behaviour of the SMTs of selected schools in uThukela district. Problems faced by the six schools that prevent them from performing at their best were identified. Based on the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5, the researcher has made some recommendations that will assist both primary and secondary schools, including underperforming schools, to improve their performance. The importance of reading for enjoyment, for meaning and to get information should be emphasised all the time in all grades. Reading for enjoyment forms a foundation for all learning areas or subjects to be taught effectively and efficiently.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Observation checklist

School: _____

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL (PMB)

MASTER OF INFORMATION STUDIES RESEARCH

An information behaviour of the School Management Team in selected schools at uThukela District, KwaZulu-Natal.

This checklist was completed by the researcher

Date:

Instructions:

- ✓ Tick was used to indicate appropriate response.

A. STATE OF CLEANLINESS/TIDINESS OF THE SCHOOL	**Good**	**Satisfactory**	**Poor**
1. Ground and premises			
2. Classrooms and buildings			

_____

_____

_____

B. SAFETY AND SECURITY	**Yes**	**No**
3. Does the school have a security guard at the gate?		
4. Does the outsiders signed the gate entering register?		
5. Does the school properly fence?		
6. Does the school have a gate for the following?		
6.1 Vehicles		
6.2 Pedestrians		

C PUNCTUALITY	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Bad	Very bad
7. Educators school time					
8. Non-teaching staff					
9. Learners' school time					
10. Teachers' honouring of periods					

D. RESPECT	All the time	Sometimes	Not at all
10. Does educators greet each other?			
12. Learners demonstrate respect to educators			
13. Learners greeting each other			
14. Movement of learners during teaching and learning hours			

Appendix 2: Principals' interview checklist

SCHOOL: _____

- ✓ Tick was used to indicate appropriate response

Section A: Demographic details

Q 1 Please indicate your circuit management

0	Bergville
1	Estcourt
2	Mnambithi

Q 2 Gender

0	Female
1	Male

Q 3 What is your age-range?

0	20 – 29 years
1	30 – 39 years
2	40 – 49 years
3	50+ years

Q 4 Are you the principal or acting principal of this school?

0	Principal
1	Acting principal
2	Other (please specify)

Q 5 How long have you been in this position?

0	0 – 3 years
1	4 – 6 years
2	7 – 10 years
3	10 + years

Q 6 How many years have you occupy this position in this school?

0	0 – 3 years
1	4 – 6 years
2	7 – 10 years
3	10 + years

Section B: Relations with the community

Q 7 How do you relate with the community and how is the school used by the community?

_____

_____

_____

Q 8 What condition did you find the school after being used by the community?

_____

_____

_____

Q 9 How do you describe the human relations with all members of the School Governing Body?

	YES	NO
Supportive		
Cooperative		

_____

_____

_____

Section C: Information needs and relations with the SMT

Q 10 What are roles of the SMT?

	YES	NO
Manage the school as whole		
Check and monitor educators work		
Monitor the implementation of DOE policies		
Guide and support educators		
Ensure that teaching and learning take place within the classrooms		
Decision making		
Exercise discipline to educators and learners		

_____

_____

_____

Q 11 What is the SMT turnaround strategies?

	YES	NO
Discipline		
Curriculum coverage		
Monitor check learners exercise books and written homeworks		
Effective teaching takes place		

_____

_____

_____

Q 12 How satisfactory are you with the compliance of the SMT and their performance?

	YES	NO
Fully comply		
Perform as expected		

_____

_____

_____

Q 13 How do they carry out their duties to your satisfactory?

	YES	NO
Check educator's files		
Exercise discipline		
Monitor the functioning of the school		
Honouring of period by educators		
Ensure that teaching and learning take place all the time		
Check absenteeism educators and learners		
Moderate examination question papers and conduct the writing of examination successfully		

_____

_____

_____

Q 14 What channels of information are used by the SMT to satisfy their information needs in response to matric performance?

	YES	NO
Effective teaching in the morning, afternoon, Saturdays and holidays classes		
Make more information and resources available and accessible to educators and learners		
Network and request assistance from overperforming schools		

_____

_____

_____

Q 15 How did they conduct themselves as the management teams?

	YES	NO
Well-presented and organised		
Always punctual at school and Role models in honouring of period.		
Effective teaching, learning and assessment take place		
Good communication skills		

_____

_____

_____

Q 16 What is the SMT view with regard to the implementation of the Reading Circular 51 of 2020 (Drop All and Read DAAR) and the reading strategy?

	YES	NO
Support and implement the reading circular		
Allocate time for reading in all grades		
Monitor the reading time effectively		

_____

_____

_____

Q 17 What is the role of the school library in assisting matric?

	YES	NO
Support the curriculum		
Improve the reading skills and reading for meaning to learners		
Provide more information for different subjects		
Make learners avid readers and lifelong readers		

_____

_____

_____

Section D: School governance and relations with educators

Q 18 How do you relate with educators in general?

	YES	NO
Well disciplined		
Do their work as expected		
Respectful		
Committed to their teaching loads		

_____

_____

_____

Q 19 Are you satisfied with competence of educators teaching matric?

