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CHARACTERISTICS OF POOR PERFORMING SCHOOLS WITHIN TSHINANE CIRCUIT IN VHEMBE DISTRICT

By

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DECLARATION

I, Fhulufhelo Patrick Muedi, declare that *Characteristics of Poor Performing Schools within Tshinane Circuit located in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province* is my own work, and that it has not been submitted before to any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Signed: ____________________ Date: 15/02/2013 ____________________

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late father, Munzhedzi Harry Muedi, my late mother, Masindi Muedi, my late brother, Nyelisani Freddy Muedi, my wife Thandi Virginia Muedi and my children Thifhulufhelwi, Nyambeni and Munzhedzi for their support throughout this project.

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ABSTRACT

While for the past three years Tshinane Circuit has been producing good results on average, there was a sudden decline in the pass rate with seven out of ten secondary schools performing below the provincial norm. Hence, the circuit was declared dysfunctional. The aim of this research was to investigate the characteristics of poor performing schools within Tshinane Circuit in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province. The questionnaire was used to get the views from the respondents in order to determine what might be regarded as characteristics of poor performing schools. The target population were learners who failed Grade 12 in 2010 National Senior Certificate Examination, performing below the Limpopo Department of Education minimum average pass of 50%, parents who were School Governing Body Members, teachers who taught Grade 12 in 2010 and principals from each of the seven out of ten secondary schools in Tshinane Circuit. The study revealed these common characteristics among underperforming schools: inadequate physical resources, lack of discipline, ineffective and unclear policies, poor content knowledge of teachers and dysfunctional school management teams. The study recommends that intervention strategies such as provision for more extra teaching, adequate supply of resources, and retraining of teachers on content knowledge be put in place in order to improve performance in all our public schools.

ACRONYM

ACE - Advanced Certificate in Education

ANA- Annual National Assessment

DBE- Department of Basic Education

EEA- Employment of Educators Act

LDoE- Limpopo Department of Education

MEC- Member of Executive Council

HOD-Head of the Department

MLA- Monitoring Learner Achievement

NCS- National Curriculum Statement

NSC- National Senior Certificate

NAPTOSA- National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa

NPRR-National Protocol on Recording and Reporting

PAM- Personnel Administrative Measures

PIRLS- Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

PPP- Pupil Progress Project

RCL-Representative Council of Learners

SACMEQ- South African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality

SADTU- South African Democratic Teachers Union

SAOU- Suid Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie

SASA- South African Schools Act

SMT- School Management Team

TIMMS- Trend in International Mathematics Science Study

SET- Sector Education and Training

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Eighteen years into our democracy and it is still apparent that the education system is struggling to break free from the legacies of Bantu Education. The infrastructure backlog, parental illiteracy, lack of parental involvement, lack of discipline among learners, absenteeism, and lack of time on task by both learners and teachers inherited from apartheid are having a profoundly negative effect on the circumstances under which children are taught and learn (Mji & Makgato, 2006).

The achievement gap between children in advantaged and disadvantaged schools needs to be narrowed. This requires systematic, focused and undivided attention to improve quality and efficiency at all schools. Attention must also be given to reducing a high rate of absenteeism and lowering the rate of repeaters and drop-outs. It also requires recognising that socio-economic constraints in our society put education in competition with many priorities in poor households.

The creation of schools of excellence in the Vhembe District within Tshinane Circuit must be considered as a serious option to improve results in all poor performing schools.

1.2 General Background of the Study

For the past five years in Limpopo Province a great proportion of Grade 12 learners have performed poorly in the National Senior Certificate examinations. The pass rate of the Limpopo Province was 56.7% in 2006, 57.9% in 2007, 53.8% in 2008, 48.9% in 2009 and 57.9% in 2010 (Department of Basic Education, 2011).

According to Legotlo, Maaga, van der Westhuizen, Mosoge, Nieuwoudt and Steyn (2002) all major stakeholders in education such as learners, teachers, parents, employers and the National Ministry of Education were concerned about the problem of poor learner performance in Grade 12 examinations in South Africa.

Legotlo et al (2002) further indicated that the low internal efficiency of the education system simply implies more wastage and increases in the cost of education. When learners fail to complete their high school education within the minimum time, a lot of money is spent without any increase in the social benefit (Mji & Makgato, 2006).

Poor learner performance in Grade 12 examinations represents a challenge to all South Africans (Legotlo et al, 2002).

In South Africa schooling especially for black children is characterized by high rate of absenteeism and repetition of the same grade by learners which lowered the average attainment of pass rate (Bipath, 2005). Bipath (2005) further indicated that schools which are located in low-income villages and rural areas, the capacity of parents and the community to provide administrative support was the weakest and schools were usually mismanaged. Additionally, the use of their resources was inefficient and unwise.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In South Africa Grade 12 examinations are used as a barometer to gauge the effectiveness and efficiency of the school system. Good performance of a school is based on the Grade 12 pass rate. The purpose of this study is to examine the characteristics of poor performing schools using Grade 12 examination results as a barometer.

A major focus of the study is to identify and examine what characterises a poor performing school. The research focuses on stakeholders, such as learners, teachers, principals, and parents.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The general aim of this research is to investigate the characteristics of poor performing schools within Tshinane Circuit in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province based on 2010 Grade 12 National Senior Certificate results.

1.5 Research question

The study was guided by the following research question:

- What are the characteristics of poor performing schools?

1.6 Definition of poor performing schools

The following paragraphs give a definition of poor performing schools:

Corallo and McDonald (2002:1) define poor performing schools, "In an environment of standards-based reform, low performing often refers to those schools that do not meet the standard established and are monitored by the state board of education, or some other authority external to the school."

Bipath (2005) elaborated on poor performing schools in the South African context and defined them as those schools where a breakdown of teaching and learning is evident usually combined with poverty, material deprivation and disruption.

In this research a poor performing school is a secondary school in Limpopo Province which has achieved less than a 50% pass rate in the Grade 12 examination known as National Senior Certificate in the year 2010.

1.7 Research Design and Methodology

Research design is a plan and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2009:3). According to Bipath (2005) a research design is a plan or blue print of how you intend conducting research.

1.7.1 Quantitative Research Design

In this study a quantitative survey questionnaire was applied in order to obtain a large quantity of data from a population. A survey questionnaire was applied to fourteen sampled learners who failed Grade 12 in 2010, thirty-one teachers who taught Grade 12 in 2010, fourteen parents who were members of the School Governing Body in 2010 and seven principals of all seven secondary schools that underperformed in the 2010 National Senior Certificate examination.

1.7.2 Research Methodology

A quantitative method of investigation was the methodology that was used which relies on numbers in reporting results, sampling, and providing estimates of instrument reliability and validity.

1.7.2.1 Population

The target population for the present research were fourteen learners, thirty-one teachers, fourteen parents and seven principals from seven secondary schools which performed poorly out of total number of ten secondary schools in Tshinane Circuit in Vhembe District.

1.7.2.2 Sample selection

According to Creswell (2009) in random sampling each individual representative of the population provides the ability to generalize to a population.

The Circuit under study had ten secondary schools. In the selection process for individual participants, a random sample was used. From each school two learners who failed Grade 12 in 2010, four teachers who taught Grade 12 in 2010, two parents who were components of the School Governing Body and all the principals from each secondary school were requested to complete a questionnaire with the intent of getting a better picture of what might have constituted the characteristics of all seven schools which underperformed in 2010 National Senior Certificate Grade 12 results.

The sample was also chosen in respect to poor average performance by all schools in Tshinane Circuit in 2010. Out of ten secondary schools only three secondary schools managed to obtain an average pass rate of between 50% and 100% whereas seven secondary schools produced poor results which are below the provincial pass rate of 50%.

1.7.2.3 Instrumentation

I applied a self-constructed questionnaire and a pre-tested survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A comprised of three items which addressed biographical information about the participants. Section B had eighteen items where participants indicate the availability and usage of resources in the selected school. Section C comprised of fifteen factors where the participants should indicate the extent to which those factors might have contributed to the underperformance of their schools.

The survey questionnaire was pre-tested with selected learners, teachers, parents and a principal in one secondary school outside Tshinane Circuit which underperformed in 2010 Grade 12 National Senior Certificate examination before distribution to the seven secondary schools that underperformed in Tshinane Circuit. Pre-testing was conducted to rectify any misunderstanding or any mistake that might have been identified.

1.7.2.4 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaires were distributed to seven secondary schools at Tshinane Circuit based on their poor performance in 2010 Grade 12 NSC results. The responses of learners, teachers, parents and principals were explored.

1.8 Data Analysis

The literature survey and questionnaires were used as data collection techniques for this study. The data from the questionnaires was analysed in detail. Responses to the questionnaire provided structured data which was easily comparable. The results are analysed and the responses presented in percentages. The purpose was to give a picture of the extent to which different questions and ideas were supported or not supported.

1.9 Delimitation of the study

My study was restricted to seven secondary schools in Tshinane Circuit that achieved percentage pass rates below the Limpopo Department of Education provincial norm of 50% in the 2010 Grade 12 National Senior Certificate. I chose Tshinane Circuit because it was the first time for Tshinane Circuit to have almost seven secondary schools out of ten secondary schools achieving below 50% in the Grade 12 examination.

1.10 Ethical consideration

Ethics generally are considered to deal with beliefs about right or wrong, proper or improper, good or bad (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006) rights and welfare of the participants should be taken into account when conducting research. The following ethical issues were considered for this study:

1.10.1 Informed consent

Explanation of the research was provided to all participants after consultation with Vhembe District Department of Education (Approval letter attached as Appendix D). Teachers and learners were requested to sign a consent letter which informed the participants of voluntary participation and confidentiality of the information provided.

1.10.2Confidentiality

According to Babbie and Mouton, (2003) in a confidential survey the researcher can identify a given person's responses, but essentially promises not to do so publicly. On confidentiality, the respondents were guaranteed that the information provided would be treated with strictest confidentiality to avoid embarrassment of respondents. The information collected would be used for educational purposes only. The researcher in this study did not link individual respondents and schools by names. Names of individual respondents were not mentioned and schools are identified by symbols.

1.11 Significance of the study

It was hoped that this study will highlight and expose the characteristics of poor performing schools based on the results and poor performance of seven secondary schools in the final 2010 National Senior Certificate (NSC) Grade 12 results. It is further hoped that teachers, learners, parents, principals start to find mechanisms to improve their performance in the identified areas that pose serious challenges to the provision of quality learning and teaching in their schools.

This will hopefully ensure that all administrative levels of the Department of Education in Limpopo Province, including the curriculum section, assume their assigned rightful duties and responsibilities of monitoring and supporting schools as stakeholders.

1.12 DIVISION OF THE RESEARCH CHAPTERS

1.12.1 Chapter One

Chapter One is the introduction, which focuses on the importance of the research, statement of the problem, purpose of the research and research methodology. It also outlines certain assumptions and clarifies the concepts of the research.

1.12.2 Chapter Two

In Chapter Two the focus is on the literature study regarding characteristics of poor performing schools. The literature includes papers, documents, research and *publications by different researchers and scholars.*

1.12.3 Chapter Three

Chapter Three deals with empirical research which will give a detailed description of the methodology to be used for the quantitative data collection, namely the instrument used to collect data, the analysis and interpretation of the questionnaire. The population sample that is used is described and the reasons are advanced for selecting the particular sample.

1.12.4 Chapter Four

In this chapter the researcher gives a presentation and analysis of data. Information derived from the literature review and questionnaires are analysed and deductions made. A generalization is then drawn upon which recommendations are based.

1.12.5 Chapter Five

This chapter focuses on the findings and the recommendations as well as guidelines which can be implemented in poor performing schools in order to produce excellent results. The recommendation and conclusions of the research are drawn and indicators for further research projects are identified

1.13 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter deals with the background to the study. It includes the statement of a problem to give the reader the researcher's perspective regarding the problem. This chapter also highlights the components necessary to rejuvenate the breakdown of teaching and learning in poor performing schools. The need for efficient and effective management and proper implementation in poor performing schools is emphasized. It is envisaged that the research would come up with some recommendation of transforming poor performing schools into schools of excellence.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Since 1994, the education system in South Africa has undergone many reforms that have brought about some acceptable levels of equity in access to participation in education (Taylor, 2008). Taylor (2008) further indicated that the reforms also facilitated the improvement of conditions of services for educators. According to Mji and Makgato (2006) the reforms in the education system since 1994 led to improvement in funding of schools. Despite all these efforts of reforming and funding the education system by the democratic government of the Republic of South Africa, the quality of education for the majority of South African learners is still poor (Phurutse, 2005). The education is still poor because of the fact that the education delivery system is characterised by chronic underperformance by majority of schools, especially former historical black schools (van der Berg, Burger, Burger, de Vos, du Rand, Gustafsson, Moses, Shepherd, Spaull, Taylor, van Broekhuizen and von Fintel, 2011).

A study conducted by Econometric (Pty) Ltd (2010) Kruger (2011) found that of the 1 550 790 learners that started grade1 in 1998 only 35, 6% (551 940) of them had managed to reach grade 12 within 12 years in 2009. Of the 551 940 that wrote the grade 12 examinations in 2009 only 334 609 passed which represents 21.6% of all the learners that started school in 1998 (Kruger, 2011). An analysis was done for the cohort of learners that started grade 1 in 1999 and indicated that in 1999, about 1 380 000 learners enrolled in grade 1 and in 2010 less than 600 000 of them were in grade 12 (Ramaphosa, 2011).

According to The Department of Basic Education (DBE) (2011) an analysis of grade 12 results in all the nine provinces of the Republic of South Africa shows that the burden of poor performance is mostly concentrated in the rural provinces of Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and the Eastern Cape as depicted in the table below.

Trend analysis of grade 12 results: Pass rate in % from 2006 to 2010 per Province						
	2006	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**	2011
Eastern Cape	59.3%	57.1%	50.6%	51.0%	58.3%	58.1%
Free State	72.2%	70.5%	71.8%	69.4%	70.7%	75.7%
Gauteng	78.3%	74.6%	76.4%	71.8%	78.6%	81.1%
Kwa-Zulu Natal	65.7%	63.8%	57.6%	61.1%	70.7%	68.1%
Limpopo	56.7%	57.9%	54.3%	48.9%	57.9%	63.9%
Mpumalanga	65.3%	60.7%	51.8%	47.9%	56.8%	64.8
North West	67.0%	67.2%	68.0%	67.5%	75.7%	77.8%
Northern Cape	76.8%	70.3%	72.7%	61.3%	72.3%	68.8%
Western Cape	83.7%	80.6%	78.4%	75.7%	76.8%	82.9%

Source: Report on the National Senior Certificate Results, DBE (January 2007, 2008,2009,2010,2011 and 2012)

In the inaugural diagnostic report of the National Planning Commission (2011), all Commissioners: Manuel, Ramaphosa, Altman, Balintulo, Coovadia, Eberhard, Essop, Gasa, Goba, Godsell, Gosa, Harrison, Karaan, Mahlati, Makgoba, Malikane, Maphai, Masilela, Moloi, Molwantwa, Muller, Netshitenzhe, Rensburg, Taylor, Vilakazi and Holdt agreed that school functionality and improved quality of education outcomes are a function of the management and governance of the school, community and parental involvement on the curriculum design and delivery, with more emphasis on effective management of the school above all factors associated with both good and poor performance of schools.

2.2 DEFINITION OF POOR PERFORMING SCHOOLS

According to Bipath (2005) poor performing schools are known as "failing schools" and they are usually found in poor neighbourhood. Bipath (2002; 2005), further argued that such schools are characterised by "low socio-economic background" and low literacy levels among parents, poor nutrition, violence and social fragmentation. There is a significant relationship between socio economic status of the families of learners and their performance in schools.

Bipath (2005) elaborated poor performing schools in the South African context as those schools where a breakdown of teaching and learning is evident usually combined with poverty, material deprivation and disruption.

Corallo and McDonald (2002:1) define poor performing schools "In an environment of standards-based reform, "low Performing" often refers to those schools that do not meet the standard established and monitored by the state board of education, or some other authority external to the school.

2.3 HOME ENVIRONMENT

The home environment is a powerful agent for laying the foundation of an education of a child from an early age (Rammala, 2009). According to Gasa (2005) quality of attachment, bonding and the socio-economic background of the parents in the family are important for the child's emotional health. Leithwood (2010) like Gasa (2005) also regards home environment as an important support system available to a child and adolescent which if disturbed by factors such as unstable home environment, parents level of education and negative parenting style, have implications for a child and adolescent performance at school.

2.3.1 Parental involvement in education

It is universally recognised that home and other environmental factors contribute greatly to the development of cognitive skills and subsequent labour market outcomes (van der Berg et al. 2011). Leithwood (2010) regards home environment as the crucial starting point of teaching and learning of a child at an early stage w here parents should play a very important role in shaping and preparing a child to formal school systems.

The new National Curriculum Statement (NCS) demands that a lot of work should be done at home where parents should assist their children with assignments, home works and projects (Corallo & McDonald, 2002). The Pupil Progress Project (PPP) results indicate that children who frequently do homework and reading at home have a performance advantage over those who do not (Taylor, 2008). School principals should make it easier for parents to be informed and to play a part in what goes on in the classroom (Phurutse, 2005).

A school is a unit within a society, and can only exist through the co-operation of a school community (Legotlo, Maaga, Sebego, Westhuizen, Mosoge, Nieuwoudt & Steyn, 2002). According to Legotlo et al. (2002), the establishment of a good school community relationship is a key ingredient to success in securing mutual participation of parents in the day to day running of schools which is constituted by the following activities: decision-making, problem-solving, providing assistance and offering services to school.

According to Rammala (2009), for the school to produce quality results parents should participate in the day-to-day activities which can be seen to promote quality learning and teaching. According to van der Berg et al. (2011), there seems to be sharp differences between educated and uneducated parents when it comes to participation of parents in schools. Van der Berg et al. (2011) noted the willingness by educated parents to help their children on school matters at home. On the other hand uneducated parents tend to leave everything to the teachers and learners.

Motshekga (2011) indicated that when parents are involved in education, children perform better and schools improve their results such as those of Annual National Assessment (ANA) and Grade 12 results.

2.3.2. Parental literacy and socio- economic level

High illiteracy in Limpopo Province is resulting in minimal or none participation by parents in their children's learning which include supervision of home work, assignments and projects which as a result eventually lead to poor performance by children from illiterate families (Bayona & Sadiki, 1999; Rammala, 2009).

According to Limpopo Department of Education (2011), adult illiteracy is a huge problem which impacts negatively on learner performance as parents are unable to assist their children at home due to their illiteracy. Parents are identified by both learners and teachers as very important participants that could play a role in improving learners' performance (Mji & Makgato, 2006).Limpopo Department of Education (2011), further indicates that the poor the household the weaker the performance of learners at school.

Leithwood (2010) argued that illiterate parents seem to be ashamed to attend meetings in which curriculum matters are discussed because they think they are not educated enough and they do not believe and trust that their contributions would be entertained by those who are educated. Leithwood (2010) further indicated that such illiterate parents seem to attend meetings for compliance because their participation in curriculum and policy matters is very minimal.

It is the children of the poor parents who most consistently underperform in their schools (Corallo & McDonald, 2002). Corallo and McDonald (2002), also view the education level of parents and their socio-economic status as predictors of education performance.

2.4 SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The National Ministry of Education in South Africa and all major stakeholders such as learners, educators and parents are concerned about the problem of poor performance in our schools, especially performance in Grade 12 examinations (Edley, Sauer, and Sikrwege, 2006). According to Green & O'Sullivan for a school to operate well it must be well resourced and also require a range of enabling conditions, such as: skilled, motivated and well-trained staff supported by good conditions of service; strong leadership and management capability; access to ongoing professional development; understanding and implementation of the curriculum; safe and healthy environment; and a sound relationship with all stakeholders.

2.4.1 Breakdown of management and leadership

Leadership creates the conditions under which teachers can work effectively as well as to instil high level of discipline, proper and effective management systems and structures with clear lines of authority, powers, responsibility and accountability (Taylor, 2008). Taylor (2008) also regards leadership and management as a prerequisite for school performance.

Appointment of inexperienced black teachers to occupy management position such as a head of department, deputy principal as well as principals in townships and rural areas is one of the factors which affect schools results (Block & Pradesh, 2002). Most of the black educators appointed to management positions lack experience compared to their White, Coloured and Indian counterparts (Bipath, 1998).

Since the introduction of a democratic government in South Africa in 1994 there has been the decentralisation of tasks which were in the past (during the apartheid era) conducted by inspectors from the circuit offices, the principals, heads of departments and senior teachers who are now assuming more responsibilities in the day-to-day running of school activities (Green & O'Sullivan, 2009).

School Management Teams play an important role in planning and implementing quality programmes towards quality performance (Lekgoto et al. 2002).

Van der Berg et al. (2011), argued that for the school to avoid underperformance, the responsibility and the accountability of the principal needs to be clearly defined with clear policies relating to instructional programme such as classroom visits, homework policy, comprehensive subject policies that included policy on assessment and computation of final examination marks.

In his budget speech Masemola (2011), the Member of Executive Council (MEC) responsible for Education indicated that the weaknesses related to school management and leadership should be addressed in order to improve school management and leadership which will in turn lead to improvement in the school performance. Masemola (2011) also suggested that weaknesses can be addressed by strengthening educational programmes such as the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) in school management and leadership which is offered in the province. "The offering of this ACE can advance management and leadership skills of principals" (Masemola, 2011: 8).

According to Bodestein (2008), The School Management Team (SMT) holds a key position in managing the education of learners effectively to produce results of high quality. Bodestein (2008) also noted that the SMT has the responsibility to provide an environment that ensures quality of teaching and learning at schools. According to Bodestein (2008) none-committal and unwillingness by the (SMT) to provide leadership that can ultimately lead to quality education through regular monitoring of written work and learner attendance may negatively affect performance of Grade 12 learners.

According to Motshekga (2010), some School Management Teams do not understand their roles, responsibilities and are unable to plan and monitor curriculum properly, which results in an inappropriate subject offerings and combinations as well as poor time-tabling.

School performance is crucially linked to the leadership and management role of the principal and his, her School Management Team (Manuel et al. 2011). Manuel et al (2011), also indicated that most of the schools in South Africa which are performing poorly are schools where the principal run the schools inefficiently and the schools are undisciplined, do not support the educators, do not mentor less experienced staff members, do not involve parents in the education of their children and do not promote their schools in the broader community.

2.4.2 Lack of learner discipline

Safe and disciplined learning environment is one of the critical elements to the successful delivery of quality education (Department of Education National Guidelines titled "Management and Prevention of Drug Use and Abuse in all Public Schools and Further Education and Training Institutions", 200; 2002).

The National Department of Education (2000; 2002), also regards the creation of a safe learning environment an essential prerequisite to learning which can lead to good performance of schools. According to May (1998), for schools to create good environmental conditions for good teaching and learning to take place they must first create safe learning environment. Schools cannot perform well or produce good results if there is no orderly environment for teaching and learning to take place effectively (May 1998).

According to Taylor (2008), the relationship between the learner and the educator is one of the factors that determine academic performance of schools. If learners are ill disciplined that may therefore affect their relationship with their teachers which may in turn affect their performance (Rammala, 2009).

According Smithgall and Walker (2009), lack of respect for educators by learners is one of the causes of discipline problems in the schools and their classrooms. Smithgall and Walker (2009), further say that addressing discipline issues in schools can force educators to spend more time on learner discipline issues and spend less time on teaching. Legotlo et al. (2002) like Smithgall and Walker (2009), are also of the view that when more time is spent on learner discipline teachers may not be able to cover the scope and syllabi on time as prescribed by pacesetters of different learning areas.

Corporal punishment was abolished in 1996 and schools must apply alternative disciplinary processes to create positive learning and teaching environment which is incentive- based system that rewards good conduct and encourages self-discipline (Department of Education, 2000:9). The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (SASA) Chapter 2, Section 10 sub-section (1), states that "No person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner.

Some of the schools do not have learners' Code of conduct in the place. Taking an advantage of the absence of the code of conduct some of the learners are undisciplined and do not attend school regularly and that result in poor performance of a school (Bayona, 1999).

2.4.3 Peer pressure and substance abuse

Peer groups provide opportunity for learning specific skills or behaviour that may not be available in other social relationships (Rammala, 2009). Peer interaction plays a unique and essential role in developing sociability and moral development (Gasa 2005). According to Bipath (2005), adolescents are likely to do the same as their closest friends and will emulate the behaviour or abuse intoxicating stuff through observation and imitation. Bipath (2002; 2005), further argued that most of the adolescents who are afraid of being rejected by their peer become engaged in drugs and alcohol so as to gain acceptance and approval of the group.

According to Rammala (2009), alcohol and drug abuse might change adolescent's behaviour and that they may become argumentative, disruptive and aggressive in the school. The abuse of such substances impairs the learners' ability to learn and respond to questions relating to the learned information. In most cases of the crimes committed at schools substance abuse is involved (Rammala, 2009).

According to Gasa (2005), learners who abuse intoxicating substances such as drugs and alcohol usually bunk lessons, commit crimes, they become rebellious, moody and are always dodging from attending school. When learners are under the influence of stupefying substances, they do not study, they lose a lot of time for studies and they perform poorly (Gasa, 2005).

2.4.4 Educators absenteeism and lack of time on task

In terms of Section 4 of the Employment of Educators Act (EEA), 1998, as stipulated in the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) all educators should be at school during formal school day, which should not be less than seven hours a day, except for special reasons and with prior permission of the principal (Policy Handbook for Educators, 1998). Any deviation to the seven hours policy should be based on special reasons as contained in chapter J of the Personnel Administrative Measures made in terms of the Employment of Educators Act (EEA), 76 of 1998 (Republic of South Africa, 1996 C-123).

Bernstein Bernstein (2011) conducted research on teacher attendance and found that an average of 24 days of regular instruction time is being lost a year due to educator absenteeism. Bernstein's (2011) report revealed that educators are mostly absent on Mondays and Fridays and that ten percent of them are not in school on any given day (Sowetan, September 23 2011). Bernstein (2011), further argued in an article published in Sowetan dated 23 September 2011 that just over three quarters of leave recorded is of one or two days that is discretionary leave not requiring a medical certificate. Mondays and Fridays are the most popular discretionary leave days.

According to Bipath (2005), time on task denotes the amount of time educators are supposed to spend on educational activities, especially teaching and learning in the classroom. According to Phurutse (2005), the ideal time of formal contact hours is 25 hours per week. The province that shows the highest number of formal contact hours between learners and teachers within the categories of 25-35 hours is Limpopo with 76 per cent, followed by Eastern Cape with 71,8 per cent (Phurutse, 2005). Taking into account that Limpopo Province is not one of the best performing provinces, it might stand to reason that there could be wide-scale deviation from the norm for time on task in Limpopo Province (Phurutse, 2005).

Phurutse (2005) also noted that teachers whose time on task is less than 25 hours a week are doing less in terms of effective teaching and they are unlikely not to cover or complete curriculum as per pacesetters and that may result in poor performance by learners.

According to Bernstein (2011), the extent to which time is used for teaching and learning is the most valid and obvious indicator of the extent to which the school is dedicated to its central task. It is self evident that no learning can occur if teachers and pupils are not in class at the same time (Bernstein, 2011).

Block and Pradesh (2002) argued that for effective teaching and learning to take place, educators have to be at school regularly. According to Leithwood (2006) if a number of hours of teaching and learning time is lost due to absenteeism of educators is not compensated, then educators may not complete the syllabus and that may in the end contribute negatively towards poor performance in the final Grade 12 results.

2.4.5 Social grants payment and learner absenteeism

According to Edley et al (2006), many female learners are grant recipients or assist elderly family members who are grant recipients during school hours and this result in low attendance on payout days and thereafter when learners do shopping. Schools with poor and ineffective management of learner's attendance may not be able to identify why learners absent themselves to school (Bayona, 1999). Bayona (1999) indicates that poor attendance may result in poor performance as learners do not have much contact time of classroom activities. The poor performance and low pass rate in poor performing schools may improve to good performance if learners attended school regularly (Edley et al, 2006).

Bayona (1999) also discovered that some of the parents stop their children to attend school on Fridays for the purposes of religious ceremonies whereas some of the parents take their children out of the school in order to take part in the initiation ceremonies which in some cultures every child in that community must participate. Majority of schools in those communities do not have school policies to regulate attendance by learners and as result many schools perform poorly because school days are lost when learners are engaged in community ceremonies (Bayona, 1999).

2.4.6 Under-staffing across the system

According to Green and O'Sullivan (2009), the quality and quantity of support that the department is expected to provide to schools is one of the critical success factors to improve learning and teaching in our schools and hold educators accountable. The Limpopo Department of Education has a very high vacancy rate in the area of Professional Support Staff particularly in curriculum advisory services at district and circuit level where teachers expected to be trained on teaching skills (Limpopo Department of Education, 2011). For good performance and quality results Professional Support Staff is crucial and therefore the filling at these posts should be prioritised so that the schools receive continuous support in order assist both learners and teachers in the administration of their work (Green & O'Sullivan, 2009).

Green and O'Sullivan (2009), further argue that the posts that are not filled hamper successful completion of programmes and projects and in the long run, the employees become over stretched and consequently not being productive. According to Bayona (1999), understaffing lead to poor administration which affect the culture of teaching and learning and in turn leads to poor scholastic achievements and school development.

2.4.7 Teacher competence in the teaching Mathematics and Science

South Africa has participated in a number of international comparative studies such as Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ), Monitoring Learner Achievement (MLA) and Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) that seek to benchmark academic performance. All these studies indicate that children in South Africa are not performing at the expected grade levels (Mji & Makgato, 2006 and Taylor, 2008).

The 1995 Third International Mathematics and Science Study shows that the teaching and learning of mathematics, science and technology was the hardest hit because the results on learners' performance in which South Africa participated with other 41 countries such as Botswana, Kenya, Malawi and Zambia reveals that South African learners came last with mean score of 351 which is lower than the international benchmark of 513 (Mji and Makgato, 2006).

According to The Limpopo Department of Education (2011), a pilot programme conducted in 2008 for high school Maths and Science teachers, revealed that the educators are not competent in the content they are expected to teach because the results show an achievement of 39% in Mathematics and 35% in Physical Science for the educators when they are assessed on the same content that they are expected to teach. The teachers' performance in Higher Grade Mathematics and Physical Science were 39% and 35% respectively (Limpopo Teacher Assessment Programme May 2009).

The Limpopo Department of Education (2011) argued that teachers in the main fail to generate any knowledge beyond what is prescribed in the text- books and they hardly use different teaching methods.

According to Onwu (1999), outdated teaching practices and lack of basic knowledge always result in poor teaching standards. The poor standards are also exacerbated by large number of under-qualified or unqualified teachers who teach in overcrowded and non-equipped classrooms (Mji & Makgato, 2006).

According to Onwu (1999) and Mji and Makgato (2006), the status of mathematical and scientific literacy is generally poor in the entire schooling system (inclusive of both poor performing and poor performing schools), and it is conceivable that such a system will not be able to produce enough learners who qualify to enrol at the universities to pursue further Sector Education and Training (SET) studies.

2.4.8 Insufficient school infrastructure

School infrastructure such as laboratories and libraries has always been a challenge more especially where many schools were built by the communities (Bipath, 2005). According to Onwu (1999), learners whose schools are without laboratory facilities find it difficult to learn physical science.

In physical science practical sessions experiments are conducted where teachers try to bring life to what is explained in the textbooks in order to enhance teaching and learners' performance (Onwu, 1999). Without laboratories there is a possibility that learners may be unable to improve higher order learning skills such as analysis, problem solving, and evaluating. Such learners may perform poorly in physical science (Mji & Makgato, 2006).

On the other hand, the same schools within poor communities are without well resourced libraries (Block and Pradesh, 2002). It is a logical assumption that the absence of library and lack of library orientation and motivation to read beyond the textbook certainly impacts negatively on learners learning, leading to a low level of the culture of learning- thus a high probability of failure in school work (Bayona 1999).

According to Block and Pradesh (2002), shortage of classrooms and overcrowding in schools make it difficult for teachers to supervise and monitor homework and assignments effectively, the quality of learning and teaching is compromised in both primary and secondary schools.

2.4.9 Admissions

The National Admission Policy (National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 on admission in public school) requires schools to complete admissions a year prior to reopening for the new academic year (Edley et al. 2006).

Majority of schools in Limpopo still have a challenge of complying with this policy as revealed by School Readiness Report of January 2011 (Limpopo Department of Education, 2011). Limpopo Department of Education (2011) further revealed that teaching and learning cannot take place effectively from the first day of reopening if admissions are not finalised the previous day in advance because late admissions have negative impact on the education planning systems and resource provisioning.

Quality teaching and learning cannot occur if both educators and learners are not present at school on every working day including the first day of the academic year (Edley et al, 2006).

According to Block and Pradesh (2002), some of the schools do not have clear policies and plans in place which inform parents of learners about the actual dates of admission of learners, correct procedures to follow when parents are registering learners and commencement dates for official normal schooling.

Lack of information about the due dates of admission of learners result in some parents registering their children in the following year and that disrupts the normal starting of the school at the beginning of the year (Pradesh & Block, 2002).

2.4.10 Problems in implementing government policies

In South Africa, the amalgamation of 18 education departments after 1994 resulted into the formation of a single non-racial and democratic education department (Lekgotlo et al. 2002). Lekgotlo et al. (2002), further clarified that the formation of this single none racial and democratic education department necessitated the formulation of policies that were expected to simplify the governance and management of schools (public and private as well as independent schools).

According to Taylor (2008), an attempt to transform and reform the education system, the government enacted many laws and adopted new policies such as South African Schools Act, 1996 (Act No 84 of 1996) (SASA), which may have positive or negative effect to learner performance.

Lekgotlo et al. (2002) further argued that despite the policies developed by the department to guide the schools, the schools are still experiencing problems in developing and implementing their own school policies and such incapacity affect effectiveness in school management.

According to Legotlo et al. (2002) and Edley et al. (2006), every academic year the Provinces develop new post establishments of all the public schools which are normally exposed to teacher unions before implementation. Legotlo et al. (2002) and Edley et al. (2006), indicate that provinces are some certain instances unilaterally release and implement without consulting teacher union and always result in disputes which take time to be resolved and also compromise service delivery.

Occasionally educators are temporarily redeployed by the Provincial Department to other schools without following the prescribed procedures and guidelines. Principals find it difficult to supervise educators who are borrowed from other institutions especially in a case where such an educator is not even competent to the learning area where his or her assistance is needed (Green & O'Sullivan, 2009).

2.4.11 Teacher union disturbances and problems in implementing collective agreements

In pursuit of transformation in the build up to the first democratic election, educators mobilised themselves to form teachers unions at different levels within all nine provinces with an aim of taking part in reviewing South African education system as well as representing educators at the bargaining chambers (Legotlo et al. 2002).

Teacher unions wanted to work in partnership with the Department of education in developing effective intervention strategies in order to improve teaching and learning in our public schools.

According to Legotlo et al. (2002), after the election of 1994, unionization of educators has been a major development in South Africa with the emergence of giant unions such as South African Democratic Union (SADTU), National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA), and Suid Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie (SAOU) and that resulted in more than 300 000 educators in South Africa joining and affiliating to the unions of their choice.

Legotlo et al. (2002), further indicate that the National Ministry of Education has made and signed several agreements with teacher unions, which include: access to work place, union meetings at the work place, time off with full pay for union activities and appointment of full time shop steward. In the implementation of these agreements major challenges such as strikes, picketing and sit in emerged as a result of the employer not honouring the agreements or moved by labour demands Legotlo et al. (2002).

According to Bipath (2005), expression of rights by union members can have the effect of disrupting teaching and learning when teachers demonstrate their anger by not honouring their assigned responsibilities in terms of their contracts as clearly outlined in Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) Chapter A which talks about educators workload (school based).

Bipath (2005) further argued that there is a tendency to threaten the employer by vowing not to return to classes until their demands are met. Legotlo et al. (2002) further argued that occasionally union officials cause disturbances during normal working hours by holding meetings or taking time-off.

The social and environmental activities such as strike actions and holding of union meetings are time consuming for the poorest learners in our communities and that have resulted in poor performance by learners (Manuel et al. 2011).

According to Green and O'Sullivan (2009), some union office bearers get seconded with full pay to carry out union activities for a year and learners are left without teachers because the Department takes time to substitute the educator especially if the seconded educator is teaching scarce skills subject like Mathematics and Physical Science.

According to Leithwood (2010), during the time of wage negotiations some union members would prolong organised strikes, or take more teaching time than necessary to organise for a strike. Leithwood (2010), further indicated that election of office bearers to union leadership position is not limited to post level one educators only, even principals as long as they are in good standing they can elected.

When an SMT member is elected into union leadership position, management of school is also compromised because it is difficult for SMT member to run union activities whilst at same he or she must attend to the administration of the school (Legotlo et al. 2002).

Legotlo et al. (200), argued that teacher unions (particularly SADTU) played a most important role as they closed the schools or took teachers out of schools during school hours because some school principals have no power over teachers because of unions.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, information concerning characteristics of poor performing schools was collected through literature from local and international sources. This was done to identify and review previous work published by other scholars and to avoid replication of previous research. In support of this view Hofstee (2006: 01) points out "..... Literature review provides the researcher with a theory base, a survey of published works that pertain to research investigation, and an analysis of that work". According to McMillan & Schumacher (2006) literature review illuminates the related literature to enable a reader to gain further insights from the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents details of how the whole research process was conducted. Research design indicates the structure and procedures that are followed to answer research questions. The purpose of this study was to investigate and determine characteristics of poor performing school.

The study further investigated the availability and usage of resources in poor performing schools as well as the extent to which available policies were implemented.

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Thefollowing question guided this research:

- What are the characteristics of poor performing schools

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design refers to a plan for selecting participants, research sites, and data collection procedure to answer the research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

Quantitative method was used in choosing participants, data collection technique, that is, questionnaire, procedures for gathering data.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

A letter was written to Department of Education Vhembe District to request for permission to undertake the study in seven secondary schools at Tshinane Circuit which performed poorly in 2010 Grade 12 final examination. When permission was granted, principals of schools were contacted by Department of Education Vhembe District Office, introducing to them the study and the researcher.

A structured questionnaire was compiled, using the literature research as a basis, in an effort to obtain the response by School Management Teams (SMTs') regarding attendance rate, discipline, teaching practice, learning atmosphere, absenteeism, parents participation in education of their children, availability and usage of resources, school management and so forth (see questionnaire appendix A).

I physically visited respondents in their schools, work places and in some cases, at home to distribute and collect questionnaire. All respondents were assured of confidentiality and not requested to give their names.

Questionnaires were distributed to fourteen learners who failed Grade 12 2010 NSC final examination , thirty one teachers who taught Grade 12 in 2010, fourteen parents of learners and principals from the seven secondary schools which performed poorly in 2010 Grade 12 NSC final examination in an effort to obtain their views regarding poor performance in their schools.

Teachers, School Governing Body members and principals were in a position to complete questionnaire on their own. On the other hand learners could not be able to complete the questionnaire on their own. They were supervised whilst completing questionnaire quietly and individually.

3.5 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, a quantitative approach was followed. A survey questionnaire was used to collect data. Population of the study, sampling procedures, construction of the questionnaire, pre-testing of questionnaire, distribution, and collection processes are explicitly documented in this section.

A questionnaire was chosen because is relatively economical, has the same questions for all the subjects, and can ensure anonymity. The subject responds to something written for specific purposes.

3.5.1 Population

The target population for the present research were learners who failed Grade 12 in 2010, teachers who taught Grade 12 in 2010, parents of learners who were members of the School Governing Body in 2010 and principals from seven out of total number of ten secondary schools in Tshinane Circuit in Vhembe District. All seven secondary schools that underperformed in 2010 National Senior Certificate Grade 12 results were chosen for this study.

3.5.2 Sampling

The target population for the present study were schools at Tshinane Circuit in Vhembe District. This sample was chosen in respect of poor average performance by all schools in this circuit. Out of ten secondary schools in Tshinane Circuit, seven secondary schools had performed below the Provincial norm of 50% in Grade 12 in 2010.

The participating schools had approximately 262 learners who failed Grade 12 National Senior Certificate examination in 2010. The sample included thirty teachers, fourteen parents and seven principals from the selected schools.

Both parents and learners were randomly selected taking into account gender representation except for educators who were selected on the basis that they were teaching Grade 12 in 2010 academic year.

In the selection process of individual participants, simple random sample was used. In this research, learners who failed Grade 12 in 2012, parents who were members of the School Governing Body, teachers who taught Grade 12 in 2010 and principals from all the seven secondary schools which performed below 50% in National Senior Certificate Examination of 2012 were required to complete a questionnaire and the results were analysed quantitatively.

According to Creswell (2009) in random sampling each individual representative from the population provides the ability to generalize to a population.

From each school two learners who failed Grade 12 in 2010, four teachers who taught grade 12 in 2010, two parents component of School Governing Body and all the principals from each secondary school were requested to complete a questionnaire with a view to get a better picture of what might have constituted characteristics of all those seven which underperformed in 2010 National Senior Certificate Grade 12 results.

The sample was also chosen in respect of poor average performance by all schools in Tshinane Circuit in 2010.

3.5.3 Questionnaire

According to Hofstee (2006) questionnaires are a form of structured questions, where all respondents are asked the same questions and are often offered the same options in answering them.

A structured questionnaire to be completed by two learners who failed 2010 Grade 12 examination from each school, four teachers with an additional three teachers from the three big schools, two parents who are members of the School Governing Body and a principal and a principal was developed to collect data.

The questionnaire was consisted of three sections namely: Section A in which provided biographical information of participants, Section B availability of resources, policies and how they were utilised or implemented and Section C which was about the extent to which other factors or activities that might have contributed to poor performance of a school.

3.5.4 Pre-testing the questionnaire

Creswell (2009:150) argued: "....testing is important to establish the content validity of an instrument and to improve questions, format and scales ..."

A pre-test was conducted with the view of detecting problems in data collection method. Questionnaire was administered to two learners, four teachers, two School Governing Body members and two principals from three different schools which performed poorly in 2010 Grade 12 National Senior Certificate results with an aim of making corrections, adjustments and amendments where necessary. Participants were typical of the people from which the main study intended to collect information.

The pre-test revealed that the questionnaire was too long. The number of questions was therefore reduced. The question which was addressing the availability and usage of resource did not include the column of those who were not affected.

Questionnaire gave structured responses which were comparable. That assisted the researcher in making a well informed generalization from the responses.

3.5.5 Data collecting procedure

I used primary and secondary information to collect data in this study:

3.5.5.1 Primary data

Primary data comprised information gathered from secondary school learners, teachers, principals and parents information based on their response to the questions regarding their participation on curriculum delivery of their children.

It was intended to get response from the people who are directly involved in the school environment and to get perspectives of teachers and principals on the problem from the experience, knowledge and management point of view.

3.5.5.2 Secondary data

This is comprised of the information gathered from statistical results information obtained from administrators at Tshinane Circuit.

3.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Precision and accuracy are obviously important qualities in research measurement (Babbie & Mouton, 2003). The researcher, therefore, support the view that when social scientists construct and evaluate measurements, they should pay special attention to two technical considerations: reliability and validity.

3.6.1 Reliability

According to Babbie and Mouton (2003) reliability is a matter of whether a particular technique, applied repeatedly to the same object would yield the same results each time. If the same experimental design leads to the same results on subsequent occasions and using different samples then the experiment is said to be reliable (Breakwell, Hammond & Schaw, 2000).

MacMillan and Schumacher (2006:130) say the following about reliability "...reliability refers to consistency of measurement, or the extent to which the scores of respondents are similar over different forms of the same instrument or occasion of data collection".

According to Vithal and Jansen (2010) reliability of questionnaire is about the consistency of a measure, score or rating. Questionnaire as a measurement instrument that is reliable will provide consistent results when a given individual is measured repeatedly under near-identical conditions (Bipath, 2005).

3.6.2 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of concept under consideration (Babbie & Mouton, 2003)

According to Vithal & Jansen (2010) validity is an attempt to "check out" whether the meaning and interpretation of an event is sound or whether a particular measure is an accurate reflection. Validity is a mearurement concept that is concerned with the degree to which the measurement instrument actually measures what it purports to measure (Bipath 2005). Validity of a questionnaire as a research tool relates to extent to which inferences and uses made on the basis of scores which are reasonable and appropriate (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

In line with the above information on reliability and validity the researcher ensured that the questionnaire used as data collection instrument complied with the demands of reliability and validity. The questionnaire schedules were seen as ideal for conducting a study. Question used were tested and retested in the form of pilot testing in order to determine consistency of responses elicited.

Prior to using the questionnaire to collect data, it was pilot tested on 20% of population of the sample from each category of the respondents. The purpose of the pilot test was to refine the questionnaire so that respondents would have no problems in answering the questions and there would be no problems in recording data. In addition, that enabled the researcher to obtain some assessment of the questions' validity and the likely reliability of data to be collected.

The questionnaire used was structured in such a way that all respondents were asked the same questions and were offered the same options in answering questions. The population sample was representative of population of poor performing schools within Tshinane Circuit in the Vhembe District of Department of Education

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The literature survey and questionnaires were used as data collection techniques for this study. In analysis of data questionnaires responses are analysed in detail. Responses to questionnaire provided structured data which was easily comparable. The results are analysed and the responses presented in percentages. The purpose was to give a picture of the extent which different questions and ideas were supported or not supported.

Columns and tables are presented in Appendix A and B to help link the questions to responses. This made it easy to see how the conclusions were made.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Researchers need to protect their research participants; develop a trust with them; promote integrity of research; guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their organisations or institutions; and cope with new, challenging problems (Creswell, 2009)

The following ethical issues were considered before collecting data from the respondents:

3.8.1 Anonymity

Anonymity is about the protection of the respondents' interests; their well being and their identity, especially in survey research (Babbie & Mouton, 2003). If revealing the respondents' responses by the researcher may in one way or the other injure the respondents in any way, therefore, adherence to ethics of anonymity becomes more important.

Respondents have a right to remain anonymous whereby the researcher disassociate names of the respondents during collection of data. Anonymity refers to the principle that the identity of an individual is kept secret (Bak, 2004). According to Mouton (2001) the conditions of anonymity also apply to collection of data by devices where the respondents are free to reject such devices if they do not understand how they work.

In the questionnaire that was distributed to the respondent, there was no space provided for filling in of names. Therefore, it was clear to the respondents that their names or any form of identification would be used.

3.8.2 Disclosure of the purpose of research

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006) the researcher should be open and honest with the respondents as possible, but there are circumstances in which either withholding information about the research or deceiving respondents may be justified.

In this study a letter which also disclosures the topic of the research and to request permission to conduct a research within seven secondary schools which performed poorly in 2010 Grade 12 final examination was sent to the Department of Education Vhembe District.

3.8.3 Caring and fairness

A sense of caring and fairness must be part of researcher's thinking, actions and personal morality (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Before the respondents completed the research question, the researcher had had open discussions and negotiations about the topic with participants in order to promote fairness to participants.

3.9 CONCLUSION

The core of the research process and methodology used in collecting data was presented in this section. Reasons and the rationale behind the research procedures were provided in order to assist in understanding the interpretations as well as subsequent conclusions in the next chapter.

Reasons were given for the preference of quantitative survey method. A clear description of population and sample procedure were indicated. The explanation and advantages of data collection procedure and the instrument used were given. All sections hinged on this section.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents report on the results of the data gathered from the questionnaire conducted with learners who failed Grade 12 in 2010 National Senior Certificate Examination, teachers who taught Grade 12 in 2010, members of parent component of School Governing Body and principals of all the seven schools that under performed in 2010 Grade12 results. The main purpose was to investigate as to what might have contributed to underperformance and also check characteristics of poor performance in those schools.

Grade 12 Tshinane Circuit results- 2010

Table 4.1 the table below shows average passes (%) of selected schools in Vhembe District at Tshinane Circuit in 2010

Secondary schools	No. Wrote	% pass
A	35	29.9%
B	133	44.2%
C	87	43.0%
D	77	34.0%
E	38	26.0%
F	40	27.5%
G	107	48.9%

*Adapted from 2010 Tshinane Circuit analysis of results

The table shows 2010 Grade 12 NSC statistics of results of all the seven underperforming schools in Tshinane Circuit. It may be observed from the results that all the seven poor performing schools did not manage to get Limpopo Provincial norm of 50%. School names are not included for ethical reasons. Therefore, each school is awarded a code for statistical purposes.

4.2 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The following paragraphs focus on reporting the empirical investigation by providing answers to the perceptions and understanding of learners, teachers, parents and principals on what might be viewed as characteristics poor performing school. Two major themes emerged from the analysis of quantitative data, that is, the impact which the availability of resources such as infrastructure had on the performance of the school, the extent to which policies and school record contributed to performance of the school. The responses to questionnaire items are presented graphically in tabular form and are followed by a brief synthesis of findings for each item.

4.3 Biographical information of respondents

4.3.1 Population distribution

The table below presents number of male and females respondents who took part in this study.

	Frequency	Percent
Male	45	68.2
Female	21	31.8
Total	66	100

Table 4.2 Gender of respondents

Table 4.2 is showing the highest percent of 68.2 males as compared to only 31.8% of females. There were 68.2% of men which is almost in majority of at least 36.4%

over women respondents to the questionnaire. Women comprised of 31.8% of the sample.

4.3.2. Focus group of the respondents.

The following table presents focus group of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Learner	14	21.2
Parent	14	21.7
Teacher	31	47.0
Principal	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 4.3 Categories of respondents

Just under a quarter of respondents 14 (21.2%) were learners. There were also 14 (21.7%) of respondents who were parents. About 13 (47%) of respondents were teachers and only 7 (10.6%) of respondents were principals, which was a small majority of all the respondents because from each and every school only a principal or one member of School Management Team in the absence of the principal was selected.

4.3.3. Age range of the respondents

The following table presents the age of the learners, teachers, parents and principals

	Frequency	Percent
15-25 years	14	21.2
26-35 years	2	3.0
36-45 years	24	36.4
46-55 years	19	28.8
56-65 years	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 4.4 Ages

Ages of 15-25 years which constituted a small percentage of 21.2% of respondents of the sample were learners. A very small percentage of 3.0% of respondents, mainly teachers were of ages of 26-35 years. 36-45 years constituted 36.4% of the sample. 28.8% of the respondents were of ages of 46-55 years whereas 10.6% were of 56-65 years.

4.4 AVAILABILITY AND USAGE OF RESOURCES, SCHOOL RECORDS AND POLICIES

The tables below show the responses by the respondents who were asked to indicate the availability of resources such as staffroom, library, laboratory, computer laboratory, school records and policies which relate to instructional programme such as homework policy, learner and teacher attendance policy, policy on assessment and policies on time, task and official school hours.

4.4.1 Respondents' views regarding availability and usage of staffroom

The following table presents the views of the respondents regarding the availability of staffroom and how it was used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	32	48.5	Often	23	34.8
No	34	51.5	Seldom		
			Never	3	4.5
			Not applicable	40	60.6
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.5 Staffroom

At least 48.5% of the respondents indicated the availability of staffroom. There were 51.5% of the respondents who indicted that their schools did not have staffroom which reflect the difficulties experienced by teachers when preparing their work. There is a need to address this anomaly as that may impact negatively on the performance of the teachers.

At schools where staffrooms were available, 34.8% of the respondents often used them for school work. 4.5% of respondents never used them even though such resources were available. The statistics also indicates not applicable for schools which did not have staffroom. Hence, the percent stands at 66.6% of respondents as indicating non utilization of staffroom due to unavailability of staffrooms at their schools.

For schools to provide good performance and quality grade 12 results, they must be well resourced with infrastructure such as staffroom, classrooms and laboratories (Green & O'Sullivan, 2009)

4.4.2 Respondents' views regarding availability and usage of library

The following table presents the views of the respondents regarding the availability of library and how it was used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	1	1.5	Often	2	3.0
No	65	98.5	Seldom	1	1.5
			Never	5	7.6
			Not applicable	58	87.9
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.6 Library

Shortage of libraries is evident as 98.5% of respondents indicated that their schools did not have libraries, which might have impacted negatively on the performance of the learners due to shortages of supplementary reading materials. Therefore, in the column of the usage of resources 87.9% of respondents indicated not applicable because of unavailability of libraries at their schools.

At schools where libraries were available as confirmed by 7.6% of the respondents, some of the schools never used those libraries. A very small percentage of 1.5% of respondents indicated availability of libraries at their school but 1.5% of respondents seldom used those libraries.

With almost 98.5% of respondents indicating insufficient school infrastructure such as a school library in particular, it is a logical assumption that the absence of library and lack of library orientation and motivation to read beyond the textbook certainly impacts negatively on learners learning, leading to a low level of culture of learning-thus a high probability of failure in school work (Bayona 1999).

4.4.3 Respondents' views regarding availability and usage of laboratory

The following table presents the views of the respondents regarding the availability of laboratory and how it was used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	2	3.0	Often	3	4.5
No	64	97.0	Seldom	1	1.5
			Never	6	9.1
			Not applicable	56	84.8
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.7 Laboratory

Only 3% of the respondents indicated that laboratories were available at their schools. The statistics shows 4.5% of respondents indicating that they often used laboratories whereas 1.5% seldom used laboratories. Even though some of the schools were fortunate to have laboratories, they never used them.

The response by 84.8% of the respondents about the usage of laboratories should be not applicable because they did not have such a resource in place at their own schools. Shortage of an important physical resource such as laboratory was viewed as a major characteristic by respondents at poor performing schools.

According to Mji and Makgato (2006) laboratory session is important because practical work is way of bringing to life to what is explained in the text book. If 97.0% of respondents indicated unavailability of laboratories at their school, it simple implies that by implication learners were not able to supplement what was in the textbook through experiments.

Learners whose schools are without laboratory infrastructure find it difficult to learn Physical Science (Onwu, 1999).

4.4.4 Respondents' views regarding availability and usage of computer laboratory

The following table presents the views of the respondents regarding the availability of computer laboratory and how it was used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	24	36.4	Often	8	12.1
No	42	63.6	Seldom	12	18.2
			Never	9	13.6
			Not applicable	37	56.1
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.8 Computer laboratory

A very serious shortage of computer laboratories was noticed in the statistics when 63.6% of respondents indicated unavailability of computer laboratories at their schools. The unavailability of computer laboratories resulted in 56.1% of respondents responding by showing not applicable in the column where they were required to indicate usage of resources.

Of the 36.4% of the respondents who indicated availability of computer laboratories, 12.1% of respondents often used computer laboratories, 18.2% of the respondents seldom used computer laboratories and 13.6% of respondents never used computer laboratories irrespective of their availability at their schools.

School infrastructure such as laboratories and computer laboratories have always been a challenge more especially where many schools were built by the communities (Bipath, 2005).

4.4.5 Respondents' views regarding Teacher Attendance Register

It was important for the school to record attendance of teachers when they report for duty. The following table presents the views of the respondents regarding the availability of Teacher Attendance Register and how it was used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	62	93.9	Often	51	77.3
No	4	6.1	Seldom	9	13.6
			Never	2	3.0
			Not applicable	4	6.1
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.9 Teacher Attendance Register

An analysis on attendance shows 93.9% of respondents indicating that teacher attendance registers were in place at their schools, whereas a small percentage of 6.1% indicated none availability of registers which were to be used to monitor attendance of teachers on a daily basis.

On usage of resources, 77.3% of respondents are indicating that they often used the teacher attendance registers to record attendance and absenteeism among the teachers. That is why it was simple to arrive at the conclusion that attendance affects performance of learners at school. The availability of teacher attendance registers which the respondents from poor performing schools indicate their often usage to be at 77.3% confirms that indeed they were able to record the rate of attendance at their schools which also reveals the level of absenteeism at their schools.

13.6% of schools seldom used teacher attendance registers which may make it difficult for the school management to record the rate of attendance by the teachers whereas 3% of the schools never used attendance registers for teachers. 6.1% of the schools did not have teacher attendance register for teachers in place which may it difficult to record attendance.

4.4.6 Respondents' views regarding Teacher Movement Register

Movement of teachers in and out of the school during school hours should be monitored. Table 4.10 shows the perception of respondents regarding the availability of Teacher Movement Register and how it was being utilised.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	48	72.7	Often	36	54.5
No	18	27.3	Seldom	7	10.6
			Never	13	19.7
			Not applicable	10	15.2
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.10 Teacher Movement Register

There were 72.7% of respondents who indicated that their schools had movement registers for teachers. Only 27.3% of respondents indicated that they did not have movement registers to monitor and regulate movement of teachers in and out of the school during school hours.

Teacher Movement Register is used to regulate movement of teachers in and out of the school during school hours. 19.7% of respondents are indicating none-utilisation of teacher movement register, 15.2% of respondents are saying not applicable because they did not have teacher movement registers in place. Should we add the two percentages of 19.7% and 15.2% to the 10.6% of respondents who are indicating that they seldom use the teacher movement register, we get a total of 45.5%.

This 45.5% of respondents may suggest that indeed the respondents are indicating that movement registers for teachers are not properly controlled. 45.5% of these respondents may appear to be too low but it may impact negatively on the recording of the movement of teachers.

4.4.7 Respondents' views regarding Teacher Leave Register

The following table presents the views of the respondents regarding the availability of Teacher Leave Register and how it was used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	62	93.9	Often	44	66.7
No	4	6.1	Seldom	14	21.2
			Never	4	6.1
			Not applicable	4	6.1
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.11 Teacher Leave Register

A high percentage of 93.9% of respondents show that there were teachers leave registers whereas only 6.1% of the respondents indicated none-availability of leave registers which are used to record absence of teachers on a particular date of a day.

Teachers must always be at school. 66.7% of the respondents are indicating that their schools often used to leave registers to monitor teachers leave of absence whilst 2.1%, 6.1% and 6.1% of respondents are indicating seldom, never and not applicable.

The 66.7% translate to the respondents as having the perception that teachers leave if often used may assist in reducing teacher absenteeism whereas 33% of respondents as having the perception that if teachers leave register is not often used, the level of school attendance by teachers may not be well controlled. Bernstein (2011) in an article published in Sowetan dated 14 September 2011 indicated that just over three quarters of leave recorded is of one or two days that is discretionary leave not requiring a medical certificate. Mondays and Fridays are the most discretionary leave days.

4.4.8 Respondents' views regarding Period Register for learners and teachers

A daily record for attendance of periods by learners and teachers should be marked on daily basis. The table below shows the respondents' response regarding availability and usage of Period Register for learners and teachers.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	49	74.2	Often	36	54.5
No	17	25.8	Seldom	10	15.2
			Never	7	10.6
			Not applicable	13	19.7
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.12 Period Register for Learners and Teacher

Of the entire respondents who completed the questionnaire 74.2% indicated that they had period attendance registers which were to be used to monitor period attendance of different learning areas by learners and teachers. Only 25.8% of the respondents indicated that did not have period attendance registers for learners and teachers at their school.

Period registers for learners and teachers are used to regulate how periods are attended by both learners and teachers on a daily basis during schools hours. 54.5% of respondents are indicating how often they were able to use period register for learners and teachers in order to record and monitor the trend of period attendance. 15.2% of respondents agree that they seldom used the period register for learners and teachers which might have resulted in some schools unable to properly control and monitor period attendance by both learners and teachers.

10.6% of respondents indicated that they never used any register to record and monitor how periods were being honoured by learners and teachers. Even though it may appear to be a small percentage of 19.7% of respondents are indicating that they did not have period registers for learners and teachers. Therefore, the absence of such an important registers might have impacted negatively on how attendance was being monitored and that might have resulted in content gap coverage.

4.4.9 Respondents' views regarding Examination Time Table for all the Grades

In the table below the respondents are indicating the availability of examination time tables for different grades and how they were being used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	63	95.5	Often	45	68.2
No	3	4.5	Seldom	12	18.2
			Never	2	3.0
			Not applicable	7	10.6
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.13 Examination Time Table for all the grades

An analysis suggests that 95.5% of respondents indicated that they were having examination time tables for all the grades for all quarterly examinations. Only 4.5% of the respondents indicated none-availability of examination time tables for all the grades.

The Limpopo Department of Education's policy on examination directs all the schools in the province including schools at Tshinane Circuit to write examinations in each and every quarter and then report performance of learners to the parents at the end of each quarter. Therefore, should draw time tables in order to manage such examinations.

The usage of examination time tables at some of the schools as shown by 3.0% of the respondents who indicated that they never used examination time tables for all grades even though they were available when writing quarterly examinations leaves much to be desired. On the hand 10.6% of the respondents are indicating that they did not have examination time tables for all the grades.

Therefore, unavailability and none utilization of examination time tables has negative impact on learners' performance and achievement. In contrast, 68.2% of respondents indicated that they often used examination time tables.
A further 18.2% view examination time tables for all grades as important even though they seldom used.

4.4.10 Respondents' views regarding School General Time Table

In the table below the respondents are indicating the availability of school general time table for different grades and how it was being used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	65	98.5	Often	53	80.3
No	1	1.5	Seldom	4	6.1
			Never	4	6.1
			Not applicable	5	7.6
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.14 School General Time Table

The quality assured school General Time Table reflects the contact time which is in line with departmental prescripts, date and period allocated to different learning areas per teacher for a particular week. The general time table also assists the School management Team to monitor movement of teachers in and out of the classrooms and attendance of learners during school hours.

There were 98.5% of the respondents who indicated that their schools had general time tables to monitor attendance of classes by learners and teachers. Only 1.5% of the respondents indicated unavailability of general time tables for all the grades.

The statistics would suggest that there were schools which did not care about developing and implementing policies. That is why table 4.4.10 is exposing to us some of the schools which did not comply with the policy on time table. It was confirmed by 6.1% of the respondents who indicated that even though their school had general time tables in place, they were never used to monitor attendance by both learners and teachers.

A small percentage of 7.6% of the respondents indicated that they never developed general time tables at their schools. However, it is quiet pleasing to note that 80.3% of the respondents often used school general time table as a tool or an instrument to monitor and regulate movement of teacher in and out of classrooms and learner attendance during school hours. A further 6.1% of respondents seldom used the school general time table. The availability of the general time table might have assisted a lot in monitoring how teacher were attending lessons throughout the week.

4.4.11 Respondents' views regarding Study Time Table for different grades

In the table below the respondents are indicating the availability of study time tables for different grades and how they were being used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	42	63.6	Often	33	50.0
No	24	36.4	Seldom	4	6.1
			Never	8	12.1
			Not applicable	21	31.8
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.15 Study Time-Tables for Different Grades

An analysis on the study time tables for different grades shows 63.6% of the respondents indicating that the study time tables for different grades were available. 36.4% of the respondents indicated unavailability of study time tables for different grades.

Thirty three (50%) of respondents are indicating that their schools did not provide homework time-tables to learners of different grades. Only 12.1% of respondents are saying that even though their schools had homework time-tables, they never used them whereas 10.6% of respondents are indicating that they seldom used homework time-tables.

The new National Curriculum Statement (NCS) demands that learners should have to do a lot of school work at home where parents should assist with homework (Corallo and Mc Donald, 2002). Schools should make it easier for parents to assist their children by providing them with homework time-tables for different subjects (Phurutse, 2005).

4.4.12 Availability and usage of homework time tables for different grades

The school should provide learners with homework time-tables for different grades. In the table below the respondents are indicating the availability of homework time tables and how they were being used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	25	37.9	Often	18	27.3
No	41	62.1	Seldom	7	10.6
			Never	8	12.1
			Not applicable	33	50.0
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.16 Homework Time-Tables for Different Grades

There were only 37.9% of respondents who indicated that their schools had homework time tables for different grades. 62.1% of the respondents indicated none-availability of homework time tables for different grades.

Table 4.15 indicates 27.3% of respondents showing how often they used homework time-tables for different grades and 10.6% of respondents are indicating that they seldom used homework time-tables for different grades whereas 12.1% of respondents are saying that they never used homework times-tables for different grades.

Just 50% of respondents are indicating that they did have homework time-tables in place for different grades. The analysis based on the table shows 50% of respondents is not having any interest in motivating learners to study at home where they might get assistance from parents or their peers. Therefore, in the absence of homework time-tables, performance of learners may be affected and that may result in poor performance.

Children who frequently do homework and reading at home have a performance advantage over those who do not (Taylor, 2008).

4.4.13 Respondents' views regarding School Year Plan

The school year plan with different school activities should be developed by school management. In the table below the respondents are indicating the availability of school year plan and how it was being used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	48	72.7	Often	31	47.0
No	18	27.3	Seldom	19	28.8
			Never	5	7.6
			Not applicable	11	16.7
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.17 School Year Plan

Some of the schools saw the need to incorporate all the activities to take place at school for 2010 academic year in a school year plan. There were 72.7% of respondents who indicated the availability of school year plans at their schools. Only 27.3% of the respondents indicated that they did not have school year plans in place.

About 47% of respondents are indicating that their schools did not often use the school year plan. 28.8% of respondents seldom used the school year plan. 7.6%

never used a plan. 16.7% of respondents indicated none availability of plans at their schools.

Planning is an important managerial process (Bipath, 20055). The success of a school depends on how plans, including a year plan are developed as well as how activities in a plan are co-ordinated.

According to Motshega (2010), some School Management Teams are unable to plan which result in poor monitoring and poor time-tabling

4.4.14 Respondents' views regarding School Assessment Plan

School Assessment Plan with dates for tests and examinations should be made available to parents. In the table below the respondents are indicating the availability of School Assessment Plan and how it was utilised.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	57	86.4	Often	35	53.0
No	9	13.6	Seldom	12	18.2
			Never	6	9.1
			Not applicable	13	19.7
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.18 School Assessment Plan

The School Assessment Plan might have significant impact on learner performance if it was available or used properly. They were 86.4% of respondents who indicated that their schools had school assessment plans in place. School assessment plans were not available in place in some of the schools as it was confirmed by 13.6% who indicated unavailability.

About 53% of respondents are indicating that their schools used school assessment plans to assess if learners were able to respond well to questions based on the amount of work covered as per pacesetters. 18.2% are indicating that their schools seldom used the school assessment plan.

A small percent of 9.1% of respondents are indicating that they never used school assessment plan whereas 19.7% of respondents are indicating that they did not have school assessment plan in place. If 53% of respondents indicated that they often used the assessment plan and 9.1% with 19.7 indicated never and not applicable with 18.2% of seldom, that may suggest that in practise poor performing schools never used assessment plan effectively, therefore that might have affected performance.

For the school to avoid underperformance comprehensive policies that included policy on assessment and computation of final examinations marks must attended to by the school principal (Van der Berg, Burger, de Vos, du Rand, Gustafson, Moses, Sheperd, Spaull, Taylor, van Broekhuizen & von Fintel, 2011).

4.4.15 Respondents' views on School Academic Performance Improvement Plan

Every year after the release of results school are required by the Department of Education draw a School Academic Performance Improvement Plan which clearly outlines intervention strategies to improve learners' performance. In table respondent are showing availability of such a plan and how it was used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	58	87.9	Often	34	51.5
No	8	12.1	Seldom	18	27.3
			Never	5	7.6
			Not applicable	9	13.6
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.19 School Academic Performance Improvement Plan

School Academic Performance Improvement Plan is a management tool used to give the school operational direction on an annual basis. The improvement activities for learners were based on analysis of learner results in quarterly and annual assessment.

Every academic year after the release and announcement of Grade 12 final results all the schools are required to analyse results and indicate in their School Improvement Plan on how results of the current year would be improved. In order to record activities to be done for that particular year, the school should have Academic Improvement plan.

A high percentage of 87.9% of the respondents indicated that their schools managed to develop School Academic Performance Improvement Plan after 2009 Grade 12 results. It thus appears that a large percentage of poor performing schools complied with the Limpopo Department of Education that each year after the release of the results, schools should draw up the School Academic Performance Improvement Plan and submit to the Head of the Department (HOD). Only 18.2% of the respondents indicated unavailability of the School Academic Performance Improvement Plan at their schools.

Of all the poor performing schools 51.5% of the respondents indicated that they often used the School Improvement Plan, 27.3% seldom, 7.6% never whereas 13.6% did not have School Academic Performance Improvement Plan in place.

4.4.16 Respondents' views regarding Policy on Learner Discipline

A School Governing Body of public school should develop a policy on learner discipline. In table 4.20 respondents are indicating whether policy on learner discipline was available or not and how they were being used.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	53	80.0	Often	32	48.5
No	13	19.7	Seldom	16	24.2
			Never	8	12.1
			Not applicable	10	15.2
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.20 Policy on Learner Discipline

In table 4.4.16 48.5% of respondents indicated how often they were using a policy on learner discipline and 24.2% of respondents are saying that they seldom used the policy on learner discipline. 12% of respondents are indicating that even though policies on learner discipline were available, they were never used whereas 15.2% of the respondents are indicating that they did not have a policy on learner discipline in place.

Effective teaching and learning can only take place where there is proper discipline. Only disciplined learners will at all times carry out all duties such as writing of tests, assignments and homework given to them by their teachers (Maivha, 1991). 80.3% of respondents indicated that their schools were having policy on learner discipline in place whereas 19.7% of respondents indicated unavailability of policy on learner discipline at their schools.

According to the Department of Education (2000; 2002), safe and disciplined learning environment is one of the critical elements to the successful delivery of quality education.

4.4.17 Respondents' views on Monitoring Tools for Teaching and Learning

The school should develop monitoring tools to monitor teaching and learning. In table 4.21 the respondents indicated the availability and usage of monitoring tools

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	54	81.8	Often	35	53.0
No	12	18.2	Seldom	15	22.7
			Never	5	7.6
			Not applicable	11	16.7
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.21 Monitoring Tools for Teaching and Learning

Learning in the school is determined by the amount of time a learner is willing to preserve with relevant learning tasks and how the teacher uses his or her professional time to teach. Therefore, monitoring tools must be put in place to monitor how time is used by learners to learn and by teachers for instructional processes.

In table 4.20 81.8% of the respondents indicated that they had monitoring tools in place to monitor teaching and learning whereas 18.2% of the respondents indicated that they did not have monitoring tools to monitor teaching and learning.

School Management Teams have the managerial responsibility to monitor how teaching and learning is taking place at school. In order to find out whether indeed teachers are in class teaching and learners are in class learning, monitoring tools must be used to track progress. 53% of respondents are indicating that they often used monitoring tools to monitor teaching and learning at their respective schools.

22.7% seldom used monitoring tools to monitor teaching and learning.7, 6% of respondents never used monitoring tools for teaching and learning whereas 16.7% of respondents are saying they did not have tools for monitoring teaching and learning.

4.4.18 Respondents' views on Intergraded Quality Management Systems Programme (IQMS)

Teachers must be evaluated every year for development and pay progression. In table 4.22 respondents presents availability of such a programme and how the programme was being managed.

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	64	97.0	Often	38	57.6
No	2	3.0	Seldom	14	21.2
			Never	6	9.1
			Not applicable	8	12.1
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 4.22 Intergraded Quality Management Systems Programme (IQMS)

IQMS is a policy which is used to improve quality of teaching and school management. Every academic year teachers are assessed and evaluated to check if their performance is still in line with assessment standards. The main aim is to provide assistance in areas where some of the teachers will need development and pay progression.

The statistics shows that from all the schools that completed the questionnaire 97% of the respondents indicated that their schools had Integrated Quality Management System programme in place. Only 3% of the respondents indicated unavailability of IQMS programme at their schools.

Table 4.21 shows us 57.6% of respondents indicating that their schools often used Intergraded Quality Management System (IQMS) programme and 21.2% are indicating that they seldom implemented IQMS programme. 9.1% is agreeing that IQMS was in place but was never implemented whereas 12, 1% is saying that they did not have IQMS programmes at their schools.

Integrated Quality Management Systems should be a positive boost for poor performing schools. It is up to School Management Teams to ensure that IQMS is implemented.

IQMS management plans are the cornerstone for teacher's professional development, improvement of learner achievement and holistic improvement of the school. The non-availability of these plans in some of the schools was a cause for concern which resulted in some of the schools' poor performance (Limpopo Department of Education, 2011).

4.5 THE EXTENT TO WHICH OF THE FACTORS OR ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTE TO POOR PERFORMANCE OF A SCHOOL

The analysis in the tables below show the response by the respondents who were asked to indicate the extent to which different activities or factors might have affected the performance of learners at their schools.

4.5.1 Content knowledge of educators' contribution to school performance

Educators should have enough knowledge of educators they are teaching. In the table below respondents presents the extent to which content knowledge of educators contributed to performance of a school.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	40	60.6
To a less extent	13	19.7
Does not affect	5	7.6
Not sure	8	12.1
Total	66	100

Table 4.23 Content knowledge of educators

A high percentage of 60.6% of respondents view content knowledge of teachers as one of the factors which contribute to performance to a large extent whereas 19.7% of respondents regards content knowledge of teachers as contributing to less extent. That may be interpreted as having affected the performance of the school. 7.6% says it does not affect whereas 12.1% is not sure.

Limpopo Department of Education (2011) argued that teachers in the main fail to generate any knowledge beyond what is in the textbooks and they hardly use different teaching methods.

4.5.2 Poor content knowledge of educators' contribution to performance

Educators are expected to be competent in the subjects they qualify to teach. In table 4.24 respondents indicate the extent to which poor content knowledge of educators might have contributed to poor performance of a school.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	23	34.8
To a less extent	25	37.9
Does not affect	11	16.7
Not sure	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 4.24 Poor content knowledge of educators

Just 34.8% of respondents view poor content knowledge as one of the factors that might have contributed to poor performance of their schools to a large extent whereas 37.9% of respondents are of the perception that poor subject content knowledge was to a less extent might have contributed to poor performance of their schools.

Only 16.7% of the respondents are saying that poor content knowledge of educators did not affect performance of their schools. 10.6% of respondents are not sure if poor content knowledge of educators might have affected the performance of their schools.

According to The Limpopo Department of Education (2011), teachers are not competent in the content they are expected to teach. An example was given based on the pilot programme conducted in 2008 for high school Maths and Science teachers which revealed the teacher performance in high grade Mathematics at 39% and 35% respectively (Teacher Assessment Programme, May 2009).

The Limpopo Department of Education (2011) further argued that teachers fail to generate any knowledge beyond what is prescribed in the textbooks and they hardly use different teaching methods.

4.5.3 School Management's contribution to school performance

In table below respondents are indicating the extent to which dysfunctional School Management contributed to poor performance of a school.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	19	28.8
To a less extent	17	25.8
Does not affect	17	25.8
Not sure	13	19.7
Total	66	100

Table 4.25 Dysfunctional School Management

Only 28.8% of the respondents are indicating that dysfunctional school management has affected the performance of schools to a large extent.

On the hand only 25.8% of respondents view dysfunctional school management as to a less extent have affected the performance of their schools whereas 19.7% of respondents are not sure whether dysfunctional school management has anything to do with the performance of learners at school.

If 28.8% of respondents view dysfunctional school management as to a large extent have negatively affected their performance and 25.8% to a less extent, the two different percentages by respondents may suggest that the respondents are in agreement that dysfunctional school management negatively affected their schools' performance.

Leadership creates the conditions under which teachers can work effectively as well as to instil high level of discipline, proper and effective management systems (Tylor, 2008). Tylor (2008) also regards leadership and management as a prerequisite for school performance.

Manuel et. al (2011) indicated that school performance is crucially linked to the leadership and management roles of the principal and that most schools in South Africa which are performing poorly are schools where principals run the schools inefficiently.

4.5.4 The extent to which School Management Team contributed to performance

School Manage Team should manage teaching and learning and provide leadership. Table 4.26 indicate the extent to which School Management Team contribute to the performance of a school.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	23	34.8
To a less extent	20	30.3
Does not affect	16	24.2
Not sure	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 4.26 School Management Team

About 34.8% of respondents in table 4.5.4 view School Management Team's role in managing the school as one of the factors which affects the performance of the school to a large extent
Only 30.3% of the respondents believe that the School Management Team affect performance of the school to a less extent which simple means that the respondents may also be agreeing that if School Management Team does not play its part in managing the school that may negatively affect the performance of the school.

Only 24.2% felt that the School Management Team does not affect the performance of the school whereas 7% is not sure if the School Management Team contributes to the performance of the school.

School performance is actually linked to School Management Team (Manuel et al.2011). According to Bodestein (2008), the School management Team holds a key position in managing the education of learners effectively to produce results of high quality.

4.5.5 The extent to which Attendance to Union Activities by Teachers Contributed to performance

Teachers attend to union activities to discuss educational and labour matters. In table 4.27 the respondents the extent to which that might have contributed poor performance a school.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	25	37.9
To a less extent	19	28.8
Does not affect	15	22.7
Not sure	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 4.27 Attendance to Union Activities by Teachers

Since 1994, unionization of teachers has been a major development in South Africa. However, when union members were in dispute with the employer, such members of the union had on several occasions caused some disturbances which took more teaching time and affected performance of learners.

Attendance of union activities by teachers was seen by 37.9% of respondents as having contributed to poor performance of their schools to a large extent and 28.8% also agree that attendance to union activities by teachers contribute to poor performance but to a less extent.

Only 22.7% of respondents do not agree that attendance of union activities by teachers contributed to poor performance. Only 7% of respondents are not sure whether attendance to union activities by teacher contributes to poor performance or not.

According to Bipath (2005), the expression of rights by union members to attend meetings or other union activities during school hours can have the effect of disrupting teaching and learning.

4.5.6. Community activities such as attendance of memorial services by teachers

Teachers as members of the community also take part in community activities such as memorial services. In table 2.28 the respondents are indicating the extent to which that might have contributed to poor performance of the school.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	19	28.8
To a less extent	17	25.8
Does not affect	22	33.3
Not sure	8	12.1
Total	66	100

Table 4.28 Attendance to community activities

A small percentage of 28.8% of respondents are indicating community activities such as attendance of memorial services by teachers as having resulted in poor performance of their schools to large extent.

Another 25.8% of the respondents are also in agreement that attendance to community activities such as memorial services might have contributed to poor performance of their school but to a less extent. 33% of respondents view attendance to community activities such as memorial services as activities which might have not contributed to poor performance of their schools. Only 8% of the respondents are not sure whether community activities such as attendance to memorial services have anything to do with performance of learners at the school.

According to Legotlo et al. (2002), teachers cause disturbances during normal working hours by holding meetings or taking time-off to attend memorial services and that result in poor performance of schools.

4.5.7 The behaviour of learners

The behaviour of learners at significantly influences their performance at school. In table below reflects responses in that regard.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	28	42.4
To a less extent	12	18.2
Does not affect	23	34.8
Not sure	3	4.5
Total	66	100

Table 4.29 Learner Discipline

About 42.4% of respondents are indicating learner discipline as one of the factors that might have contributed to poor performance of their schools to a large extent.

Only 18% of respondents are also citing learner discipline as a factor that might have contributed to poor performance of their schools but to a less extent. A very small percentage is not sure if learner discipline might have affected their performance to which extent. Therefore, if we add 42.4% and 18.2% we get a total of 60.6%. That may be interpreted as 60.0% of respondents agreeing that indeed learner disciplined might have affected the performance of their schools in one way or the other.

If learners are ill-disciplined teachers may spend more time in disciplining learners than teaching and teachers may not be able to cover the scope and syllabi on time as prescribed by pacesetters of different learning areas (Rammala, 2009).

Smithgall and Walker (2009) argued that addressing discipline issues in schools can force teachers to spend more time on learner discipline issues and spend less time in teaching.

4.5.8 Curriculum coverage as per pacesetters by teachers

Teachers should teach and cover what is prescribed in the curriculum before learners write end of the year examination. In table 4.30 respondents are indicating the extent to which that impacted to the performance of learners.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	36	54.5
To a less extent	18	27.3
Does not affect	11	16.7
Not sure	1	1.5
Total	66	100

Table 4.30 Curriculum coverage

Curriculum coverage as per pacesetters by educators was rated by 54.5% of the respondents as might to a large extent have led to poor performance of Grade 12 learners in 2010 at their schools. Curriculum coverage as per pacesetters was also to a less extent seen by 27.3% of respondents as might have contributed to poor performance of their schools.

A small percentage of 16.7% of the respondents do not agree that curriculum coverage as per pacesetters might have affected the performance of learners at their schools. A minority of 1.5% of respondents were not sure whether curriculum coverage as per pacesetters might have affected the outcome of the performance. Phurutse (2005) noted that teachers whose time on task is less than 25 hours per week are doing less in terms of effective teaching and are unlikely not to cover or complete curriculum as per pacesetters and that may result in poor performance by learners.

4.5.9 Registration of children to school on time by parents

Every year learners should be registered on time to school for teaching and learning to start on the first day. Respondents on table 4.31 indicate the extent to which registration of the learners contributed to poor performance of a school.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	32	48.5
To a less extent	13	19.7
Does not affect	16	24.2
Not sure	5	7.6
Total	66	100

Table 4.31 Registration of learners

48.5% of respondents are indicating that if registration is not completed on time, that may impact negatively to the performance of the school to a large extent. 19.7% of respondents are also agreeing that late registration of learners might have resulted to poor performance of their schools to a less extent. If we add the two percentages of 48.5% and 19.7% of respondents we get a total of 68.2%. Therefore, the total of 68.2% of respondents suggest that indeed if registration of learners is delayed that might have affected their school to perform poorly.

Lack of information about the due dates of admission of learners result in some parents registering their children in the following year and that disrupts the normal starting of the school at the beginning of the year (Pradesh & Block, 2002).

There was only 24.2% of respondents who felt that registration of learner on time do not affect school performance whereas only 7.6% of the respondents are not sure if registration has anything to do with performance of the school.

Limpopo Department of Education (2011) revealed that teaching and learning cannot take place effectively from the first day of reopening if admissions are not finalised the previous year because late admissions have a negative impact on curriculum coverage.

4.5.10 Participation by parents in curriculum delivery of their children

It was also important in this study to find the extent to which parents participated in curriculum delivery of their children. Table 4.32 is presentation of respondents on participation by parents on curriculum delivery.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	23	34.8
To a less extent	25	37.9
Does not affect	11	16.7
Not sure	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 4.32 Parents' participation on curriculum

34.8% translates to the respondents as having perception that participation by parents in curriculum delivery was to a large played a role in poor performance of their schools. Therefore, that may also suggest that the respondents are also of the view that if parents are not participating in the curriculum delivery of their children that may result in poor performance of the school. 37.9% of the respondents also view parents' participation in curriculum delivery of their children as a factor that might have contributed to a less extent the performance of their schools.

If the two percentages of 34.8% and 37.9% of respondents is added to a total of 72.7%, the interpretation might suggest that indeed if parents are not participating in the curriculum delivery of their children the school may not produce the desirable good performance. For the school to produce good performance parents should participate in the day to day school activities which can be seen to promote quality teaching and learning.

Just 16.7% of the respondents seem to disagree because they are indicating that participation by parents in curriculum delivery of their does not affect performance of the school. 10.6% of respondents are not sure if participation by parents in curriculum delivery of their children may affect performance of the school.

According to Limpopo Department of Education (2011), high illiteracy of parents is resulting in minimal or none participation by parents in their children's learning which include supervision of home work, assignments and projects, which as a result may eventually lead to poor performance by learners.

4.5.11 Monitoring implementation of departmental policies by principal

School are governed and regulated by policies which must be implemented and monitored by principal of school. In table 4.33 respondents are indicating the extent to which departmental policies were implemented by school principals.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	30	45.5
To a less extent	19	28.8
Does not affect	10	15.2
Not sure	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 4.33 Monitoring implementation of policies

The table shows 45.5% of respondents are indicating that monitoring implementation of departmental policies by principal as one of the factors which to large extent might have affected the performance of their schools.

With the addition of 28.8% of respondents who are indicating monitoring implementation of departmental policies by the principal to might have affected the performance of their schools to a less extent, a significant 74.3% of respondents view monitoring implementation of departmental policies by the principal as having contributed to poor performance of their schools.

A small percentage of 15.2% of the respondents are indicating that monitoring implementation of departmental policies by the principal did not affect performance at their schools and 10.6% of respondents are not sure if monitoring implementation of departmental policies by the principal may contribute to the performance of school.

According to Legotlo et. al (200), formulation of policies simplify governance and management of schools assists in improving learners performance.

4.5.12 Rate of attendance by learners

Learners should attend school regularly in order to pass at the end of the year. In table 4.34 respondents revealed the extent to which learners were attending school.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	28	42.4
To a less extent	15	22.7
Does not affect	15	22.7
Not sure	8	12.1
Total	66	100

Table 4.34 Attendance by learners

Table 4.34 shows 42.4% of respondents indicating attendance by learners as a factor which might have to large extent affected performance of their schools. 22.7% of respondents are also agreeing that attendance by learners may determine the performance of the school, but to a less extent.

According to 22.7% of respondents attendance by learners did not affect their performance to any extent. 12.1% of the respondents are not sure if attendance by learners may affect performance of the school.

Edley (2006) argued that poor performance and low pass rate in poor performing schools may improve to good performance if learners attend school regularly. Bayona (1999) indicates that poor attendance may result in poor performance as learners may not have much contact time of classroom activities.

4.5.13 Rate of attendance by educators

Teachers should sign attendance register when they report for duty. Table 4.35 indicate the extent to which the respondents observed the attendance by educators.

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	29	43.9
To a less extent	23	34.8
Does not affect	12	18.2
Not sure	2	3.0
Total	66	100

Table 4.35 Attendance by educators

A significant 43.9% of respondents found that attendance by educators has to a large extent affected the performance of learners in 2010 Grade 12 final examination. 34.8% of respondents view attendance by educators to have affected performance of the school to a less extent.

In contrast, there were 18.2% of respondents who do not agree that attendance by educators affected the performance of learners in their schools. Only 3% of respondents are not sure if indeed the attendance by educators might have affected the performance of learners at their schools.

According to Bipath (2005), time on task denotes the amount of time educators are supposed to spend on educational activities especially teaching and learning in the classroom. If we look at 43.9% of the respondents indicating teacher attendance to have affected the performance of their schools to a large extent, it is self evident that no learning can occur if teachers and learners are no in class at the same time.

Pradesh and Block argued that for effective teaching and learning to take place, teachers have to be in class regularly. According to Leithwood (2006) if a number of hours of teaching and learning time is lost due to absenteeism of teachers is not compensated, then teachers may not complete the syllabus and that may in the end negatively towards poor performance.

4.5.14 Monitoring educators in class teaching

Educators should be monitored when they are class teachers. Respondents in table 4.36 indicate the extent to which educators were being monitored

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	35	53.0
To a less extent	15	22.7
Does not affect	14	21.2
Not sure	2	3.0
Total	66	100

Table 4.36 Monitoring of educators

The majority of 53% of respondents in the poor performing schools are having the opinion that monitoring of educators in class teaching was to a large extent affected performance of their schools. 22.7% of respondents view monitoring of teachers in class teaching as a factor which might have to a less extent affected the performance of their schools.

If we add the two percentages of 53% and 22.7% of respondents, a total percentage of both respondents may be viewed as to be agreeing that monitoring of teachers in class teaching might have influenced the outcome in the poor performance of their schools.

A percentage of 18.2% of respondents are indicating that monitoring of teachers in class teaching did not anyway affect the performance of their schools. Only 2% of respondents are not sure if monitoring of teachers in class teaching may on one way or the other affect the performance of a school.

According to Benstein, 2011) it is self evident that no learning can occur if teachers are not in the class on time teaching effectively.

4.5.15 Giving feedback to parents on learners' performance

Parents should be given feedback regarding performance of their learners at the end of each and every quarter. In the table below the respondents present the extent to which parents were given feedback on learner performance

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	23	34.8
To a less extent	14	21.2
Does not affect	21	31.8
Not sure	8	12.1
Total	66	100

Table 4.37 Feedback to parents

The level at which the School Management Team gives feedback to parents on a quarterly basis gives both learners and teachers opportunity to improve on their performance. If learners are not given feedback regularly they would not be able to identify their weaknesses and areas where they need improvement.

34.8% of respondents are indicating that giving feedback to parents on learners' performance affected the performance of their schools to a large extent. 21.2% of respondents are also agreeing that giving feedback to parents on learners' performance affect performance, but to a less extent.

34.8% and 21.2% of respondents added together gives us a total of significant 55.2% of respondents as having the opinion that if the school gives feedback on learners' performance regularly that may have an impact on the performance of learners. 21.2% of respondents is indicating that giving feedback to parents on learners, performance do not affect performance of learners at school and 12.1% are not sure if giving feedback on learners performance to parents may affect the performance of learners at school.

4.6 CONCLUSION

From the data analysis presented in this chapter, characteristics of poor performing schools based on learners' performance in 2010 Grade 12 final examination were related to unavailability of some of the policies such as school attendance registers, period attendance registers for both learners and teachers and the extent to which some of the policies which were available in some of the schools were being implemented.

More than anything else the analysis revealed unavailability or inadequate of physical resources such as laboratories, libraries and competent human resources as some of the characteristics which were found to be common in the poor performing schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMANDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The breakdown in the quality of education may be traced back to the legacy of apartheid. The rejection of Bantu education through protests and boycotts, together with unfair material provisioning to apartheid black schools and the conditions of poverty and disruptions in the black communities, have most definitely contributed to the emergence of poor performing schools.

The literature study which was conducted revealed lack of resources such as libraries and laboratories as characteristics that are dominant in majority of poor performing schools. According to Legotlo et al (2002) shortage of resources and inadequate preparation of teachers who are the product of bad education with limited academic background had to some extent contributed to poor teaching and learning in some schools.

Having highlighted the various findings that emanate from the literature review, the focus will be on the important findings unveiled by the research.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following findings were exposed. The availability and usage of resources and the extent to which some of the policies were utilized are the two dimensions grouped together that constituted a framework of the questionnaire.

5.2.1 Findings with respect to parental involvement

5.2.1.1 Registration of learners

Parents did not register their children on time. Respondents who completed the questionnaire indicated that late registration of learners had affected normal teaching and learning that should have started from day one of schooling to a large extent and to a less extent. Even though a small percentage of parents managed to register their children on time at some of the schools, the majority of poor performing school were negatively affected by late registration of children.

The National Admission Policy requires schools to complete admission a year prior to reopening for the new academic year. However, schools still have a challenge of complying with this policy as illustrated in table 4.5.9 on registration of children to school on time by parents where respondents of poor performing schools indicated that late registration might have to a large extent or less extent affected their poor performance.

5.2.1.2 Parents participation in curriculum delivery

A high percentage of respondents indicated the unavailability of homework time tables which should have been given to parents in order to assist their children. Therefore, in the absence of homework time tables, challenges that faced learners when dealing with homework were not adequately addressed or attended to.

School principals should provide parents with homework time tables and assessment plans to enable them to assist their children on what goes on in the classrooms (Phurutse, 2005). The National Curriculum Statement demands that a lot of work should be done at home where parents should assist their children with assignments, homework and projects.

The respondents from poor performing schools were of the perception that participation by parents to curriculum was minimal as the percentages are showing participation to have affected poor performance of their schools to a large extent or less extent. Parental lack of participation in the child's learning and progress limited teaching in their schools almost to a large extent.

Parents illiteracy in Limpopo Province is resulting in minimal or none participation by parents in parents meeting convened by School Governing Bodies to discuss curriculum matters (Leithwood, 2010).

5.2.2. Findings with respect to school environment

5.2.2.1 School infrastructure

Respondents of poor performing schools were of the perception that the staffroom, library, computer laboratories and science laboratories were inadequate or not available. The present low level of availability of laboratories in many schools is such that we are in danger of producing a generation of learners who are only familiar with textbook information and have no opportunity to engage in other science process skills development including manipulative skills.

On the other hand the low level of availability of libraries denied learners an opportunity for reference reading materials to improve their reading skills and content knowledge. In schools where these facilities were available, they were seldom or never used for educational purposes.

It is a logical assumption that the absence of a laboratory and lack of a library orientation and motivation to read beyond the textbook certainly impacts negatively on learners learning, leading to a low level of the culture of learning- thus a high probability of failure in school work.

5.2.2.2 Attendance rate by learners and teachers

Poor performing schools have an average to poor attendance rate. A certain percentage of poor schools as revealed by respondents did not have an attendance policy in place whereas school which had learners and teachers attendance policies in place, seldom or never implemented such policies to monitor the attendance by learners and teachers.

In the absence of such important policies and attendance registers which also serve as monitoring tools, such schools did not have record to check or verify the rate of attendance and absenteeism.

5.2.2.3 Teaching practice and discipline

An analysis regarding teaching practices in poor performing schools reveals respondents as having the perception that parental lack of interest in child's learning and progress, absenteeism by learners and teachers as having limited teaching and learning in their schools to a large extent or less extent.

As far as discipline is concerned, the respondents of poor performing had an opinion that absenteeism or late arrivals at school disrupted the normal teaching and learning to a less extent or to a large extent, probably almost on a daily basis. Missing classes and periods by learners and teachers disrupted schooling.

5.2.2.4 School Assessment plan and examination timetable

An analysis reveals some of the as not having school assessment and school general timetable in place. Schools without an assessment plan and an examination timetable which are important curriculum documents are likely to have disorganised assessment systems which consequently would impact negatively on the quality and standard of assessment reports and records.

5.2.2.5 Poor content knowledge of teachers

It has been revealed by respondents that poor content knowledge of teachers have to a large extent and less extent resulted in poor teaching standards. The poor standards might have been exacerbated by serious shortage of physical resources such laboratories and libraries.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1 Parents' participation in curriculum delivery

A school is a unit within a society, and can only exist through the co-operation of the school community. Parents are the most essential stakeholders in education; and consultations with them would indeed improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

Parents as co-partners in education should be consulted regarding problem solving, decision making, formulation of policies such as code of conduct for learners and designing curriculum of their children. Therefore, it is of critical importance that parents be always updated on all the developments at school and meetings of parents must be held frequently and records of minutes for these meetings should be kept as evidence.

5.3.2 Poor content knowledge of teachers

In the quest to improve learner performance, content knowledge of teachers has been identified as an important aspect towards improving poor performance. It is recommended that relevant school- based, clustered, provincial and national workshops where teachers share their knowledge and teaching strategies should be conducted to assist disadvantaged poor performing schools.

5.3.3 Dysfunctional school management

Managing a school in South Africa is a massive job and probably far more complex than running a business with similar number of employees and clients (Lillie, 2012). According to Lillie (2012) principals should undertake at least one community project where they would be capacitate on human relations and leadership in order to strengthen the education system in South Africa.

Principals should be trained and empowered to be accountable and take responsibility on school management and staffing issues as final decision makers at school level. The principal and School Management Teams need to develop plans and policies to ensure effective leadership, high quality of teaching and learning and school improvement.

Weaknesses related to school management and leadership should be addressed by strengthening educational programmes such as Advanced Certificate in education.

5.3.4 Admission of learners

Teaching and learning cannot take place effectively from the first day of reopening if admissions are not finalized the previous year. Indeed late admissions have a negative impact which may result in poor performance by schools, poor education planning systems and inadequate resource provisioning.

It is therefore, prudent for admissions advocacy campaigns to be run throughout the year so that the culture of early registrations and consequently early admissions could be inculcated in all stakeholders.

5.3.5 School plans

School Year Plan and other plans such as School Development Plan, School Improvement Plan and Assessment Plan which include all activities with dates in which tests, examinations and feed back to parents on learners progress will be given. Accordingly schools should be supplied with National Protocol on Recording and Reporting (NPRR) documents for the management of school assessment records and basic requirements for learner profiles, report cards, record sheets and schedules.

5.3.6 School policies

Policies such Code of Conduct for learners and period attendance registers must be put in place in order to monitor attendance rate by both learners and teachers. Policies also assist school management to monitor the level of absenteeism.

5.3.7 Intergraded Quality Management System (IQMS)

Even though the Intergraded Quality Management System appears to be assisting in the development of teachers, such a system could also benefit learners with respect to their academic achievement. Therefore, schools should develop plans to manage IQMS for teachers' professional development, improvement of learner achievement and holistic improvement of the school.

5.3.8 Learners and teachers attendance rate

Quality teaching and learning could occur only if both learners and teachers are present on every working day including the first day of the academic year. Attendance policies such as daily attendance class registers, period attendance for learners and teachers should be developed, implemented and continuously monitored.

The researcher further recommends that rewards and incentives could be used as effective motivation in monitoring and improving attendance of all learners and teachers. Rewards and recognition reinforce positive appropriate behaviour. For an example, reward in the form of a certificate could prove fruitful in reducing absenteeism.

5.3.9 Learner discipline

Some of the respondents revealed unavailability of policy or seldom and never usage of policy on learner discipline at their school which under performed. The absence of policy on learner discipline resulted in late arrivals, skipping of classes or period by learners.

The researcher recommends that all stakeholders of the school must be involved in drawing up and implementation of a discipline policy, most importantly the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) must be involved. Once all the stakeholders get involved in the formulation or development of policy on discipline, they will be conscious in observing all the rules and consequences regarding punitive measures regarding none observance of the rules.

Without discipline, it is unlikely that punctuality on attendance, time on task, preparedness, planning, tests and assignments will be properly addressed. The respondents of poor performing schools had an opinion that absenteeism or late arrivals at school disrupted schools more often, probably on a daily basis. There will be no effective learning and teaching if learners miss classes and periods.

The principal and School Management Team members should at all time monitor and control the implementation of this policy. A zero tolerance attitude to discipline and control should be maintained in poor performing schools. All teachers must be taken on board and be aware of the protocol on procedures regarding punishment of offences as described in a discipline policy.

5.3.10 School infrastructure

Shortage of physical resources such staffroom, libraries and laboratories was common characteristic as revealed by the respondents. On this basis, schools within Tshinane Circuit in the Vhembe District in Limpopo which is one of the most rural provinces in the Republic of South Africa should be adequately resourced with laboratories and appropriate library with books.

School facilities are an essential component of school achievement and success. Therefore, school facilities should be addressed.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The findings in this section paint a gloomy picture of the state of teaching and learning at all poor performing schools in Tshinane Circuit in the Department of Education, Vhembe District.

The study revealed lack of adequate resources such as library and laboratories, poor content knowledge of teachers, ill discipline amongst learners, ineffective and none implementation of policies, learner and teacher absenteeism and none participation in curriculum delivery by parents as major characteristics of poor performing schools based on the results of 2010 Grade 12 final examination.

The study suggests that the Department of Education should consider supplying schools with adequate physical and human resources to improve teaching and learning. Learner and teacher commitment and morale cannot be over-emphasised.

With the status of seven schools which underperformed below the Limpopo Department of Education provincial norm of 50%, it is conceivable that such schools which performed poorly in 2010 Grade 12 examination at Tshinane Circuit would not be able to produce learners who qualify to further their studies at institutions of higher learning unless progressive intervention strategies are put in place to improve results.

The intervention strategies in the Department of Education within our schooling system as whole must be comprehensive and integrated, that they commence very early in school life, and that they cover a broad range of school activities including adequate supply of human and physical resources.

Strategies should also take learning areas into account, especially language of teaching and learning, or reading and writing skills, or language across the curriculum. Policy makers, education managers and teachers must ensure that the outcomes or effects of teaching are sustainable and permanent.

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APPENDIX A

P.O. BOX 380

Vhufuli

0971

14 January 2012

The District Senior Manager

Vhembe District

Dear sir/Madam

REQUEST TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH: MUEDI F.P. - STUDENT NO: 8500255 (UNIVERSITY OF VENDA FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY).

1. The above matter refers.
2. I hereby request permission to conduct an educational research at schools in Tshinane Circuit within your Vhembe District.
3. My research topic is: Characteristics of poor performing schools within Tshinane Circuit located in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province.
4. Confidentiality of school information will be taken into account during the process of interviews.

I hope your office will find this request in order.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Muedi F.P.

APPENDIX B

University of Venda
Creating Future Leaders

P.O. BOX 380

Vhufuli

0971

14 January 2012

Dear sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE: CHARACTERISTICS OF POOR PERFORMING SCHOOLS: MUEDI F.P. STUDENT N0: 8500255

1. The above matter refers.
2. I hereby request few minutes of your time in completing my questionnaire on my research Topic: Characteristics of poor performing schools within Tshinane Circuit in the Vhembe District.
3. Your response to questions will only be used for the study purposes, anonymity of personal information and confidentiality of information provided will be taken into account during the process of completion of questionnaire.
4. Permission for conducting this research has already been granted by Vhembe District Senior Manager

I hope you will find this request in order.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Muedi F.P.

APPENDIX C

POOR PERFORMING SCHOOLS QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: Indicate your response by crossing the appropriate number.

Section A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

1. Gender

Male	1
Female	2

2. Indicate your category

Learner	1
Parent	2
Teacher	3
Principal	4

3. Age

15-25 years	1
26-35 years	2
36-45 years	3
46-55 years	4
56-65 years	5

SECTION B: Indicate availability and usage of resources, records and policies

	AVAILABILITY		USAGE			
Resources	**Yes**	**No**	**Often**	**Seldom**	**Never**	**Not applicable**
4. Staffroom	1	2	1	2	3	4
5. Library	1	2	1	2	3	4
6. Laboratory	1	2	1	2	3	4
7. Computer lab	1	2	1	2	3	4
8. Teachers attendance register	1	2	1	2	3	4
9. Teachers movement register	1	2	1	2	3	4
10. Teachers leave register	1	2	1	2	3	4
11. Period register for learners and teachers	1	2	1	2	3	4
12. Examination time table for all the grades	1	2	1	2	3	4
13. General time table	1	2	1	2	3	4
14. Study time tables for different grades	1	2	1	2	3	4
15. Homework time tables for different grades	1	2	1	2	3	4
16. School year plan	1	2	1	2	3	4
17. School Assessment Plan	1	2	1	2	3	4
18. School Academic Performance Improvement Plan	1	2	1	2	3	4
19. Policy on learner discipline	1	2	1	2	3	4
20. Monitoring tools for teaching and learning	1	2	1	2	3	4
21. IQMS programme	1	2	1	2	3	4

SECTION C: To what extent do these factors contribute to poor performance of your school?

Factors	To a large extent	To a less extent	Does not affect	Not sure
	1	2	3	4
22. Content knowledge of educators	1	2	3	4
23. Poor content knowledge of educators	1	2	3	4
24. Dysfunctional school management.	1	2	3	4
25. School management team	1	2	3	4
26. Attendance of union activities by educators.	1	2	3	4
27. Community activities such as attendance of memorial services by educators	1	2	3	4
28. earner discipline	1	2	3	4
29. Curriculum coverage as per pacesetters by educators	1	2	3	4
30. Registration of children to school on time by parents	1	2	3	4
31. Participation by parents in curriculum delivery of their children	1	2	3	4
32. Monitoring implementation of departmental policies by principal	1	2	3	4
33. Attendance by learners.	1	2	3	4
34. Attendance by educators	1	2	3	4
35. Monitoring of educators on class teaching.	1	2	3	4
36. Giving feedback to parents on learners' performance.	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX D

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

VHEMBE DISTRICT

2012 -01- 19

REF: 14/7/R

ENQ: MANENZHE T.A

TEL: 082 868 3499/015 962 6037

MUEDI F.P

P.O.BOX 380

VHUFULI

0971

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH: YOURSELF

1. Permission is hereby granted to you to conduct a research at schools in Tshinane Circuit.
2. You are advised to conduct your research with the consent of both the circuit manager and the principals of the identified schools.
3. We strongly advice that the research process should never interrupt the normal learning and teaching time.
4. Wishing you all the best.

.... 19/01/2012

DISTRICT SENIOR MANAGER DATE

APPENDIX E

RESULTS FOR QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND PRINCIPALS

SECTION A: Biographical information

Tables 1, 2 and 3 show characteristics of the sample

Table 1 Gender of respondents

The table below shows gender of participants

	Frequency	Percent
Male	45	68.2
Female	21	31.8
Total	66	100

Table 2 Categories of respondents

The table below shows the focus group of the participants.

	Frequency	Percent
Learner	14	21.2
Parent	14	21.7
Teacher	31	47.0
Principal	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 5 Library

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	1	1.5	Often	2	3.0
No	65	98.5	Seldom	1	1.5
			Never	5	7.6
			Not applicable	58	87.9
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 6 Laboratory

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	2	3.0	Often	3	4.5
No	64	97.0	Seldom	1	1.5
			Never	6	9.1
			Not applicable	56	84.8
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 7 Computer laboratory

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	24	36.4	Often	8	12.1
No	42	63.6	Seldom	12	18.2
			Never	9	13.6
			Not applicable	37	56.1
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 8 Teacher Attendance Register

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	62	93.9	Often	51	77.3
No	4	6.1	Seldom	9	13.6
			Never	2	3.0
			Not applicable	4	6.1
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 9 Teacher Movement Register

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	48	72.7	Often	36	54.5
No	18	27.3	Seldom	7	10.6
			Never	13	19.7
			Not applicable	10	15.2
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 10 Teacher Leave Register

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	62	93.9	Often	44	66.7
No	4	6.1	Seldom	14	21.2
			Never	4	6.1
			Not applicable	4	6.1
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 11 Period Register for Learners and Teachers

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	49	74.2	Often	36	54.5
No	17	25.8	Seldom	10	15.2
			Never	7	10.6
			Not applicable	13	19.7
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 12 Examination Time Table for all the grades

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	63	95.5	Often	45	68.2
No	3	4.5	Seldom	12	18.2
			Never	2	3.0
			Not applicable	7	10.6
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 13 General Time Table

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	65	98.5	Often	53	80.3
No	1	1.5	Seldom	4	6.1
			Never	4	6.1
			Not applicable	5	7.6
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 14 Study Time-Tables for Different Grades

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	42	63.6	Often	33	50.0
No	24	36.4	Seldom	4	6.1
			Never	8	12.1
			Not applicable	21	31.8
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 15 Homework Time-Tables for Different Grades

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	25	37.9	Often	18	27.3
No	41	62.1	Seldom	7	10.6
			Never	8	12.1
			Not applicable	33	50.0
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 16 School Year Plan

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	48	72.7	Often	31	47.0
No	18	27.3	Seldom	19	28.8
			Never	5	7.6
			Not applicable	11	16.7
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 17 School Assessment Plan

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	57	86.4	Often	35	53.0
No	9	13.6	Seldom	12	18.2
			Never	6	9.1
			Not applicable	13	19.7
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 18 School Academic Performance Improvement Plan

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	58	87.9	Often	34	51.5
No	8	12.1	Seldom	18	27.3
			Never	5	7.6
			Not applicable	9	13.6
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 19 Policy on Learner Discipline

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	53	80.0	Often	32	48.5
No	13	19.7	Seldom	16	24.2
			Never	8	12.1
			Not applicable	10	15.2
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 20 Monitoring Tools for Teaching and Learning

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	54	81.8	Often	35	53.0
No	12	18.2	Seldom	15	22.7
			Never	5	7.6
			Not applicable	11	16.7
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

Table 21 Intergraded Quality Management Systems Programme (IQMS)

Availability of resources			Usage of resources		
	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
Yes	64	97.0	Often	38	57.6
No	2	3.0	Seldom	14	21.2
			Never	6	9.1
			Not applicable	8	12.1
Total	66	100	Total	66	100

SECTION C: In tables 22-35 Respondent indicated the extent to which some of the factors or activities contributed to poor performance of their schools

Table 21 Content knowledge of educators

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	40	60.6
To a less extent	13	19.7
Does not affect	5	7.6
Not sure	8	12.1
Total	66	100

Table 23 Poor content knowledge of educators

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	23	34.8
To a less extent	25	37.9
Does not affect	11	16.7
Not sure	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 24 Dysfunctional School Management

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	19	28.8
To a less extent	17	25.8
Does not affect	17	25.8
Not sure	13	19.7
Total	66	100

Table 25 School Management Team

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	23	34.8
To a less extent	20	30.3
Does not affect	16	24.2
Not sure	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 26 Attendance to Union Activities by Teachers

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	25	37.9
To a less extent	19	28.8
Does not affect	15	22.7
Not sure	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 27 Community activities such as attendance of memorial services by teachers

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	19	28.8
To a less extent	17	25.8
Does not affect	22	33.3
Not sure	8	12.1
Total	66	100

Table 28 Learner Discipline

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	28	42.4
To a less extent	12	18.2
Does not affect	23	34.8
Not sure	3	4.5
Total	66	100

Table 29 Curriculum coverage as per pacesetters by teachers

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	36	54.5
To a less extent	18	27.3
Does not affect	11	16.7
Not sure	1	1.5
Total	66	100

Table 30 Registration of children to school on time by parents

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	32	48.5
To a less extent	13	19.7
Does not affect	16	24.2
Not sure	5	7.6
Total	66	100

Table 31 Participation by parents in curriculum delivery of their children

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	23	34.8
To a less extent	25	37.9
Does not affect	11	16.7
Not sure	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 32 Monitoring implementation of departmental policies by principal

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	30	45.5
To a less extent	19	28.8
Does not affect	10	15.2
Not sure	7	10.6
Total	66	100

Table 33 Attendance by learners

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	28	42.4
To a less extent	15	22.7
Does not affect	15	22.7
Not sure	8	12.1
Total	66	100

Table 34 Attendance by educators

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	29	43.9
To a less extent	23	34.8
Does not affect	12	18.2
Not sure	2	3.0
Total	66	100

Table 35 Monitoring educators in class teaching

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	35	53.0
To a less extent	15	22.7
Does not affect	14	21.2
Not sure	2	3.0
Total	66	100

Table 36 Giving feedback to parents on learners' performance

	Frequency	Percent
To a large extent	23	34.8
To a less extent	14	21.2
Does not affect	21	31.8
Not sure	8	12.1
Total	66	100