

**PERCEPTIONS OF STAKEHOLDERS ON HOW SCHOOLS IN THE
FEZILE DABI DISTRICT MANAGE REPUTATION**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this study is my own original work and that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references

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- The Free State Department of Education for allowing me to conduct research in schools in the Fezile Dabi district

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late mother Mrs Gertrude Tshabangu, who laid a very strong foundation. She always encouraged me to work very hard to succeed in life.

May her soul rest in peace.

ABSTRACT

Key words: management, reputation, reputation management in schools, external stakeholders, internal stakeholders, reputation in school.

The main aim of this study was to investigate the perceptions of stakeholders regarding reputation in schools in Fezile Dabi district. A qualitative approach was used. Multiple sources of data collection included semi-structured interviews, documents and visual data in the form of photographs.

A literature review revealed that reputation management is imperative for schools to survive and continue existing. Determination of factors that contribute to good reputation and those causing bad reputation is important before school managers can embark on reputation management. Reputable schools attract more learners and resources because of the culture of learning and teaching in these schools.

Four sites were purposefully selected and twenty internal and external stakeholders participated. The research sites were made up of two primary and two secondary schools all Quintile 1 and 2 schools. The study revealed that factors contributing to good reputation in the participating schools included: effective teaching, emotional appeal, clean physical surroundings, good leadership and management, involvement of parents and effective financial management. It was found that all participating schools had good academic results and received awards in sport and music, involvement in extra-curricular activities was regarded as a norm in these schools, thus they were boasting of high enrolment of learners.

There were however, causal factors to bad reputation such as external factors- lack of leadership and management at district level and lack of skills regarding dealing with media. Internal factors included misbehaviour of learners and ineffective management. School managers in these schools were not creative and innovative in the use of strategies to strengthen reputation in their schools. The focus was only on effective teaching and extra-curricular activities. No new strategies were adopted by school managers to adapt to the changing school environment to ensure continued reputable schools.

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