	YES	NO
All are qualified educators		
All teaching their specialized subject in the Further Education and Training (FET) Phase		
Always punctual an honouring their periods		
Always in the classroom teaching		

_____

_____

_____

Q 20 How is governance / management in relation to the school?

	YES	NO
School turnaround strategy in place		
Maintain, respect, discipline and order within the school		
Monitor the Deputy Principals file or Heads of departments files and exercise books		
Ensure that all DOE policies are implemented		
Support all teachers, their teaching and learning activities		
Support non-teaching staff		

_____

_____

_____

Section E: Challenges and solutions

Q 21 What are the challenges you encountered when trying to increase matric performance?

	YES	NO
Grade 12 learners underperforming		
Learners not doing and submitting their tasks		
Departmental policies of progressed learners		
Shortage of educators		
Learners' lack of culture of learning		
Educators who are not competent to teach at FET phase		
Educators who are not teaching their subject of specialisation		
Lack of support from the parents		

_____

_____

_____

Q 22 What solutions to overcome those challenges?

	YES	NO
Effective teaching in the morning, afternoon, Saturdays and holidays classes		
Make more information and resources available and accessible to educators and learners		
Network and request assistance from overperforming schools		

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND RESPONDING TO THE INTEVIEW QUESTIONS

Appendix 3: Departmental heads

Questionnaire

Semi-structured questionnaire

Instructions

✔ Tick was used to indicate appropriate response(s). Kindly not that all information provided will be confidential, you may withdraw at any point of time from this study if you feel so.

- **NB**: Q for question and
- lines provided below each question are for more responses and explanations

Section A: Demographic data

Q 1 Please indicate your circuit management

1	Bergville	
2	Estcourt	
3	Mnambithi	

Q 2 Gender

1	Female	
2	Male	

Q 3 Age-range

1	20 – 29 years	
2	30 – 39 years	
3	40 – 49 years	
4	50+ years	

Q 4 Current status / position

1	Departmental head	
2	Acting departmental head	
3	Any other (please specify)	

Q 5 How long have you been in this position?

1	0 – 3 years	
2	4 – 6 years	
3	7 – 10 years	
4	10 + years	

Q 6 Do you teach matric?

1	Yes	
2	No	

Q 7 If your answer to Q6 is YES, please indicate subject(s) below, if NO, move to Q 11.

_____

_____

_____

Q 8 Again, if your response to Q6 is YES. Please answer this question (Q8), Q 9 and Q10.
Is the above stated subject(s) part of your specialization?

1	Yes	
2	No	

Q 9 How long have you taught this subject(s) in Grade 12?

1	0 – 3 years	
2	4 – 6 years	
3	7 – 10 years	
4	11 years and above	

Q 10 How long have you taught Grade 12 the subject(s) indicated on Q 7 in this school?

1	0 – 3 years	
2	4 – 6 years	
3	7 – 10 years	
4	11 years and above	

Section B: Information behaviour

Q 11 What are the information behaviour in relation to managing of the school? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Monitoring educators' files	
2	Managing the writing of Examinations	
3	Monitoring curriculum implementation	
4	Ensure effective teaching	
5	Encourage the regular usage of the school library	
6	Support, discipline and respect	
7	Checking written work on learner's exercise books	
8	Checking curriculum coverage	
9	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

Q 12 What were the major problem (s) experience / discovered by you with regard to matric classes of 2014 to 2018?

1	Over performance	
2	Under performance	

_____

_____

_____

Q 13 Under what conditions do you experience the above situations you have ticked on Q 12? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Learners' absenteeism	
2	Learners late coming	
3	Learners not serious at all	
4	Learners not submitting their tasks and homeworks	
5	No respect	
6	Learners progressed policy	
7	Inadequate support from the parents	
8	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

Section C: Information channels

Q 14 What channels of information are used by the SMT and educators to satisfy their information needs based on poor matric performance? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Textbooks	
2	Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs)	
3	Study guides	
4	Books: non-fiction (factual)	
5	Journals	
6	Newspapers and magazines	
7	Smart phones	
8	Internet	
9	Dictionaries	
10	Encyclopedias	
11	Atlas and maps	
12	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

Q 15 What form of information delivery do you prefer in Grade 12? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Oral	
2	Printed sources	
3	Online sources	
4	Audio sources	
5	Audio-visual sources	
6	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

Q 16 Which resources do you use to find information you need? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Maskew Miller Longman	
2	Macmillan Education	
3	New Dawn Publishers	
4	Shuters & Shooter Publishers	
5	Via Africa	
6	eBook publishers	
7	Oxford university Press	
8	New generation	
9	Heinemann Publishers	
10	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

Q 17 Where do you get /access the sources of information used in the classroom? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Storeroom within the school	
2	School library	
3	Public / municipality libraries	
4	Cellphone	
5	From your colleague	
6	From colleagues of other schools	
7	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

Q 18 Do you enforce the use of libraries to get additional information? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Yes	
2	No	

_____

_____

_____

Section D: Information needs

Q 19 In relation to satisfying your information behaviour / needs, what format of sources do you prefer? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Printed sources	
2	Electronic sources	
3	Online sources	
4	Audio sources	
5	Audio-visual sources	
6	Any other (please specify)	

Q 20 Do you always find satisfied information when searching for information using preferred sources? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Yes	
2	No	
3	Sometimes	

Section E: Challenges encountered

Q 21 What are the problems that you are facing when locating the information, you need to improve Grade 12 performance? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Shortage of teaching staff	
2	Shortage of textbooks	
3	Shortage of teaching and learning aids	
4	Unavailable of school library	
5	Inadequate water and no electricity	
6	Inadequate information resources	
7	Poor teaching and learning environment	
8	Any other (please specify)	

Q 22 What challenges are you experiencing when trying to solve the problems especially matric performance? (Please tick all that apply)

1	In adequate support from the district	
2	Parent's support	
3	Learner's lack of cooperation and commitment	
4	Learners high orate of absenteeism	
5	Tasks and homeworks not done	
6	Learners lack reading skills (read for meaning and comprehension)	
7	Use of substance abuse (drugs and alcohol)	
8	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

Section F: Strategies / solutions to the challenges

Q 23 As a SMT member, what are the strategies that can be used to overcome the challenges faced by Grade 12?

_____

_____

_____

Q 24 In your opinion, how can the SMT improve learner's performance?

_____

_____

_____

Q 25 Any other comments / suggestions:

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendix 4: Chairperson of the School Governing Body

Questionnaire

Semi-structured questionnaire

Instructions

- ✔ Tick was used to indicate appropriate response(s). Kindly not that all information provided will be confidential, you may withdraw at any point of time from this study if you feel so.
  - lines provided below each question are for more responses and explanations

A: Demographic data

Q1. Please indicate your circuit management

1	Bergville	
2	Estcourt	
3	Mnambithi	

Q2. Gender

1	Female	
2	Male	

Q3. Age-range

1	20 – 29 years	
2	30 – 39 years	
3	40 – 49 years	
4	50+ years	

Q4. Current status / position

1	Chairperson of the School Governing Body	
2	Member of the School Governing Body	
3	Any other (please specify)	

Q5. How long have you been in this position?

1	0 – 3 years	
2	4 – 6 years	
3	7 – 10 years	
4	10 + years	

B. Information behaviour

Q 6. What were the major problem(s) experience / discovered by you with regard to matric classes of 2014 to 2018?

1	Over performance	
2	Under performance	

_____

_____

_____

Q7. In your opinion, what was the cause of the above response?

1	Educators	
2	Learners	
3	Both educators and learners	
4	I am not sure	

_____

_____

_____

Q8. Under what conditions do you experience the above situations you have ticked on question 6? (Please tick all that apply)

0	Shortage of educators	
1	Shortage of teaching and learning aids	
2	Parents not involve on learners work and progress	
3	Inadequate support from the district advisors	
4	Learners not submitting their tasks and homeworks	
5	Learners' absenteeism and late coming	
6	Learners' substance abuse	
7	Learners progressed policy	
8	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

C. Information channels

Q9. Did you get school functionality reports and progress?

1	Yes	
2	No	
3	Sometimes	

_____

_____

_____

Q10. What channels of information are used by the SMT and educators to satisfy their information needs based on poor matric performance? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Textbooks	
2	Annual Teaching Plans (ATPs)	
3	Newspapers and magazines	
4	Dictionaries and encyclopedias	
5	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

Q11. What form of information delivery do you prefer in Grade 12? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Oral	
2	Information and Communications Technology	
3	Cellphones	
4	Audio	
4	Audio-visual	
5	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

D. Information needs

Q12. What do you think are the most resources that can be used in thi school to increase Grade 12 performance?

0	Textbooks	
1	Non-fiction / factual books	
2	Newspapers and magazines	
3	Dictionaries & encyclopedias	
4	Any other (please specify)	

Q13. Where do you the SMT and educators can get /access the sources of information to be used in the classroom? (Please tick all that apply)

1	Storeroom within the school	
2	School library	
3	Public / municipality libraries	
4	From your colleague	
5	From colleagues of other schools	
6	Any other (please specify)	

E. Challenges encountered

Q14. What are the problems that you think will be encountered by the SMT when locating the information to improve Grade 12 performance? (Please tick all that apply)

0	Shortage of teaching staff	
1	Shortage of textbooks, teaching and learning aids	
2	Lack of parent's support	
3	Unavailable of school library	
4	Inadequate water and no electricity	
5	Learners not doing their tasks and homeworks	
6	Poor teaching and learning environment	
7	Department of Education lack of support	
8	Any other (please specify)	

F. Strategies / Solutions to challenges

Q15. As a SMT member, what are the strategies that can be used to overcome the challenges faced by Grade 12?

1	Encourage parents to be supportive and be part of their children education	
2	Encourage educators to do their work honestly, effectively and as expected	
3	Support and help the principal in his / her decisions to improve learner's performance	
4	Any other (please specify)	

_____

_____

_____

Q16. Do you think if the SMT encourages the culture of reading additional resources can make a difference and improve learners' performance especially Grade 12?

0	Agree
1	Not sure
2	Disagree

_____

_____

_____

Q17. Any other comments / suggestions:

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE