

**THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ASSESSMENT POLICY IN PRIMARY
SCHOOLS**

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DEDICATION

To my late father, Rueben Green Khosa and my loving mother, Lizzy Khombomuni Khosa who taught me to believe in myself.

To my husband, Mongalo Johnson, my dearest children, Ntshembo and Lerato and my mother in-law Puleng Kate Sekwati, for the help, support and patience they showed during my study.

To my brothers and sisters who believed that one day their youngest sister will achieve this academic qualification.

To my friends for giving me the will to go on, their role has made a major positive impact in my life.

To the Almighty His name be glorified, for His grace and blessings during the entire exercise.

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this research was to determine the extent of the role of the school management team in implementing an assessment policy. Related themes that were addressed in this investigation were assessment requirements and the role of the school management team in relation to assessment. An explanation of the Outcomes-based Education (OBE) approach served as a basis for the clarification of assessment in this research, because assessment is viewed as an integral part of OBE. The requirements of assessment were accordingly identified and discussed in detail, e.g. types of assessment, purpose of assessment, forms of assessment and methods of assessment.

The role of the school management team was subsequently clarified in relation to the implementation of an assessment policy with a focus on the composition of the school management team and the roles, responsibilities and core duties of the different members of the school management team. The accumulated information from the literature overview formed a coherent basis for the development of a management plan and theoretical framework for school management teams to manage assessment in primary schools of the Jouberton education district.

The description of the research design was aimed to provide a systematic outline of the research process and methodology to empirically investigate the extent of the role of the school management team in implementing an assessment policy. The research was based on a quantitative survey with the use of a structured questionnaire that included qualitative open-ended questions to determine the extent of the role of the school management team in implementing an assessment policy in primary schools in the Jouberton education district. The results from the empirical investigation proved to be complementary to the proposed theoretical framework for the management of assessment in schools. The responses from the empirical investigation revealed some tendencies and needs according to the different sections of the questionnaire. Guidelines were accordingly formulated for the enhancement of the competency of the members of the school management teams to implement a management plan for implementing an assessment policy in the schools of the study population.

OPSOMMING

Die doel van die navorsing was om die omvang van die rol van die skoolbestuurspan te bepaal met betrekking tot die implementering van 'n assesseringsbeleid. Verwante temas wat deel van die ondersoek uitgemaak het, was onder andere vereistes vir assessering en die rol van van die skoolbestuurspan in die verband. 'n Uiteensetting van die Uitkomsgebaseerde Onderwysbenadering vorm die basis vir die verklaring van assessering aangesien assessering beskou word as 'n integrale deel van Uitkomsgebaseerde Onderwys.

Die rol van die skoolbestuurspan in verband met die implementering van 'n assesseringsbeleid is vervolgens beskryf met 'n fokus op die samestelling van die skoolbestuurspan asook die rolle, verantwoordelikhede en kernpligte van die verskillende lede van die skoolbestuurspan. Die saamgestelde inligting van die literatuuoroorsig het 'n samehangende basis gevorm vir die samestelling van 'n bestuursplan en teoretiese raamwerk vir skoolbestuurspanne om assessering in die primêre skole van die Jouberton Onderwysdistrik te bestuur.

Die beskrywing van die navorsingsontwerp was daarop gerig om 'n beskrywing te voorsien van die navorsingsproses en metodologie ten einde die rol van die skoolbestuurspan empiries te ondersoek om 'n assesseringsbeleid te implementeer. Die navorsing was gebaseer op 'n kwantitatiewe ondersoek met 'n gestruktureerde vraelys wat kwalitatiewe oop-vrae ingesluit het om die mate van die rol van die skoolbestuurspan in primêre skole van die Jouberton Onderwysdistrik te bepaal. Die resultate van die empiriese ondersoek was ondersteunend tot die voorgestelde teoretiese raamwerk vir die bestuur van assessering in skole. Die response van die empiriese ondersoek het sekere tendense en leemtes blootgelê ooreenkomstig die verskillende afdelings van die vraelys. Riglyne is vervolgens geformuleer vir die verhoging van die bevoegdheid van die lede van skoolbestuurspanne om 'n assesseringsbeleid in skole van die studiepopulasie te implementeer.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Curriculum development and implementation was initiated in the previous dispensation by the former national department of education (National Education Policy Initiative, 1992:10). The national curriculum policy of the time was authoritarian in that the content of the syllabuses was centrally prescribed by the government establishment with only minor variations allowed for implementation by the various ethnic groups (Jansen, 2003:35).

The implementation of the curriculum in schools was mainly concerned with timetabling, monitoring and assessment (Graham-Jolly, 2003:101). According to Mabaso *et al.* (2001:161) the focus of assessment was limited to prescribed learning content and the mastering thereof, while assessment practices were narrowly based on tests, assignments and examinations as determined by strict prescriptions from the different syllabuses. Assessment procedures were communicated to educators in an authoritarian manner through the hierarchical management structures of the department of education as a compulsory set of instructions (Coleman *et al.*, 2003:101). It can be deduced that there was in such an authoritarian situation no consultation at educator level with, consequently, a minimum of input from educators about essential elements of the implementation of the curriculum, like assessment. Such a prescriptive environment limited the creativity of educators who only had to follow strict instructions to be monitored by the hierarchical management structure of the education department and school. The outdated inspection services fulfilled the responsibility to “inspect” all curriculum practices.

In the new democracy of South Africa the former Minister of Education, Professor Bengu, announced the implementation of Curriculum 2005 in 1998 as the new curriculum for the 21st century (Vermeulen, 2002:3). One of the main features of the curriculum policy has been to shift the emphasis of teaching and learning away from mere rote learning to the realisation of achievable educational outcomes

(Department of Education, 2001b:10-14). According to the outcomes-based approach of the new curriculum policy, learners should become actively involved in their own learning process and are required to demonstrate what they have learnt and achieved in a variety of ways. Assessment is, consequently, regarded as an ongoing process where learners are assessed in a variety of ways on a continual basis (Department of Education, 2001b:10-14).

The transformation of the curriculum policy has, thus, major implications for the curriculum component of assessment, especially as far as the role of the educator is concerned. The educator now fulfils the role of a facilitator responsible for developing teaching and assessment strategies to facilitate the learning process (Scott & Ayres, 2002:48). According to Vermeulen (2002:92), the core task of the educator has moved from teaching to assessing, but the dilemma for educators is that they do not always have the necessary information and guidance from the school management team to effectively implement an assessment policy. The dilemma is echoed by Vermeulen (2002:93) in his quotation of the former Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal: *“There is a fear that unless there is a greater guidance for teachers as to what they should do and how they should do it, we South Africans will continue to have disappointing results.”*

Requirements for curriculum implementation are not only limited to educators, but also include the members of the school management team (Jacobs *et al.*, 2000:281). Education authorities provide generic curriculum guidelines for educators to devise and to implement an assessment policy in schools. However, a lack of more specific guidelines seems evident for the role of the members of the school management team. Mabaso *et al.* (2001:161) stressed in this regard the need for guidelines for members of the school management team to manage assessment practices effectively in schools. Specific management tasks must be fulfilled by the school management team to ensure a tailor-made assessment policy for the various learning programmes and for the school as a whole (Department of Education, 2001a:8). Jacobs *et al.* (2000:281) propagate an in-service initiative for educators to obtain competency to implement an assessment policy in schools.

Fierce reaction from all role players in practice led to the revision of Curriculum 2005 that resulted in the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) (Chisholm, 2000:50). The Revised National Curriculum Statement became policy during 2003 and it is implemented in all South African schools (Vermeulen, 2002:94). One of the outcomes of the Revised National Curriculum Statement is that educators must be trained about the procedures and methods of assessment. However, the role of the school management team to support the educators for the effective implementation of an assessment policy in schools has not been addressed satisfactorily in the RNCS (Jacobs *et al.*, 2000:281).

According to the Revised National Curriculum Statement (Department of Education, 2002:28), the school management team should ensure that the school's assessment policy is formulated in consultation with the educators and parents. The National Assessment Policy (Department of Education, 1998b:7) requires from members of the school management team to manage the implementation of an assessment policy to ensure that assessment is fair, reliable and valid.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Considering the above argumentation, the research problem for this research study is formulated as: What is the role of the school management team in implementing an assessment policy in primary schools?

An analysis of the above-formulated research problem suggests that the following research questions should be addressed:

- What are the prerequisites of an effective assessment policy for primary schools in the Jouberton education district?
- To what extent do school management teams implement assessment policies in primary schools in the Jouberton education district?
- What management guidelines can be developed for school management teams to ensure effective assessment practices in primary schools in the Jouberton education district?

The formulation of a problem statement with related research questions makes it possible to formulate the aims for the research report.

1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The primary aim of this research is to determine the role of school management teams and to develop management guidelines for the implementation of an assessment policy in primary schools in the Jouberton education district. The primary aim can be subdivided into the following **secondary aims**, namely to

- determine the prerequisites of an effective assessment policy for primary schools in the Jouberton education district;
- determine the role of school management teams with regard to the implementation of assessment policies in primary schools in the Jouberton education district, and to
- develop management guidelines for school management teams to ensure effective assessment practices in primary schools in the Jouberton education district.

The finalisation of the problem statement and research aims leads to the selection and description of an appropriate research design.

1.4 RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research study is based on a cross-sectional, empirical survey. An approach of a quantitative survey will be undertaken which aims to provide descriptive findings representative of an overview of the study population. This research design is chosen because of its applicability on gathering data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature or existing conditions (Mouton, 2002:152,153; De Vos *et al.*, 2005:375).

1.4.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

A comprehensive literature review will form an important part of this research to determine the requirements for the implementation of an effective assessment policy for primary schools in the Jouberton education district. The nature of the data from literature involves primary and secondary sources as well as related documentation from the Department of Education. Different databases, e.g. NEXUS, GKPV, RSAT, ERIC, and other related educational indexes will be utilised for the purpose of an intensive literature review. Electronic access to data via the Internet will form part of the literature review and databases such as *Sciencedirect*, *EBSCOHost* and *ALLTHEWEB* will be explored for relevant data.

Key words in this regard are: *education, teaching, schools, management, assessment, policy, curriculum, outcomes-based, tasks, and methods. (school management team)*

1.4.2 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The empirical research design aims to describe an applicable research design and methodology as a scientific process to gather reliable and valid information for the purpose of analysis and interpretation to meet the requirements of the research problem.

1.4.2.1 Research design

A research design refers to a systematic plan according to which relevant data is collected, analysed and interpreted to investigate a particular research problem in a scientific manner (Mouton, 2002:55, 56; Henning *et al.*, 2004:30). For the purpose of this investigation, a research design is viewed as the selecting of specific research methods and procedures to acquire valid and reliable data for empirically grounded analyses, conclusions and guidelines formulation.

1.4.2.2 Population

The reference to *population* in this research refers to the members of a defined group of people (members of school management teams) to whom the research

results are applicable. The population is in other words the group of people to whom the research report wishes to generalise the findings and results (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:193). The population of this research study is described as all the primary schools of the Jouberton education district of the North West Province. The school principal, deputy school principal and three heads of department as members of the school management team of each selected primary school acted as respondents for the survey.

1.4.2.3 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is selected as data collection method to obtain facts, opinions and experiences from the members of school management teams from primary schools in the Jouberton education district. In order to conduct the survey, a structured questionnaire was developed as a measurement instrument to capture the required data from the study population. A structured format for the questionnaire was chosen to include, in addition to the structured closed-ended questions, also probing open-ended questions that explored the responses to the closed-ended questions for the purpose of greater depth and the gaining of additional information.

The questionnaire was developed and completed anonymously by the respondents. A cover letter accompanied each questionnaire to explain the purpose of the research and provide information for the completion of the questionnaire. A literature review and pilot study contributed to the validity of the questionnaire.

1.4.2.4 Statistical analysis

Descriptive statistical techniques were applied to organise, summarise and interpret the quantitative data. Measurements were mainly recorded as scores indicated by means of a four point Likert scale with a range from a low to a high level of the variable of interest. Measurements of central tendency were selected to describe the average of selected sets of scores to obtain indications of typical tendencies and outliers. The raw scores were statistically converted to derive scores for the purpose of quantitative interpretation. The statistically derived scores consisted of frequencies, means and rank scores to represent a particular

statistical position of individual or categories of recorded responses. The standard deviation and range as measurement of variability were also represented as part of the statistical analysis.

The analyses also accounted for open-ended responses to determine the idiosyncratic experiences and practices of respondents concerning the implementation of an assessment policy in primary schools. Responses to the open-ended questions were analysed qualitatively by means of recording, interpretation, categorising, pattern formation, inference and conclusion.

1.5 CHAPTER DIVISION

The following chapters represent the unfolding and structure of this research:

Chapter 1: Orientation

Chapter 2: Assessment requirements for schools

Chapter 3: The role of the school management team in the implementation of assessment policies

Chapter 4: Empirical research

Chapter 5: Findings, recommendations and conclusion

1.6 CONCLUSION

This introductory chapter provides an orientation to the research. Background information was provided concerning the adoption of Outcomes-based education as a new approach in the South African education system. Assessment as an integral part of Outcomes-based education is regarded as an ongoing process where learners should be assessed in a variety of ways on a continual basis. Educators are now required to fulfil the role of facilitators to develop teaching and learning strategies to achieve predetermined outcomes. One of the core tasks of the educator thus shifted from teaching to assessment. The problem, however, is that educators do not receive sufficient information and guidance from the school management team to effectively implement an assessment policy.

This research aims in the following chapters to explore this particular need to eventually formulate recommendations and guidelines for the school management teams of the study population to implement an assessment policy in the primary schools of the Jouberton education district.

CHAPTER 2

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOLS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The research report's focus revolves around the implementation of an assessment policy by school management teams in primary schools in the Jouberton education district. Before a description of the main concept of assessment and an exposition of the role of school management teams, the closely linked theme of Outcomes-based Education will be analysed and discussed. A clarification of the concept of Outcomes-based Education will serve as basis for all references to assessment, which is an essential component of Outcomes-based Education.

Assessment is not an isolated phenomenon in the teaching and learning process. Assessment forms an integral part of the approach of Outcomes-based Education (Department of Education, 2000a:13) and therefore the essence of this specific approach and correlation with assessment are indicated in this chapter. A clear understanding of the concept of Outcomes-based Education and the related issue of assessment are of paramount importance for the further investigation of the research theme.

Important sub-themes like principles, purposes, types, and methods of assessment are discussed. These sub-themes are complimented by descriptions of different approaches of assessment.

With the above-mentioned introduction as a point of departure, the following sections cover the development and background information of Outcomes-based Education as a specific approach to education, because it is the current national policy in South Africa.

2.2 OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION AS AN APPROACH TO EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

A new education policy was introduced with the advent of the new democracy in South Africa (Vermeulen, 2002:3). One of the main features of the new education policy was an approach of Outcomes-based Education with far reaching implications for teaching and learning activities in South African Schools.

A background on the development, concept clarification and implications of an approach of Outcomes-based Education in South Africa are outlined in the next paragraphs.

2.2.1 WHAT IS OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION?

The Department of Education (1997:4) defines Outcomes-based Education as an approach of formal or informal teaching and learning processes that encompasses knowledge, skills, attitudes and values within a particular educational context to achieve specific outcomes. Outcomes-based Education is a learner-centred, result-oriented approach to education and training that builds on the notion that all learners need to and can achieve their full potential at different times and style (Department of Education, 1998b:4). Outcomes-based Education is described in a departmental document (South African Education for the 21st century, 1997:6) as a means for the development of the learner as a whole and not for only judging a learner's ability. The Department of Education (2000a:2) further describes Outcomes-based Education as an approach that enable learners to communicate effectively, identify and solve problems by using creative and critical thinking, work effectively with others in a team, and to understand that the world consists of a set of related systems. An approach of Outcomes-based Education must lead to life-long learning for all learners.

Jacobs *et al.* (2000:102) also describe Outcomes-based Education as a curriculum approach to teaching and learning that requires a shift from teacher input through syllabuses to a focus on learner outcomes. Outcomes-based Education is also viewed as a competence approach (Vermeulen, 2002:6) whereby it is directed towards what the learner knows and can do at the end of a learning activity, cycle or phase. The Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002b:1) states that

Outcomes-based Education strives to enable all learners to achieve their maximum potential by setting the outcomes to be achieved at the end of the learning process.

The analysis of the concept Outcomes-based Education has led to the conclusion that Outcomes-based Education is a specific teaching and learning process that covers skills, knowledge, attitudes and values based on a strong learner-centered focus and a life-long learning orientation. The learner in Outcomes-based Education must be involved in an active, creative and self-regulatory manner, while the educator guides the learning experience and acts as a facilitator. Outcomes-based Education as an approach is instrumental to develop a learner in totality, whereby it enables the learner to use specific skills like communication and problem solving. Outcomes-based Education focuses specifically on learning outcomes that can be achieved in a variety of ways. An important component of Outcomes-based Education is the measurement of the attainment of the set outcomes. This implies assessment to determine the level of achievement that serves as basis for future alignment of the teaching and learning process.

The description of Outcomes-based Education makes it possible to identify some characteristics of the concept.

2.2.1.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION

The following characteristics of Outcomes-based Education as an approach to teaching and learning were identified according to the exposition of the concept description as described in the previous section:

- Activities of teaching and learning are learner-centred.
- Activities of teaching and learning encompass knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.
- Life-long learning is encouraged.
- The learner is an active participant in the learning process.
- What needs to be achieved as part of the teaching and learning process is formulated in the form of outcomes.

- The educator guides and facilitates the learning activities in order for learners to achieve.
- Learning progress as the achievement of set outcomes is determined by assessment.
- Each learner's potential is accounted for by means of a variety of teaching and assessment strategies.

The above-formulated explanation of Outcomes-based Education is a synthesis of relevant perspectives about Outcomes-based Education as an approach to teaching and learning. The next paragraph describes the premises underpinning the approach of Outcomes-based Education in a South African education context.

2.2.1.2 PREMISES UNDERPINNING OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION

An understanding of the premises that is fundamental to Outcomes-based Education is necessary because it is also applicable to assessment as an integral part of Outcomes-based Education. The premises that underpinned Outcomes-based Education are (Spady, 1994:10-24; Department of Education, 2002:10-12):

- All learners can learn and succeed with different pace.
- Participatory, learner-centred and activity-based education is the focused of the approach.
- The approach of Outcomes-based Education ensures the development of learners to realise their maximum potential and that they are equipped for life-long learning.
- Ample opportunity is provided for creativity and innovation for educators to interpret what and how to teach and assess.
- Both the process and content of teaching and learning must be accounted for by the outcomes to be achieved at the end of the process.
- Learning outcomes and assessment standards are designed from critical and developmental outcomes.
- The critical and developmental outcomes are derived from the vision and values of the Constitution.

- The approach of Outcomes-based Education upholds a democratic vision of society and envisages responsible citizens emerging from the education system.

Lundie (2004:15,16) identifies the following principles that underlie the implementation of Outcomes-based Education in schools:

- **Clarity of outcomes**

Outcomes need to be formulated very clearly because demonstration of achievement through assessment is the focal point and ultimate aim of teaching and learning processes.

- **Critical and developmental outcomes**

Curriculum, instructional and assessment design should be based on the critical and developmental outcomes on which everything ultimately focuses and rests.

- **High expectations**

A high level of challenge should be set for all learners. Expectations to accomplish the outcomes at high performance levels should be made clear. Credit for excellence and achievement after assessment should be given.

- **Expanded opportunity and support**

Educators should provide ample opportunity and support to ensure the achievement of outcomes. A flexible approach to the teaching and assessment process is encouraged to provide learners the opportunity to demonstrate learning success through assessment.

The above-mentioned premises provide a basis and framework for the implementation of Outcomes-based Education in schools and serve as guidelines for the practice making of an instructional and assessment design. The implementation of Outcomes-based Education in schools does not take place in a

haphazard manner, but needs to be planned, organised, guided and controlled as a national driven initiative in education. Effective management of the whole teaching and learning process in the context of Outcomes-based education is of paramount importance to ensure the attainment of the set outcomes for all the learners.

A common characteristic of the mentioned premises is the emphasis on assessment as an integral part of an approach of Outcomes-based Education. The next section will focus on assessment as part and as a measurement instrument of Outcomes-based Education to monitor the mastering of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

2.3 ASSESSMENT

The above explanation of Outcomes-based Education refers to the monitoring of the teaching and learning process, which indicates assessment practices as part of the whole process. The following paragraphs provide an exposition of assessment as part of the schooling process.

2.3.1 ASSESSMENT AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION

A literature review overwhelmingly supports the statement that assessment in education is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Different authors explain the coherency between assessment and Outcomes-based Education in the following way: Bertrams *et al.* (1997:6), Le Grange and Reddy (1998:11), Department of Education (2000b:13) and Vermeulen (2002:73) all state explicitly that outcomes-based assessment is integral to the whole process of teaching and learning. Outcomes-based Education requires of educators to devise and incorporate applicable assessment strategies at the same time as they plan their teaching and learning strategies. Assessment in Outcomes-based Education is designed according to the achievement of clearly defined outcomes, making it possible to credit learners' achievement and progress at various levels (Department of Education, 1998b:4). Kotze (1999:31) views assessment as integrated to the learning experience to monitor, measure and credit the level of

achievement in relation to the set outcomes.

Outcomes-based Education requires that learners must be continuously assessed in terms of their progress towards achieving the applicable outcomes. The Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002b:18) states clearly that assessment provides important information of the level of learner achievement and competence. It is therefore necessary that assessment must be done in the most effective and efficient manner to indicate how learners integrate and apply knowledge and skills of a particular learning programme. Any involvement in assessment as part of the teaching and learning process does not happen in a vacuum at the level of educators only, but requires commitment and involvement from all levels of management in schools to ensure effective and coordinated assessment practices.

The above descriptions support the coherency of assessment as part and parcel of Outcomes-based Education. Assessment is no longer regarded as the end result of schooling like it was in the traditional practices of the past. Integrated outcomes-based assessment practices help learners to make judgements about their own performance, set goals for progress and provoke further learning (Department of Education, 1998a:4). Assessment as an integral part of Outcomes-based Education requires from educators to adapt and progress according to the learner's pace in order to assist each learner to realize his/her potential.

The explanation of the coherence between assessment and Outcomes-based Education necessitates a clarification of the meaning of assessment.

2.3.2 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

This section explains the meaning of assessment by analyzing official as well as related descriptions from literature to ensure a clear understanding of the concept for the purpose of this research report. A literature review reveals a number of definitions that describes the essence of the meaning of assessment. Although the definitions are representative of different perspectives, it all reveals commonness to a great degree.

Rowntree (1997:4) views assessment in education as occurring whenever one person in some kind of interaction, directly or indirectly with another, is conscious of obtaining and interpreting information about the knowledge or abilities of the other person. This definition can be seen as a purposeful intervention in the form of educators who gather evaluative information about their learners' performance and achievement. Another description by Erwin (1991:15) supports the above definition that assessment is indicative of educators that interact with learners in order to gather and interpret information for teaching and learning purposes. The author is of the opinion that collecting, analyzing and communication information will increase learner development. This viewpoint is also an indication that assessment is part of the learning experience and cannot be separated from any learning activity. Erwin (1991:15) and Vermeulen (2002:73) define assessment as the process of designing, selecting, collecting, analyzing, interpreting and using information about a learner's achievement according to nationally agreed outcomes to increase learners' learning and development. Fraser *et al.* (1994:10) are of the opinion that assessment is the process of determining the extent to which the aim and assumptions of the curriculum have actually been achieved.

The Department of Education (1998b:3,4) views assessment in four steps:

- Generate and collect evidence of achievement.
- Evaluate the evidence against outcomes.
- Record the findings of evaluation, and
- use the information to assist learners' development and to improve the process of teaching and learning.

Le Grange and Reddy (1998:11), Sieborger and Macintosh (1998:25) view assessment as an ongoing process that takes place throughout the whole process of teaching and learning. Mabaso *et al.* (2001:164) describe assessment as the collection of information about an individual learner to enable an informed judgement that is based on the evidence of performance. Coetzee (2002:144) regards assessment as a developmental tool within the learning process.

Vermeulen (2002:73) is convinced that without effective assessment, it is impossible to measure the goals and outcomes of any education endeavour. This implies that the meaning of assessment can in no way be separated from the learning experience. Bertrams *et al.* (1997:73) describe assessment as an integral part of the learning process and consider it as a test for knowledge, skills and attitudes to help learners to succeed. The Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002a:93) points out that assessment is a continuously planned process of gathering information about the performance of learners measured against the assessment standards of the learning outcomes. Lastly, the dictionary meaning of assessment is described as an act of judging a person, situation or event (Dictionary.Com: 2006).

The perspectives of the various exponents in this field of study reveal agreement to a high degree about the meaning of assessment. Certain authors provide a more comprehensive description than others, while some authors put more emphasis on specific aspects of assessment. Considering the various definitions from literature, an own interpretation of the concept can be formulated.

The following key aspects of the concept are identified in an analysis of the descriptions from literature. It can be concluded that assessment is:

- Human intervention.
- An integral part of education.
- The collection, recording and communication of information on achievement.
- An ongoing process.
- About knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.
- Measurement against criteria, standards and outcomes.
- A process of systemic planned actions.
- Judgements of competence based on results.
- A developmental tool in education, and
- Aims to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

It can be deduced that assessment is part of a process of lifelong learning. It can also be assumed that assessment plays an important role in South African education, because it develops lifelong learners to realise their unique potential to become responsible and productive citizens of the country.

The analysis of the various descriptions of assessment has led the researcher to formulate an own viewpoint or synthesis about the meaning of assessment. The concept can consequently be described as:

Assessment is an integral part of the education process and instrumental to personal development and lifelong learning. Assessment involves a systematic and planned process of collecting, recording and communication of measurable information on achievement about knowledge, skills and attitudes according to nationally agreed standards to ensure successful teaching and learning.

The above-formulated definition of assessment serves as a point of reference for this research, which proceeds to focus on the principles of assessment.

2.4 PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

As a national initiative of Outcomes-based Education, assessment in the schools of South Africa needs certain principles as fundamental guidelines for the practice to ensure a degree of uniform interpretation and implementation. The principles serve therefore as basis and fundamental framework for the implementation of an assessment programme in schools. Educators and school management teams must account for these principles in their interpretation and implementation of assessment in practice. The following principles are provided by the (Department of Education 1998a:12; 1998b:5; Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002a:94):

- Assessment should have a clear, direct link with the critical and developmental outcomes.
- Assessment is an on-going, integral part of the learning process.
- Assessment must be accurate, objective, valid, fair, time-efficient and

manageable.

- Assessment results must be communicated clearly, accurately, meaningfully and timeously.
- Assessment must be bias free and sensitive to the gender, race, cultural backgrounds and abilities of learners.
- Assessment must recognise individual achievement, progress and must lead to the improvement of the quality of learning.
- Assessment must include a variety of methods and account for different contexts.
- Assessment encompasses a whole school approach to engage learners, parents and must accommodate learners with special educational needs.
- Criterion-referenced and diagnostic approaches are applicable.

The outline and essence of the mentioned principles from the Department of Education is a confirmation of the integral role of assessment in the teaching and learning process. The success of teaching and learning is closely linked to the successful implementation of an assessment policy in schools, which implies involvement not only at educator level, but also involves the school management team. The stated principles are indicative that assessment involves all role players in the school setting to ensure an effective assessment strategy.

The principles of assessment provide the foundation for the school management teams to manage the implementation of an assessment policy in schools. In carrying out the preceded principles, educators and school management teams must also account for the purpose of assessment.

2.5 THE PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

The purpose of assessment in schools refers to a specific intention or result to accomplish in the teaching and learning process. As indicated in the previous sections, assessment is instrumental to improve the quality of teaching and learning and hence, all role players in the school must have a clear understanding

of the purpose of assessment.

Various formulations of the purpose of assessment occur in related literature. Garfield (1994:3,4) describes the purpose of assessment as the gathering of information about learning achievement to make it available to individual learners as an indication of their level of achievement in a particular learning activity, programme or phase. Such information is according to Garfield (1994:4), especially of value for the educator and learner to identify specific areas where difficulties or problems are experienced. The Department of Education (1998a:11) also states that the purpose of assessment included among others the identification of the strengths and weaknesses of learners. The main purpose of assessment in schools is formulated by the Department of Education (1998b:5) as follows: To determine whether the required learning for the achievement of the set outcomes is accomplished. This implies that assessment is seen as a tool to measure learners' achievement and progress. Lambrecht (1999:49) regards the purpose of assessment as to provide valid and reliable information about learners' achievement and competence. The purpose of assessment in schools is described by Van Rooyen and Prinsloo (2002:88) as the monitoring of learner progress to facilitate further learning and remedial action to support learners who are experiencing learning difficulties. Coetzee (2002:144) views the purpose of assessment as a way to ensure progress to the next level or for the awarding of credits at the end of a learning cycle or programme. The preceding viewpoints is summarised by the Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002a:94) that formulates the purpose of assessment as to monitor and facilitate the learning progress to enhance the individual growth and development of all learners.

Considering the various formulations of the purpose of assessment according to a literature review, the following key aspects are identified as the purpose of assessment:

- Effective teaching and learning according to specific outcomes.
- Difficulties, strengths and weaknesses are identified and remedial action is taken to facilitate further learning.
- Learners' progress is continuously monitored.

- Guidance of learners by means of continuous feedback and corrective evaluation.
- The provision of valid and reliable data on learners' competence and achievement.
- Progress to the next level.
- The awarding of credits at the end of a learning phase, cycle or programme.
- The enhancement of individual growth and development.

The school management team and educators are responsible to ensure that the school's assessment strategy is always in line with the purpose of assessment according to the provided guidelines. The identified key aspects of the purpose of assessment must be accounted for during all forms of assessment in schools. Assessment does not refer to a rigid practice, but manifests in many forms and types in schools according to particular needs, requirements and contexts. The next section elaborates on the different types of assessment.

2.6 TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

The assessment process includes a variety of different assessment practices. These types of assessment are used for individual growth, development and progression. A specific type of assessment is used according to context, circumstances, requirements and specific purpose. Different types of assessment serve as an important function within Outcomes-based Education to meet specific needs and requirements (Department of Education, 1998a:11). The effective monitoring of learners' achievement will facilitate further learning in an on-going process. Maree and Fraser (2004:33) state that the teaching and learning process has an influence on the type of assessment to be used. According to a literature review, four different types of assessment are identified, namely diagnostic, formative, summative and continuous assessment.

2.6.1 DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT

At the beginning of the teaching and learning process, the educator diagnoses

specific learning difficulties. Remedial action is then devised and implemented to assist learners to achieve their outcomes. The Department of Education (1998b: 6) states that learning difficulties are firstly scrutinised and classified, then appropriate remedial assistance is provided to learners who experience learning difficulties. Diagnostic assessment is used to find out about the nature and cause of learning barriers experienced by specific learners (The Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002a:94; Lundie, 2004:3). Remedial help by an educator is followed by guidance, appropriate support and intervention strategies. Maree and Fraser (2004:49) explicitly agree with the above authors by stating that diagnostic assessment is used to determine the cause or persistent learning problems to formulate a plan for remedial action. It can be deduced that diagnostic assessment includes more than just some assessment activities to identify certain barriers to the learning process, but also includes a well-planned intervention strategy to remedy any stumbling blocks in this regard.

Considering the above description of diagnostic assessment, it can be concluded that indeed if done at the beginning of the teaching and learning process, learning difficulties will be diagnosed successfully. The school management teams should be firm in managing diagnostic assessment to enable educators to provide guidance and support to learners with learning difficulties. It can further be stated that parents of such learners as well as other education specialists must be considered for intervention strategies.

2.6.2 FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

At the beginning of the teaching and learning process, diagnostic assessment is introduced to identify learners with learning difficulties. Throughout the learning process, formative assessment comes to the fore to monitor the process and the progress of the learners.

The Department of Education (1998a:14) describes formative assessment as the collection and interpretation of information on a daily basis. Learners' achievement is further continuously recognised and discussed to improve learning. Most authors like the Department of Education, (1998b:6), Mabaso *et al.* (2001:16), Coetzee (2002:139), Vermeulen (2002:77), The Revised National

Curriculum Statement (2002a:94) and Lundie (2004:3) put more emphasis on providing feedback to both educators and learner for the sake of the improvement of teaching and learning. Formative assessment conducted on a continuous basis provides constructive feedback to enable learners to successfully achieve the set outcomes. Van Rooyen and Prinsloo (2002:90) stress that formative assessment gives the educator time and opportunity to adjust or revise lessons or strategies to improve teaching and learning. The Department of Education (1998b:14) views formative assessment as a monitoring tool for whether learning is taking place as planned. Maree and Fraser (2004:33,34) view formative assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning and take place throughout the learning process.

Considering the above description of formative assessment from the literature review, the following key features are identified as formative assessment entails:

- The collection of information on learner progress on a daily basis throughout the learning process.
- The information collected is evaluated, discussed and action steps are taken to improve learning.
- Frequent constructive feedback is given to both educators and learners.
- Formative assessment monitors the progress of the teaching and learning process.

It can be concluded that the school management teams have to manage formative assessment to support and enable educators to improve the teaching and learning process at school. Because of the continuous nature of formative assessment, the school management team have accordingly to be involved in managerial matters throughout the assessment process.

2.6.3 SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

At the end of a learning programme, learners are assessed for the determination of achievement and awards. Summative assessment means in this sense that the

educator sums up all the work done by the learners for promotion to the next term or grade. According to the Department of Education (1998a:16; 1998b:6) summative assessment confirms that learners have met all competence requirements. Summative assessment is also used for recording an overall achievement of learners in a systematic way (Department of Education, 1998a:16). The Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002a:94) further states that it gives an overall picture of learners' progress at a given time or at the end of a learning programme. Cotton (1995:26), Mabaso *et al.* (2001:169), Coetzee (2002:139) and Vermeulen (2002:77) view summative assessment to be conducted at the end of the learning programme, session or at the end of studies and encompasses all written, practical and oral examinations. Summative assessment can be viewed as a final measure of what is already learnt. Maree and Fraser (2004:33) also confirm that summative assessment is concerned with the summing up of educational work or performance.

It can be concluded from the above explanation that summative assessment provides a summary of learners' success and learning barriers at the end of a learning programme. It can further be stated that the purpose of summative assessment is to record the overall learner achievement in a systematic way by using the national standardised recording forms. The implementation of an effective assessment policy has certain managerial demands for the school management team. The conducting of summative assessment requires effective management to ensure that all requirements of the national prescriptions and guidelines are met. Such an undertaking cannot be left to the educator alone, commitment and involvement from management in the school is necessary for the successful implementation of summative assessment.

2.6.4 CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

Diagnostic, formative and summative assessments are incorporated into continuous assessment. According to Clarke (2000:6) continuous assessment provides feedback to the learners and insight on how to attain learning outcomes. Vermeulen (2002:81) states that continuous assessment is designed to monitor and to encourage the teaching and learning process. Continuous assessment makes teaching, learning and assessment part of the same process (Van Rooyen

& Prinsloo, 2002:93). The characteristics that underpinned continuous assessment are (Department of Education, 1998a:14-16; Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002a:95; Van Rooyen & Prinsloo 2002:93; Mabaso *et al.* 2001:169):

- Continuous assessment takes place over a period of time.
- The purpose of continuous assessment is to gather a wide range of evidence of learners' achievement for assessment.
- Continuous assessment provides different and varied opportunities to gather this evidence.
- Assessment activities are spread throughout the teaching and learning process.
- Assessment is based on forms of assessment such as class-work, homework, projects and assignments.
- Continuous assessment puts more emphasis on what is done during the teaching and learning process.
- The application of information is assessed rather than recall of facts.
- Continuous assessment incorporates other types of assessment such as diagnostic assessment to cater for learners with learning difficulties.
- Continuous assessment enables educators to pace the progress of learners and to provide enrichment for fast and gifted learners.
- Continuous assessment provides feedback from the teaching and learning process.
- Continuous assessment allows for integrated assessment that assesses a number of related learning outcomes within a single assessment activity.
- Continuous assessment allows for summative assessment at the end of a learning programme.

Considering the above discussion on continuous assessment, it can be deduced that continuous assessment covers all the different assessment types. Continuous assessment is an on-going assessment process that provides

feedback on what is already learnt to improve teaching and learning. It is the responsibility of school management teams to encourage educators to be in line with the national assessment policy when developing their own assessment policy at school. The school management team must fulfil a strong leadership role in this regard. By managing the assessment policy of the school that includes all types of assessment, the school management teams will also ensure that educators use various forms of assessment that are well planned and practiced to develop life-long learners. The specific role of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy at school will be described in the next chapter.

2.7 WHAT IS ASSESSED?

Continuous assessment allows learners to attain learning outcomes and assessment standards assessed by educators, learners themselves and school management teams. The Department of Education (1998a:6) states that the learning outcomes will serve as the basis for assessment. The Department of Education (1998a:6; 1998b:2) further identifies issues to be assessed:

- The learner's progress and achievement is assessed. The educator should provide each learner with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate competence in different ways and across different contexts to achieve fair and balanced assessment.
- Specific or learning outcomes are assessed according to assessment criteria or standards. This assessment process must be transparent such that these outcomes and their assessment standards are made available to learners to inform them of what is to be assessed.
- Non-achievement of outcomes and their assessment standards by learners must receive clear explanations with an indication of areas that need further work, and must be assisted to reach the required standards or criteria.

Vermeulen (2002:78) further states that outcomes and assessment standards must be used to determine the learner's performance. A variety of methods, instruments and techniques must be used when assessing learners and they must

receive feedback continuously. Lundie (2004:6) describes assessment standards as the level at which learners should demonstrate their achievement of learning outcomes, while learning outcomes refers to what learners should know and be able to do.

It can be deduced from the above that learning outcomes and their assessment standards are assessed for learners' achievement and progress. Most of all learners should be informed of outcomes to be assessed and when these outcomes will be assessed. The school management team should encourage educators to assess according to learner's pace and understanding. The requirements of effective assessment process involve a partnership amongst educators, learners, school management teams and parents. The next section will focus on persons responsible for learner assessment.

2.8 WHO ASSESSES?

It is the duty of school management team to ensure that learning outcomes are assessed in accordance with the National Assessment Policy. Persons involved in assessment process should understand their roles and responsibilities in order to make the assessment process fair and transparent. The Department of Education (1998a:7), The Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002a:96), Van Rooyen and Prinsloo (2002:88) and Coetzee (2002:146) state that educators have the overall responsibility to assess the progress of learners in achieving the expected outcomes and assessment standards. Educators are expected to create a valid reliable and credible assessment process (The Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002a:96). According to Coetzee (2002:146) educators assess a learner's prior knowledge and experience, learner's progress and problems during the teaching and learning process.

The Department of Education (1998a:7) and Maree and Fraser (2004:54) further state that all stakeholders involved in the assessment process include the persons responsible for carrying out assessment. The persons can be educators, learners, policy makers, school management teams as well as parents and the community.

It can be concluded that there are people who assess learners' achievement and

these people involve educators, learners, school management teams, department officials and parents. These people make important decisions on learners' future. The vast responsibility rest upon educator's shoulders on whether learners have learnt and understood what was supposed to be assessed and they have achieved outcomes and assessment standards. It is therefore, imperative to identify role players and their responsibilities in the assessment process.

2.8.1 EDUCATORS

According to the South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996:B-4) educator means any person, including a person who is appointed to exclusively perform extracurricular duties, who teaches or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education psychological services, at school. It is important for the educator to be competent assessor and record keeper (Van Rooyen & Prinsloo, 2002:96). The National Education Policy Act no 27 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996:A-78) specifies roles of the educator as an assessor:

- The educator will understand that assessment is an essential feature of the teaching and learning process and know how to execute this process.
- The educator will have an understanding of the purpose, methods and effects of assessment and be able to provide helpful feedback to learners.
- The educator will design and manage both formative and summative assessment in ways that are appropriate to the level and purpose of the learning and meeting the requirements of accrediting bodies.
- The educator will keep detailed and diagnostic records of assessment.
- The educator will understand how to interpret and use assessment results to feed into processes for the improvement of learning programmes.

Mabaso *et al.* (2001:171) and Coetzee (2002:147) also view the educator's role as:

- To understand the standards or qualifications.
- To plan and design assessment.
- To collect evidence and evaluate evidence.
- To ensure that the gathered evidence is valid, reliable, authentic, sufficient and current.
- To assess the learners competence against assessment criteria or standard.
- To make judgement about learners competence.

The above roles of educators as assessors inform them when they assess learners during the teaching and learning process. The educator should ensure the use of a variety of assessment methods and techniques for learners to achieve outcomes and assessment standards. It is also the responsibility of the school management teams to monitor on whether educators are well vested with their roles as assessors. The educator should make sure that learners take part in assessment process by active involvement. The next part will focus on the learners' responsibility in assessment process.

2.8.2 THE LEARNER

The learner can be described as any person receiving education or obliged to receive education in terms of the South African Schools Act no. 84 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996:B-4). Mabaso *et al.* (2001:173) and Coetzee (2002:146) identify roles and responsibilities of a learner as an active participant in assessment process as:

- The learner prepares evidence throughout the teaching and learning process.
- The learner is expected to submit such evidence of competence to be assessed.
- The learner must be able to identify the outcomes and assessment criteria or standards to be assessed.
- The learner participates in assessment through self-assessment.
- The learner is also expected to demonstrate specific knowledge,

understanding and skills.

- The learner will be able to present appropriate evidence of prior achievement and current competence.

From the above roles and responsibilities of the learner in the assessment process, it is clear that the learner is no longer a passive receiver of education but an active participator in the teaching and learning process. It can be concluded that outcomes-based assessment focuses mainly on what learners know and can do and that learners can succeed. The specific role of the school management teams in the implementation of an assessment policy at school will be discussed in the next section.

2.8.3 THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM

Jacobs *et al.* (2000:28) view the school management team's role in the assessment process as:

- The school management team will help educators by making time available after teaching and learning to plan assessment activities all together. By so doing educators have an opportunity to plan continuous assessment as a team.
- The school management team should provide support during the teaching, learning and assessment process in classroom.
- The school management team should provide educators with record books and learner profiles at all times.

The Department of Education (2000b:22) further states that the school management team plays an important role in making sure that there is a systematic programme for continuous assessment. The programme will monitor learners' progress and the teaching and learning process used by educators.

It can be concluded that the educators are responsible for overall learner assessment and the learners participate by determining their readiness for assessment. The school management team help and monitor educators to find

suitable ways to report on results of learners' assessment to parents. The school management should also encourage educators to involve parents in parents' evenings and discussions on their children's achievement and progress. During the assessment process not only educators and learners take part, but instruments, methods and techniques to be used are of vital importance. The next section will focus on instruments, methods and techniques of assessment.

2.9 METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment requires all people to be actively involved in the assessment process. All the stakeholders should know how to assess learners in a fair and transparent manner. The educators should ensure that no single assessment method or instrument would serve every purpose. The educators must be clear about the methods, instruments or techniques from the beginning of the teaching, learning and assessment process (Van Rooyen & Prinsloo, 2002:91). The Department of Education (1998b:7) state that performance or achievement is measured against the specific outcomes using a wide range of methods, assessment instruments and techniques. Van Rooyen and Prinsloo (2002:91) state that during lesson planning educators should keep in mind the kind of method, instruments and techniques chosen should provide a range of opportunities for learners to demonstrate their skills, values and attitudes. Methods of assessment vary in context and educators should choose these methods in accordance to their assessment standards.

Methods of assessment are referred to as the procedures that can be followed when assessing learners (Van Rooyen & Prinsloo, 2002:91). The Department of Education (1998a:17), Mabaso *et al.* (2001:169-172), Coetzee (2002:140), Lundie (2004:8-12) and Maree and Fraser (2004:51-52) mention, amongst other, methods that can be used as:

- Oral presentation: learners present work that they have researched orally to the educators. The educators assess both the work completed and the ability to communicate what has been learnt.
- Self-assessment: learners are requested to assess themselves against

given outcomes. The learners are involved in the process, they recognise their limitation of their work and learn from it.

- **Written work:** this could be a sentence, paragraph or an essay. Learners explain, analyse and summarises an idea or concept. This method can be used to assess learners' understanding of that concept. It can demonstrate learner's thinking skills, writing and communicating skills.
- **Group projects:** a number of learners work on a task together. The educator assesses learners' abilities to work as a team and complete the task competently. This method facilitates cooperation between learners.
- **Portfolio:** these are files of folders that contain the learner's work collected over a period of time. This allows for continuous assessment.

The success of the assessment methods is closely linked to the assessment instruments. Van Rooyen and Prinsloo (2002:91) view instruments used to assist the educator in collecting evidence of competence. Instruments to be used (Van Rooyen & Prinsloo,2002:91) and Lundie (2004:7,15-18) can be:

- **Rubrics:** scoring instruments used when assessing learner performance and guide learners to desired performance levels.
- **Learner's workbooks:** these are exercise books that learners write on their class activity or homework.
- **Worksheets:** these are used to complete activities and when they write tests or examination.

Technique is a special way that the educator uses the method and instruments to provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate their evidence in various ways. Amongst other techniques to be used can be:

- **Role-plays**
- **Posters**

- Debates
- Construction and design
- Drawings, for example, map

Assessment methods, instruments and techniques are the requirements of assessment process. Without various methods and instruments assessment cannot be complete. The school management teams should provide educators with learning support material in order to make the teaching, learning and assessment process a success. The success of the assessment process will depend on the recording and reporting of learners' performance. The next section will focus on recording and reporting as part of the assessment requirements.

2.10 RECORDING AND REPORTING OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment is not an end to itself, but it should be used to give feedback to educators, learners, school management teams, department officials as well as parents. By giving feedback of whether the learners have achieved and progress to the next level or grade, recording and reporting of assessment results is part of assessment requirement at school level. The Department of Education (1998b:7) views recording and reporting of information as an integral part of assessment process. Le Grange and Reddy (1998:180) state that recording and reporting are essential elements to ensure successful implementation of assessment. This section will focus on recording and reporting.

2.10.1 RECORDING

According to The Department of Education (1998b:7) cumulative evidence of learner achievement must be recorded and these records should accompany learners throughout their learning paths. These records should include information on the holistic development of the learner, such as the development of values, attitudes and social development. The information from the records is represented in such a way that it reflects the development of the learner (Le Grange & Reddy, 1998:180). Van Rooyen and Prinsloo (2002:93) view recording as necessary to track the progress and achievements of the learner continuously against clearly defined outcomes and assessment standards. Lundie (2004:17) further states that

recording of learner achievement and progress should be done for each assessment activity for each learning outcome in each learning area. The success of a continuous assessment model rests on sound and careful methods of recording learner achievement over a lengthy period of time (Department of Education, 1998a:17). Janse van Rensburg (1998:91-92) lists various methods to be used when recording learner achievement:

- Anecdotal records: they are made up of ongoing assessment. They enable the educator to make judgement about the stages that learners have reached in their learning.
- Partial credit scoring: they are used to record the steps that learners have successfully completed in problem solving or demonstrating their partial understanding.
- Dichotomous records: is used in tests or examinations where the answers are either correct or incorrect.
- Judgement of outcomes achieved occurs when the educator lists the outcomes in the learning area and then makes a judgement as to whether or not the learner has achieved the outcomes.

It can be concluded from the above methods that past practices were too judgemental and were looking for right or wrong answers from learners. These methods were not developmental to learners but critical to learners' progress. Jacobs *et al.* (2000:311), the Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002a:97) and Maree and Fraser (2004:148) identify the following methods for recording learner achievement:

2.10.1.1 RECORD BOOKS

Most educators use some kind of record book or file in which performance is recorded (Jacobs *et al.*, 2000:311). According to the Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002a:97) record books should contain learners' names, dates of assessment, name and description of the assessment activities, according to learning areas as well as comments for support purpose. There are national

codes that are used to express how the learner has performed against outcomes and assessment standards. These codes must be clear and understood by learners and parents. Such national codes are:

- 4 = learner's performance has exceeded the requirements of the learning outcome.
- 3 = learner's performance has satisfied the requirements of the learning outcome.
- 2 = learner's performance has partially satisfied the requirements of the learning outcome.
- 1 = learner's performance has not satisfied the requirements of the learning outcome (The Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002a:98).

It can be deduced that school management teams should continuously monitor record books in order to provide educators with information on how to record learner's achievement. The school management teams will be able to check on whether learning outcomes assessed were already planned during lesson preparations. Recording of learners performance assist both educators and learners in providing support on those who did not achieved specified outcomes. The next method of recording to be discussed is learner portfolio.

2.10.1.2 LEARNER PORTFOLIO

According to Jacobs *et al.* (2000:316), Lundie (2004:13) and Maree and Fraser (2004:149) a portfolio is a meaningful collection of work that reflects a learner's efforts, progress and achievement. A portfolio presents strengths, weaknesses, capabilities and progress of learner over time. It also creates an awareness of where the learner has been and where he or she is going in terms of progress (Maree & Fraser, 2004:149). The learners' portfolio should be kept in the classroom, so as to allow learners access to their portfolios.

It can be summarised that a portfolio is a method of assessment that gives both the educator and learner an opportunity to consider work done on all activities.

These activities can be placed either in a folder, file or cereal boxes. It can also be stated that the learner portfolio should be monitored or controlled by the school management team at the end of each term or annually. Parents should also have access to these portfolios during parent meetings. The last method of recording to be discussed is a learner profile.

2.10.1.3 LEARNER PROFILE

According to The Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002a:99) and Maree and Fraser (2004:150) a learner profile is a continuous record of information that gives a round impression of a learner's progress including the holistic development of values, attitudes and social development. The learner profile assists educators in the next grade or school to understand the learner better and be able to respond appropriately to the learner (The Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002a:99). Maree and Fraser (2004:150) further state that a learner profile should be viewed as a tool for support as it assists all educators in the school in terms of planning the teaching and learning process. A learner profile monitors and records the learner's progress throughout their school careers (The Revised national Curriculum Statement, 2002a:99). The following information should be included in learner profile:

- Personal information.
- Physical condition and medical history.
- Participation and achievements in extra-curricular activities.
- Emotional and social behaviour.
- Parental involvement.
- Areas needing additional support.
- Summative end of the year overall report, and
- progression summary records of the schooling years (The Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002a:99).

According to Maree and Fraser (2004:151) learner profiles remain the property of the Provincial Department of Education and have to be kept in a safe place and be accessible to all educators. The record book, learner portfolio and learner profile

should be accessible, easy to interpret, securely kept, confidential and helpful in the teaching and reporting process (The Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002a:97).

It can be concluded that a learner profile is a record containing all formal and informal information about the learner and his social development information. A learner profile, if monitored and well supervised by school management teams, learners moving to other schools should be given these profiles together with transfer forms. Record keeping on learner performance is a day-to-day activity while reporting is a summary of learner progress sent to parents per term. The next section will focus on reporting learner results.

2.10.2 REPORTING

According to the Department of Education (1998b:8) effective communication about learner achievement is a prerequisite for the provision of quality education. It implies that after the process of teaching, learning, assessment and recording, feedback should be given to learners and parents through report cards. A report must convey through the educators' comments, a clear impression of personal knowledge of the learners. Reporting must summarise achievement and progress and provide useful feedback to evaluate learning and teaching (Department of Education, 1998b:8). Jacobs *et al.* (2000:319) view the reporting of assessment results as more than merely sending report cards to parents every term. Parents need to be informed of the progress of their children through meetings, discussions, assessment portfolios and report cards. Bowmaker (2002:8) and Lundie (2004:21) further state that reports and parents meetings provide opportunities in which the progress of a learner, his or her strengths and weaknesses and targets of the future can be discussed. The educators need to be accountable to learners, parents, the education system and the broader community in assessing their learners. The accountability is through reporting (The Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002a:99). The Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002a:99) and Van Rooyen and Prinsloo (2002:97) explicitly agree that every report on learner's overall progress should include information on the learning achieved, learner's competence, support needed and

constructive feedback commenting on learners performance. Report comments should reflect the values and attitudes of the learner as these may well underpin a learning area or a learning programme (Maree & Fraser, 2004:153). Reporting to parents should be done on a regular basis to encourage their involvement and participation (Revised National Curriculum Statement, 2002a:100). The educators must send a written report card to parents per term.

The researcher views reporting as effective communication between educators, school management teams and parents. Communication will be effective when educators invite parents to discuss their children's progress and weaknesses together to agree on whether the learner should be retained or move to the next grade. The final say lies with the parent on whether the learner should be retained or be promoted to the next grade. Reporting involves the holistic development of life-long learners. The feedback through report cards motivates learners to take pride in what was achieved. Educators should design report cards with the assistance of the school management teams by keeping in mind the provincial policy of report cards. Every term when parents receive report cards the school manager should check on whether the report cards are signed and the school stamp appears. Comments on report cards aim to be informative and helpful, to guide parents in assisting their children. The members of school management teams should also encourage and guide educators to write positive comments about learners' strengths and weaknesses.

2.11 CONCLUSION

The success of the implementation of Outcomes-based Education assessment will depend on school management teams, educators and learners in understanding the Outcomes-based Education approach. The Outcomes-based approach covers skills, attitudes, values and knowledge. Outcomes-based Education is learner centred and its focus is holistic development. Meaning that the learner is developed in totality and Outcomes-based Education promotes life-long learning. Outcomes-based assessment focuses on the learning outcomes, which are specifically clarified to the learner prior to teaching, learning and the assessment process. The monitoring of teaching and learning includes assessment, which is

integral to the teaching and learning process. Assessment in Outcomes-based Education approach needs to reflect the learners' progress towards outcomes achievement. These outcomes will only be achieved when all stakeholders know the purpose of assessment and the principles of assessment, which provide the foundation for the school management team to manage the implementation of an assessment policy.

The requirements of assessment include types of assessment that are well planned and practised by educators to develop and promote life-long learners. The types of assessment will also help educators to use suitable forms of assessment prior to the teaching and learning process. The effective implementation of an assessment policy needs flexible educators to always adjust methods of assessment to suit learners' level of performance and development. The different role players on assessment were also identified and their roles and responsibilities in the assessment process have been clarified. Assessment requires educators to help learners to learn and achieve set outcomes. The school management team provides educators with resources for recording and reporting. Reporting is a line between the school and the parent community. This implies regular and open communication of learners' performance between the school and the parents. Reporting also promotes positive bonds towards the school and the parents. Feedback on learners' performance is vital to inform parents and learners on whether the learners have achieved the expected outcomes or not. It is the responsibility of the school management team to ensure that assessment policy is effectively implemented and in accordance with the National Assessment Policy. The next chapter focuses on the role of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy.

CHAPTER 3

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ASSESSMENT POLICY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the role of the school management team with specific reference to their role in relation to the implementation of an assessment policy in the school. Effective assessment in a school necessitates a sound understanding of the composition and functioning of a school management team. This chapter aims consequently to provide insight into the role of the school management team and how a management team relates to the issue of assessment to ensure school effectiveness (Gaziel, 1992:153). The emphasis is on the managerial role and accompanying direct or indirect interaction of the various members of the school management team during the implementation of assessment policies.

The leadership and management roles of the school management team in relation to the implementation of assessment are not separated from any other leadership and management roles of the management team in a school context. Ogawa and Bossert (1997:19) suggest that leadership and management flow through a network of roles within organizations and are based on the deployment of resources to improve organizational effectiveness. Accordingly, this chapter also explores an understanding of leadership, its organizational context and the relationship with the role of the school management team with reference to the implementation of effective assessment in a schools context.

An analysis of the role of the school management team requires a specific focus on the concepts of leadership and management and a concise concept clarification is accordingly also provided. This chapter commences with an outline of the composition of a school management team and a description of the responsibilities of the different members of the school management team.

3.2 THE COMPOSITION OF A SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM

A school management team of a primary school is generally composed of the principal, deputy principal, and heads of department for the foundation, intermediate and senior phases in schools that qualify for these posts. Gaziel (1992:154) defines a school management team as a group of school management specialists who work formally as a team under the guidance of a senior member of the team, generally accepted as the school principal. Middlewood (2003:66) and Wallace and Huckman (1996:1) define a school management team as principals, deputies and senior teachers who are members of any senior management team of a school. Gaziel (1992:154) further describes the school management team in terms of two aspects, namely: the structural aspect and the process aspect. The structural aspect refers to the different managerial or authority positions of staff that form from a number of different post levels a coherent management team within the structure of the school. The process aspect refers to the series of managerial actions, operations and functions performed by the management team over a period of time to bring about an envisaged result.

Gaziel (1992:154) distinguishes between the following modes of operation as part of the process aspect of a school management team:

- In the autocratic mode, the principal provides team members with information but they do not contribute their ideas or suggestions. Decisions, direction and supervision remain the realm of the principal alone.
- The consultative mode, which is also known as decision-making by consultation, has two interpretations. The school principal seeks according to the first understanding general information and suggestions from members of the management team and subordinates prior to making a decision, but does not ask them to generate or evaluate alternative solutions. Decision-making and direction are still in the principal's hands while the management team members and other educators are consulted. In the second interpretation the principal presents the problem to the team members and other educators who may then offer advice. In this

case the principal present the problem that he or she seeks to solve. The management team members and educators have an opportunity to work together with the principal in considering all possible consequences of a proposed action. Here the principal retains the right, responsibility and accountability for making the final decision.

- In the participative mode, the principal and management team members share and analyse problems together, generate and evaluate alternatives in a team effort and attempt either to reach agreement by compromise or to arrive at the decision by majority rule.

The above descriptions of a school management team are important in assisting school principals and members of the management teams to know their role in managing their schools. The structural aspect implies that the principal is a senior member of the school management team and is accountable in applying the national assessment policy and the implementation of the drafted school assessment policy. The deputy-principal holds second position at school and assists the principal to manage and lead the school. The management thereof includes the development and implementation of an assessment policy. The heads of department manage particular phases such as the foundation, intermediate and senior phases at a primary school. The heads of departments monitor the implementation of an assessment policy of the above-mentioned phases. The process aspect implies that the school management team fulfil their managerial tasks of the development of an assessment policy. The school management team also monitor and guide the implementation of the assessment policy by all staff members thereof. The different modes of operation, for instance the consultative and participative modes, allow the principal to involve the school management team and staff in drafting the assessment policy as a team.

In essence the composition of the school management team ensures that each member of the school management team knows exactly the applicable rank and job description in order to implement an assessment policy and for the purpose of learner achievement. The description of a school management team necessitates

a further exposition of the roles of the various members of a school management team.

3.3 THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM

This section explains the role of the school management team by analysing official as well as related descriptions from literature to ensure a clear understanding of the role of the school management team. Literature reviews reveal a number of roles for the school management team and also reveal commonness to a great degree.

Roles constitute the parts people expect and are expected to fulfil in the daily drama of personal and working life (Hall, 1997:63). In this sense the school management team is expected to lead and manage educators and learners consistently to ensure the smooth running of the school. Turnbull and Mee (2003:375) are of the opinion that the purpose of the school management team is to ensure participation of staff, learners, parents and the community in the school decision-making process and to develop a culture of cooperation, accountability and commitment with a focus on improving learner achievement. The role of the school management team is to provide managerial leadership for whole school development according to specific school needs (Turnbull & Mee, 2003:376).

According to Middlewood (2003:66) the roles of the school management team are:

- To ensure that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. This means that the school management team needs to ensure that processes such as record-keeping and assessment are seen as part of a greater whole to ensure that the grades for each learner are not just a collection of separate pieces of information, but provide a holistic picture of each individuals' progress and achievement.
- To develop an appropriate culture of learning and teaching. Middlewood (2003:69) is of the opinion that the task of the school management team is to encourage a school culture within which formal teaching and learning flourish. This implies that the school

management team's responsibility is to try to ensure that the whole curriculum experienced by the learner is a process which is enriching and part of a journey which will continue after school.

- To manage structures. The school management team has to put in place structures and processes that enable the implementation of the curriculum to be managed effectively, e.g. the implementation of an assessment policy.

Wise and Bush (1999:90) view the role of the school management team as follows:

- Teaching subjects and learning programmes as part of the curriculum of the school.
- Developing the curriculum including teaching and learning strategies.
- Implementing applicable school policies.
- Supervising and monitoring colleagues' work to ensure that policies are followed through.
- Devising and monitoring learners' records.
- Collaborating in whole-school planning.
- Accept accountability for managing funds for the department.
- Devising and leading in-service training with the department and staff.
- Co-coordinating and overseeing that the marking of learners' scripts is in line with the assessment policy.
- Monitoring and controlling the issue of stock and other resources.
- Overseeing or assisting with the maintenance of facilities, including involvement in health and safety duties.
- Liaising with outside stakeholders and neighbouring schools.

Kerri *et al.* (2003:351) are of the idea that the role of school management team is to give the principal and instructional staff more decentralised control over budget, personnel, curriculum, instructional and organizational matters at the school level. Success for the school management team implies accordingly the development of main objectives with a definite goal of creating a professional work environment for

educators and learners. The mentioned roles are seen as providing the school management team with the opportunity to develop staff as a whole. It can further be stated that the school management team provides for decisions to flow up through the system rather than top down by interacting with staff, learners, parents and government officials in a professional manner. The school management team should also involve individuals for expert contributions in a meaningful way to improve communication, solve problems and make effective decisions.

In conclusion, it can be summarised that effective management and leadership are expected from all members of the school management team. It is also expected that the school management team have to involve members of staff in a participative manner to ensure commitment to effective education. This state of affairs requires the skill to identify school-unique needs as a focus for development and intervention. It is clear from the preceding that the involvement of the school management team encompasses the whole spectrum of school life and not just some part of it. An analysis of the roles as portrayed in literature reveals that the involvement of the school management team is not limited to subparts, but forms part of the greater whole to promote a culture of effective learning and teaching in the school. Creativity is required from the school management team to establish structures and procedures as part of an overall management strategy to ensure e.g. the successful implementation of an assessment policy. The role of the school management team also brings to light that members of the school management team are not excluded from teaching activities. It can however be deduced that their time devoted to managerial activities will increase with a corresponding decrease in their teaching activities. A major function as deduced from the role-description of a school management team is communication skills to liaise with different stakeholders and to oversee the implementation of school and departmental policies.

3.4 CORE DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM

The above description of a more generic role of the school management team makes it possible to focus on the core duties of the different members of the school management team. For the purpose of this research report the focus is on the school management team of a primary school. The core duties of the principal, deputy principal and heads of department are presented (Wallace & Huckman, 1996:313 and The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998:C-64).

3.4.1 Principal

The principal is the chief executive officer at the school and therefore the principal is the senior member of the school management team. The principal is accountable for the roles of all school management team members, therefore his core duties need to be clarified and known to all staff members, learners and parents. This part focuses on the duties of the school principal: (Wallace & Huckman, 1996:313 and The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998:C-64):

- Ensure that the school in totality is managed satisfactorily and in compliance with applicable legislation, regulations and personnel administration as prescribed.
- Ensure that the education of the learners is promoted in a manner and in accordance with approved policies.
- Accept responsibility for the professional management of a public school.
- Provide proper instructions and guidelines for effective timetabling, admission and placement of learners.
- Provide professional leadership within the school.
- Guide, supervise and offer professional advice on the work and performance of all staff in the school and where necessary, to discuss and write or countersign reports on teaching, support, non-teaching and other staff.
- Ensure that workloads are equitably distributed among the staff.

- Ensure that all evaluation and or forms of assessment conducted in the school are properly and efficiently organized.
- Meet with parents concerning learners' progress and conduct.

Cranston (2002:4) argues that a main responsibility of the principal is to be a strategic leader by involving colleagues for effective curriculum implementation. In order to fulfil the complex and wide-ranging duties of a principal, the principal needs to delegate some decisions and functions to other competent staff members. In the same sense, the principal needs to apply time management skills in order to meet all the demands of principalship. This implies that the principal always lead his team and other staff members in all actions, functions and decisions in school.

All the above duties of the school principal inform all staff members, learners, parents and government officials that the principal manages the school activities on a daily basis. The principal takes into account approved policies by promoting learners' education. The implementation of such approved policies includes the assessment policy, which should assist in checking whether learners are performing to their potential. By providing professional leadership and advice, the principal will be able to effectively guide and supervise the implementation of an assessment policy. One of the principal's duties is to delegate and monitor heads of department in controlling educators' lesson preparations and learners' class activities to ensure an effective teaching and learning process.

It can be concluded that the core duty of the principal is how he/she uses his/her managerial skills like communication skills to motivate and encourage his staff members and learners to do their work well and thereby promotes teaching and learning at school. The principal is expected to call parents or to arrange parent meetings to discuss their children's performance and inform them about the recording and reporting system according to the assessment policy. It can further be stated that the principal should involve his school management team members in the delegation of other duties to all staff members. The principal should always consult his school management team when making final decisions at school. The next section focuses on the duties of the deputy principal.

3.4.2 Deputy Principal

The deputy principal is the second in charge at school and the deputy principal is considered to be the right hand person of the principal. The duties of the deputy-principal are the same as those of the principal when the principal is not at school.

The core duties of the deputy-principal are to: (Wallace & Huckman, 1996:313 and The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998:C-65).

- Assist the principal in managing the school and promoting the education of learners in a proper manner.
- Assist the principal in his/her duties and to deputise for the principal during his/her absence from school.
- Assist the principal with school administration, school finance and maintenance of services and buildings.
- Guide and supervise the work and performance of staff and where necessary discuss and write or countersign reports.
- Liaise on behalf of the principal with relevant government departments.
- Maintain a total awareness of the administrative procedures across the total range of school activities and functions.

It can be deduced that the duties of the deputy-principal have commonness to a certain degree with those of the school principal. The deputy-principal's duty is to deputise during the principal's absence and to be in-charge and manage the school. The above stated duties play an important role in guiding and supervising the educators' work and the implementation of an assessment policy. By appending his/her signature on the learners' progress report cards the deputy principal confirms that the assessment policy is effectively implemented. The principal and the deputy-principal need heads of department to assist them in the management of the school. The next section focuses on the duties of heads of department.

3.4.3 Heads of Department (foundation, intermediate and senior phases)

The head of the department, according to the linear structure, is the third level member of the school management team (Department of Education, 2000a:20). This implies that when the principal and the deputy-principal are attending workshops and official meetings, an appointed head of department will be in-charge to manage the school. The head of department in primary schools is in charge of a particular phase i.e. foundation phase, intermediate phase and senior phase, whereby the head of department will be in control of managing that phase.

The duties of the head of department include, amongst other to: (Wallace & Huckman, 1996:314 and The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998:C-66).

- Engage in class teaching and be responsible for the effective functioning of the phase or department and organise relevant extra-curricular activities so as to ensure that the subject, learning areas or phase and the education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner.
- Take charge of the subject, learning area or phase.
- Jointly develop the policy for that department.
- Coordinate assessment, homework, written assignments of all the subjects in that department.
- Provide and coordinate guidance on the latest curriculum.
- Provide and coordinate guidance to inexperienced staff in the department.
- Provide guidance on the educational welfare of learners in the department.
- Control the work of educators and learners in the department.
- Control reports submitted to the principal as required.
- Control test and examination papers as well as memoranda.
- Advise the principal regarding the division of work among the staff in that department.

It can be deduced that the duties of the head of department are to manage and lead a particular phase in all activities including the controlling of the educators' learning programmes, work schedules, lesson preparations, assessment implementation and checking against learners' activities on whether the activities appear in the educators' lesson preparation. By controlling educators' files the head of department will be able to recommend new methods and forms of assessment to promote learners' performance and progress. One of the core duties of the head of the department is to develop and draft a phase policy, which include an assessment policy of the phase together with the concerned educators of that phase. It is clear from the stated duties and because of the leadership and management role that the head of department determines the success or failure of the implementation of an assessment policy. The head of department provides and guides staff on the latest curriculum information and, it is also one of the head of department's duties to orientate and develop new staff members.

It can be concluded that the head of the department plays an important role in the implementation of the assessment policy at school. In essence the head of department develop policies including an assessment policy for the phase, and will assist in monitoring the implementation of assessment at phase level.

3.4.4 SYNTHESIS

The core duties of the principal and deputy-principal is to promote the education of learners with among other the effective implementation of an assessment policy which is drafted first at phase level with the assistance of the heads of department. The heads of department on the same level assist the principal and deputy-principal in the management and leadership of all phases and to guide and develop new staff members in the implementation of the curriculum and an assessment policy. For the assessment policy to be effectively implemented, the school management team should allocate educators enough time to discuss and decide on whether the assessment policy needs to be reviewed to accommodate new curriculum guidelines as proposed by the department of education. In essence the members of the school management team should stay abreast of new developments and latest curriculum matters to provide and coordinate guidance on the implementation of an assessment policy. Another important duty of the

school management team is to provide educators with record books and learners' profiles to ensure the success of the implementation of assessment policy.

The core duties of the school management team, when creatively practised and implemented by all the management team members, will determine the effectiveness of the implementation of an assessment policy for the achievement and progress of all learners.

The common responsibility of the school management team mentioned is the emphasis of leadership and management. The next section will focus accordingly of leadership and management at school level.

3.5 CONCEPT INTERPRETATIONS OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

A research focus concerning the role of school management teams in relation to assessment inevitably brings to the fore regular references to the concepts of management and leadership. The researcher is aware of the debate and related pitfalls of argumentation of the different perspectives pertaining to management and leadership. This section describes accordingly in a brief manner the essence of these concepts for the purpose of a common understanding and to serve as a point of departure for this research report.

3.5.1 THE CONCEPT OF MANAGEMENT

Literature review reveals a number of definitions that describe management. The definitions reveal commonness of the term management to a great degree.

Smit and Cronje (1999:6) define management as a process or series of activities that gives the necessary direction to an enterprise's resources so that its objectives can be achieved as productively as possible in the environment in which it functions. The above definition can be seen as an ongoing process that has objectives that should be achieved on a daily basis. Another description by Stoner and Freeman (1992:4) supports the above definition that management refers to the process of planning, organizing, leading and controlling the work of

the organization's members and using all available resources to reach stated organizational goals. The authors are of the opinion that in order to accomplish a school's objectives, the school management team is responsible for the smooth running of the school and should support the vision. Bush (1995:87) views management in an educational context as a field of study and practice concerned with the operation of educational organizations. Education management is regarded as regulative actions in a specific field or area of regulation, so as to allow formative education to take place (Van der Westhuizen, 1995:55). The Department of Education (1997:28) views management as the process for creating and supporting effective educational organizations.

The following key aspects of the concept of management in an education context are identified from the analysis of the definitional descriptions from literature. It can be concluded that education management is:

- A process of activities in a specific field or area of regulation.
- Tasks done by people in positions of authority in an organization.
- Regulative actions like planning, organizing, directing, leading and controlling to ensure formative and effective education to take place.

The concept of management in relation to the management of an assessment can be summarised as a specific area of regulation as part of a continuous process whereby members of a school management team perform regulative activities or tasks to monitor these activities to achieve and improve teaching and learning in an educational organisation.

3.5.2 THE CONCEPT OF LEADERSHIP

A brief description of the complex concept of leadership will facilitate a common understanding of the connection of leadership and the role of the school management team in relation to the research focus, namely the management of assessment in schools. The school principal is widely acknowledged as the leader and chief manager of the school; therefore the principal is accountable to all the

stakeholders of the school, viz. the education department, staff, learners, parents and the community.

Leadership has many definitions. Terry (1999:14) cautions that leadership is not about “*techniques or quick fixes*”, but rather a mode of engagement with life, requiring a lifelong commitment to grow towards human fulfilment. The preceding means that leadership is about taking the lead in cooperation with members concerned. Gerber *et al.* (1995:343) contend that leadership is an interpersonal process through which a leader directs the activities of individuals or groups towards the purposeful pursuance of given objectives within a particular situation by means of communication. Leadership cannot be separated from management, because management is a process whereby leadership is an integral part in leading people to fulfil set objectives. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997:32) support the latter statement that it is important to note that leadership and management are closely associated functions, which cannot be attended separately. Bennis and Nanus (1997:19) define leadership as creating a vision that gives an organization an identity and putting that vision into action through interaction with members as they seek to do the right things. In essence education leaders have a vision for their schools, which is shared by all in the school and shapes the programme for learning and teaching as well as policies, plans and procedures for the smooth running of a school. Leadership is also regarded as the ability to motivate others to perform tasks and or to take actions that help the school to achieve the set goals and to fulfil the school’s vision (Beach & Reinhartz, 2000:75).

From the above-mentioned description of leadership, it can be concluded that leadership is about leading the way of commitment to the vision of the school. Interpersonal skills, motivation, communication and role modelling are important elements of leadership as portrayed from literature descriptions. The leadership role of a school management team is accordingly to lead and to manage the school effectively and in totality according to the vision, objectives and needs. The leadership of school management team allows for the identification of the functions of the members of school management team.

3.5.3 A TYPOLOGY OF FUNCTIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM

The above-stated concept of leadership influences the effective assessment practices and makes it possible to identify a typology of functional leadership positions for the members of the school management team (Coleman *et al.*, 2003:94). These functional leadership positions can be summarised as:

- The school management team functions as professional leaders because the members do not lead from the base of traditional authority or from rigid control measures, but from the strength of their professional expertise in assessment methodology to ensure formative education.
- The school management team functions as educational leaders in more horizontal management structures where ownership of assessment methodology is shared by all stakeholders in the school.
- The school management team functions as moral leaders because they lead by example and motivate by means of shared values driven by ethics of care for all connected to the school.
- The school management team functions as social leaders because they are forging partnership with other related groups, e.g. colleagues, the parents and the school governing body to enable members of the school management team to guide the assessment process more effectively.
- The school management team functions as instructional leaders because they focus on the improvement of teaching and learning through among other assessment guidance.

The school management team can be seen in the light of the above as fulfilling in a particular need to provide leadership to educators for the successful development and implementation of school specific assessment practices.

3.5.4 SYNTHESIS

In conclusion it can be stated that effective leaders are on the forefront to lead effective schools and the management thereof. Leaders in schools are charged with a range of responsibilities that have direct implications for the well-being and improvement of the schools. The role of the school management teams in the implementation of assessment policies will provide for management tasks such as delegating, monitoring, controlling and supporting educators in teaching, learning and assessment processes to take place in a fair and effective manner. An analysis of the concepts management and leadership as revealed by the literature review indicates that the principal as a school leader has to set course for his school and to manage the course accordingly to make sure that the implementation of an assessment policy promotes learner achievement and progress.

The school management team develops and manages assessment strategies in consultation with subject heads and educators and oversee the way these strategies are carried out to ensure the effective implementation of the assessment policy at school. By managing and leading, the school management team needs to be creative in motivating and inspiring educators by using their leadership influence and managerial authority to get educators to work in a conducive environment and providing them with resources needed.

The school management team provides leadership to educators for the successful development and effective implementation of a school assessment policy. The explanation of the above-stated concept interpretations in relation to the implementation of an assessment policy necessitates a focus on policy development with specific relevance to assessment.

3.6 AN ASSESSMENT POLICY

Each school is viewed as a self-reliant learning organisation that has to take the responsibility for developing its own school related policies. Any school policy is however, always subordinate to applicable national and provincial policies or directives. A policy in this sense can be seen as a system that provides a

framework for the accomplishment of intended objectives (Du Preez, 2002:82). It could be deduced that a policy provides guidelines and directives for the achievement of certain goals and objectives. A policy document has to indicate *what* is intended, *how* to achieve the objectives, *who* is responsible for certain actions and *when* to take appropriate action. Once a policy document is finalised, it must be realised that no policy is static and should therefore be reformulated and adapted continuously.

It is a requirement that every school must appoint a school assessment team for the development of a school specific assessment policy as an integral part of the school's management and policy structure. The school management team is expected to initiate and facilitate the development process to compile an assessment policy for adoption by a joint meeting of the school assessment team and the school management team (Lundie, 2004:14,15). Du Preez (2002:82) makes a clear distinction between rules and policy matters, where rules are not intended for individual interpretation.

3.6.1 GUIDELINES FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The following general guidelines for the development of policies in schools are (Du Preez, 2002:85):

- All schools policies must be within the parameters of the various laws of education as well as applicable provincial directives.
- Policies have to account for goals and objectives in accordance with the strategic mission of the school.
- Policies have long-term validity and serve as guidelines for day-to-day practices, but are not inflexible.
- All policies must be formulated in writing and must be available to all educators and the community.
- Policies must be clear on guidelines for task performance.
- To avoid misunderstanding, it must be constructed in consultation with all stakeholders.

- No favouritism should be considered and policies should always be fair and realistic.
- Policy guidelines should be consulted and used on a regular basis.

In the light of the preceding the members of the school management team must be well acquitted with the foundations of outcomes-based education in order to finalise a school specific policy for assessment.

3.6.2 ASPECTS FOR INCLUSION IN AN ASSESSMENT POLICY

An assessment policy for schools is one of the main criteria used for the quality assurance of the teaching and learning activities in the school. An assessment policy should include or refer to the following aspects (Department of Education, 1998a:65; Siebörger & Macintosh, 1998:76; Lundie, 2004:16):

- Assessment cannot be regarded as an exact science. Assessment is always influenced by other factors, e.g. the individual learner and educator, the assessment activity and the context in which the assessment takes place.
- Outcomes must be stated and used in a transparent way to enable learners to know what is expected of them and what they need to do to improve their performance.
- Provision must be made for a wide range of different types of evidence in assessment.
- Continuous feedback to learners and parents must be ensured that emphasise what the learners has achieved and what they can do.
- Educators have to utilise standardised procedures for recording learner's achievement.
- Opportunities must be provided for learners to check, reflect on and to learn from the assessment activities.
- Provision must be made for sufficient differentiation between learners. For this reason the role of learner profiles must be specified in policy with regard to assessment practices.

- Effective ways of assessment must be formulated to report progress by the learners, to firstly the learners themselves, the school administrative and management systems, relevant co-educators and the learners' parents.
- A system must be in place to identify and remove barriers to learning, e.g. learners with special needs who need additional intervention and support.
- Learners' progress has to be assessed on an ongoing basis and the learners must receive regular feedback for developmental purposes.
- A high level of confidence in the school's assessment practices by people from outside the school must be part of the assessment strategy.

It can be concluded that an assessment policy has to provide formal guidance to educators and members of the school management team about the utilisation of the different methods of assessment to determine what learners are attaining and to provide educational evidence of progress. In order for the assessment policy to be effectively implemented by the school management team, validity, reliability, fairness, transparency and flexibility should be clarified and put into practice. The next section focuses on the underlying principles of effective assessment and the accompanying relation to the management role of the school management team.

3.7 PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT

One of the roles of the school management team is to ensure that the educator and assessment activities are geared towards the needs of the learner so that no barriers to further learning are created. The implementation of an assessment policy at school according to accepted principles and without serious barriers is likely to provide credible results. Credibility in assessment is assured through the assessment procedures and practices being governed by certain principles (SAQA, 2006:16). The principles of effective assessment are reliability, validity, fairness, transparency and flexibility. When these principles are accounted for, the school management team will assure the transparency and success of the

assessment process. The next paragraphs briefly describe the above-mentioned principles associated with assessment in schools.

3.7.1 RELIABILITY

The school management team needs to be part of the drafting of an assessment policy in order to ensure that the assessment of learners is consistently implemented and assessment activities are of a high quality to promote learners' progress.

According to Brown and Knight (1994:245) reliability is the assessor's attempt to make sure that the assessment results from those involved in the assessment activity are a description of what is supposed to be assessed and not a product of something else. Bellis (2000:136) is of the opinion that reliability is that whenever the assessment is done or when an assessment tool is used, it should be assessing the same outcome at the same level. As a metaphor it implies that when one is using a one-meter tape measurer, we expect it to give us the same readings. If not, the reliability is low. Reliability in assessment is about consistency and the extent to which the same judgements can be made in similar contexts in order to statistically analyse the results (Mabaso *et al.*, 2001:167; Lundie, 2004:246; SAQA, 2006:16).

It can be deduced that reliability refers to the consistency of the results produced by an assessment activity. An activity that produces similar results each time it is administered to similar groups of learners is considered to be reliable.

Lundie (2004:246) recommends the following to improve the reliability of assessment:

- The school management team together with educators should ensure that assessment activities produce similar results each time it is used on the same group of learners after the same teaching inputs.

- Educators should check on whether assessment activities produce consistent results from the same group of learners over a period of time.

The above recommendations will assist the school management team to manage and guide educators concerning the implementation of an assessment policy in a consistent and reliable manner. The reliability of an assessment activity should provide for the validity of an assessment activity.

3.7.2 VALIDITY

Cotton (1995:93) and SAQA (2006:17) state that an assessment activity is regarded as valid if it measures according to the intended aims, goals and objectives. Focusing on the intended aims, goals, objectives and quality of assessment by not straying sideways into unintentional assessment is the essence of validity. Validity has the primary meaning of measuring what the assessment activity and technique set out to measure (Bellis, 2000:137). This implies that assessment tests what it is supposed to test and nothing else. Validity, according to Lundie (2004:245), means the extent to which an assessment activity provides accurate information about what is being assessed, without interference or distortion due to other factors.

In essence validity focuses on the intended quality of what is to be assessed instead of unintentional assessment. The school management team should always monitor whether educators are assessing the right assessment activities according to the set aims, goals and objectives, and whether they are assessing these assessment activities at an appropriate time according to an assessment policy.

Some guidelines to improve the validity of assessment (SAQA, 2006:18) include:

- Educators should clarify learning outcomes and their links to specific assessment criteria within an overall assessment strategy.
- Educators should also, ensure that the selected assessment methods are fit for the intended purpose and that these assessment

methods are used to ensure that all learning outcomes are assessed.

- Establish good links between assessment, learning and personal development, by *inter alia*, allowing learners some element of choice, encouraging self-assessment and reflection.

It is the duty of the school management team to check that assessment meets the above-stated guidelines and is an integral part of the teaching and learning process to promote validity, accuracy and fairness in the implementation of assessment policy.

3.7.3 FAIRNESS

For the school management team to monitor the implementation of an assessment policy, no favours should be allowed for other learners while others are not treated equally. All educators should treat individual learners equally and fairly to promote the best results.

Bellis (2000:136) and Lundie (2004:246) contend that fairness is essential to good assessment. Fairness is about the assessment not favouring any learner or learners or not being biased against any learner. To be fair, an assessment activity must provide all learners with an equal and even-handed opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and abilities (Lundie, 2004:246). This implies that the educator cannot use an essay as a form of assessment to check on whether a learner sweeps the classroom to the desired standard.

Fairness encourages educators to treat all learners in the same manner and allocate marks in accordance to the learners' performance to promote life long learners who are confident to succeed in life. The role of the school management team is to ensure that educators apply the principle of fairness fairly and just to promote equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of their knowledge, skills and abilities the learners portray during teaching, learning and assessment processes. Fairness provides for transparency in all assessment activities.

3.7.4 TRANSPARENCY

The involvement of educators, parents and departmental officials will encourage educators to implement an assessment policy effectively and efficiently to avoid barriers of learning to be created.

According to Mabaso *et al.* (2001:167) the assessment activity should involve the participation of several stakeholders in order to gain legitimacy and transparency. It should accommodate the fact that learners can make a judgement about the expected competence. Assessment is a developmental tool; therefore transparency is a primary principle underlying outcomes-based assessment (Coetzee, 2002:145). It implies that the learners should be informed about learning outcomes and assessment standards. The learners should also be informed on the evidence required during the teaching, learning and assessment process.

It can be deduced that transparency is essential for the school management team, staff, learners and parents to ensure that a learner has achieved the learning outcomes and can proceed to the next grade or can be retained for another term in order to achieve that learning outcome. The school management team should motivate educators to implement an assessment policy in a flexible manner.

3.7.5 FLEXIBILITY

The assurance of quality assessment at school level depends on the management of the assessment policy by the school management team. The school management team should ensure that reliability, validity, fairness and transparency are flexible enough to allow learners with special needs to be given the same opportunity as able learners in the mainstream school.

Flexibility, according to Mabaso *et al.* (2001:167), refers to the fact that there might be circumstances in which assessment is administered may need to be a little different for certain learners. This implies that learners with special needs might require assessment that is altered to their level but still assess some skills as it assesses other able learners.

It can be summarised that flexibility in assessment will inform educators to be fair when assessing learners with special needs and be flexible to all learners in different assessment activities.

3.7.6 SYNTHESIS

The role of the school management team is to ensure that the above-mentioned principles of effective assessment are part of an assessment policy and is consistently implemented. The school management team should monitor the implementation of an assessment policy wherein the educators' ability to follow the official procedures of assessment practice will promote valid results. The school management team should also establish that an assessment activity provides equal opportunities to all learners at all times. In essence it implies that educators should always discuss and assess their assessment methods and practises to ensure the fairness of the implementation of an assessment policy. For an assessment policy to be legitimate and transparent the school management team should involve all educators, learners, parents and departmental officials in the implementation thereof. This means the involvement of parents and educators in an intervention committee that will alleviate many individual problems that were supposed to be resolved by school management alone. The consideration of flexibility by management will ensure that learners with specific needs will be assessed using different methods but with the same skills as other able learners.

The implementation of an assessment policy that is developed, reviewed and adopted as true and in line with departmental policies by all staff, including the school management team, educators and parents, will be able to assess learners in a fair, reliable, valid and transparent manner. Such an approach to the implementation of an assessment policy will allow for individual flexibility and innovation to create future life-long learners for South Africa.

3.8 CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ASSESSMENT POLICY

The following characteristics are associated with the successful implementation of assessment in schools (Department of Education, 1998b:8):

- The educators and school management team are regarded as professionals who pursue a clear and shared purpose of assessment. The interpretation and implementation of assessment activities are also indicative of the collective responsibility between the school management team, educators and learners for the sake of improvement of the teaching and learning activities in the school.
- Assessment is guided according to a well-planned and transparent assessment policy that is based on shared principles and values to ensure a safe and secure teaching and learning environment.
- High expectations and standards are valid for everyone, especially for the members of the school management team, educators and learners.
- An invitational school culture where all role players engage collaboratively and collegially with each other to ensure effective assessment practices is a characteristic of the successful implementation of an assessment policy.
- Assessment practices that are indicative of trust in the judgement of others, facilitates participation and recognises the complexity of contemporary society.

The school management team has an obligation and has to take special steps for the sake of the effective implementation of an assessment policy. There are however also barriers that members of the school management team have to be aware of.

3.9 BARRIERS RELATED TO EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION

Some barriers that may hinder the successful implementation of an assessment policy in schools are according to Coleman *et al.* (2003:73,74,205):

- If the academic and emotional needs of the learners are not accounted for in assessment planning, it will negatively impact on the achievement of the expected outcomes. The academic and emotional needs of learners must be regularly monitored and integrated into the overall management structures and systems of the school. Consideration of the progress of the learner as a *whole person* during the assessment process needs therefore to be built into the management structures and systems of the school.
- Fragmented assessment policies with substantial differences between learning areas and even within the same learning area could be a barrier to the successful implementation of an assessment policy. An integrated school policy on assessment is essential for consistency in maintaining learner progress. The school management team has to facilitate the whole assessment process in the school for consistency and to ensure effectiveness.
- Certain practises or structures may keep key areas of assessment separately managed by the school management team and hence make it difficult to avoid duplication. New initiatives and developments with regard to assessment may be obstructed with these rigid and/or separate management practices or structures. New initiatives may accordingly be implemented as add-ons, instead of being integrated, which will in turn increase workload of educators and create further communication problems.
- The allocation of resources by the school management team can be a sensitive issue because of the scarcity of resources. A risk may be to allocate resources via fragmented and separate structures that will encourage unnecessary competition between members of the school management team for the available resources. Power struggles may develop because of allocation disputes.
- A tendency to concentrate on quality of work and presentation rather than the quality of learning and assessment.

- An overemphasis on marking and grading tends to lower the self-esteem of the learner instead of serving as guidance for improvement and progression.
- Narrow focuses on comparing learners with each other will certainly demoralises the less successful learners.
- Assessment feedback can be aimed to narrowly serve managerial purposes rather than guiding learners to learn more effectively.

It is an essential part of the assessment guidance of the school management team to take steps to avoid these barriers that may be detrimental for the successful implementation of an assessment policy in schools. The avoidance of barriers must be taken into consideration in the development of a management plan for the implementation of a policy for assessment.

3.10 A PROPOSED MANAGEMENT PLAN

A management plan as an accepted and agreed-upon strategy with respect to assessment in the school context provides guidance and purpose to all involved. A management plan for assessment directs the action steps according to the determined goals and objectives to deal effectively with all assessment requirements in the school. It must be clear to all role players in the school that a management plan for assessment is not meant to be an isolated initiative, but is an integral part of the outcomes-based approach and requirements (Department of Education, 2001a:21).

The need for a management plan can be described as to (Department of Education, 2001b:29; Smit & Cronje, 1999:436-441):

- indicate the relation to an overall School Improvement Plan as part of the Whole School Development programme,
- account for organisational values according to the vision and mission,
- provide clarity of focus on important matters of assessment,
- prevent *ad hoc* or fragmented intervention and guidance,

- reduce the risk for failure,
- avoid unnecessary conflict related to issues of assessment,
- recognise the importance to deal in an organised and systematic manner with all aspects of assessment,
- direct actions for the achievement of goals and objectives,
- indicate and allocate roles, functions and responsibilities to all involved in the assessment process in the school,
- designate accountability to the various role players in the school,
- provide structured channels of communication and action, and to
- ensure that all activities in connection with assessment are part of an evaluation and review programme.

The broad outline of a management plan can be regarded as a synthesis of all the previous mentioned management phases of the previous sections. A starting point for an assessment management plan is the adoption of an inclusive approach as an intention of how to implement such a plan to oversee the effective implementation of assessment as part of a whole school development programme. A prerequisite is that all staff members must be included from the onset to ensure inclusiveness and ownership acceptance of the management plan. The parameters for an assessment management plan in schools are set by relevant education and curriculum directives. These directives serve as guidelines for a management plan of what is expected and to do to ensure the effective implementation of assessment practices. Policy directives, duty descriptions and a management plan require accountability from all role players and provide a clear framework for management initiatives and guidance to ensure assessment practices of a high standard.

Certain preconditions must be ensured to create a conducive environment and climate for the successful implementation of a management plan. These preconditions include a clear understanding of the outcomes-based approach, commitment from management, skills and professional development, observance of underlying principles and the availability of official requirements and policies. A management plan must be developed in such a way that it could be implemented

in practice and therefore sufficient guidelines must be included for the implementation of the management plan. Provision must be made for adequate and continuous in-service training opportunities and follow-up actions to increase competence and to prevent the occurrence of tension.

A management plan further requires continuous and end of cycle review initiatives to identify and to redress any shortcomings. A reliable self-assessment of the successes and failures of all aspects and implementation of a management plan is a prerequisite for future alignment.

An important advantage of a management plan is that it ensures clear guidelines for the members of the school management team to provide specific guidelines for the implementation of an assessment policy to parents, educators and learners. The following section deals with assessment guidance by the school management team.

3.11 ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE BY THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM

The involvement of the school management team is regarded by Coleman *et al.* (2003:66) as critical to guide and support educators with the interpretation and implementation of curriculum related matters. The actions of the school management team will have a major influence on whether an assessment policy is effectively implemented at classroom level. It is expected from the school management team to make optimum resources available to educators for the successful implementation of an assessment policy (Coleman *et al.*, 2003:60,66). As a prerequisite, the assessment guidance of the school management team has to be preceded by effective teaching and learning practices by the educators and learners in the classroom. Learners have to prepare well for classes, and must participate in all the learning activities to contribute successfully to the implementation of assessment in the school (Levin & Nolan, 2004:161). The involvement of the school management team in connection with assessment is further investigated by a description of the requirements for effective assessment guidance.

3.11.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE

Assessment guidance is part of the professional managerial actions of the school management team to ensure a certain standard of assessment as part of an overall purpose statement of the school. The guidance of the school management team with regard to assessment forms also part of the quality assurance programme for the whole school. The following requirements with relation to assessment guidance by the school management team are applicable (Siebörger & Macintosh, 1998:75; Coleman *et al.*, 2003:91,92):

- The management structure of the school needs to encourage the participation of a wide range of stakeholders, particularly by the members of the school management team. This requirement can be described as a collegiate management approach to deal with assessment related matters.
- Regular audits of human and physical resources should be conducted to establish the status of resources and to use them in the best possible way. This requirement can be described as practices.
- Professional development of staff members concerning the effective implementation of assessment should be a key aspect of the guidance involvement of the school management team.
- Appropriate and effective arrangements should be made to provide learners and educators with guidance and counselling.
- An essential aspect of the guidance by the school management team is that the assessment practices and policy is reviewed and evaluated at regular intervals, to ensure the achievement of the set objectives.

The above-stated list of requirements is of a limited nature and is not intended to be a comprehensive list in this regard. It however provides a generic outline of what is expected of the assessment guidance from the school management team. Once the requirements are met, the focus shifts to the implementation of an assessment policy.

3.11.2 GUIDANCE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ASSESSMENT POLICY

The contribution that schools make to the academic achievement of learners is to a large extent determined by the outcomes of the assessment by the educators. The work of the educators happens within a specific context of a particular school, which is among other influenced by school management and governance structures and process. In this sense the school management team has an important role to fulfil concerning guidance with regard to the interpretation and implementation of an assessment policy in the school. Guidelines for the implementation of an assessment policy in schools by the school management team are (Badenhorst & Scheepers, 1995:84-87; Coleman *et al.*, 2003:78):

- The implementation of an assessment policy is an integral part of the management of a particular learning area or department. Guidance for the purpose of effective assessment must be based on shared leadership between members of the school management team as well as educators that are part of the related learning area or subject group.
- The school management team must provide leadership, support and make resources available to ensure the effective implementation of an assessment policy.
- The promotion of effective assessment practices is essential as part of a culture of teaching and learning in cooperation with the educators.
- Specific goals and objectives for assessment must be set with contribution from educators representative of the relevant learning areas or departments. The goals and objectives must be in accordance to a clearly defined mission statement of the school and applicable national and provincial directives.
- The implementation of an assessment policy must be in close relation and be linked to the preceding teaching and learning practices.

- Continuous assessment should highlight problem areas and the school management team should provide assistance in the areas that educators require guidance and support.
- The school management team should take the initiative for in-service training to increase the assessment competence of educators.
- Regular and systemic supervising and evaluation of the assessment practices of educators and achievement levels of learners must form part of the implementation of an assessment policy.
- The school management team must create a productive teaching and learning environment in such a manner that it gains the respect and trust of educators in their respective learning areas or departments. This state of affairs is a prerequisite for successful assessment.
- The school management team should always demand high standards with regard to the implementation of an assessment policy and not be satisfied with lower standards because of unsubstantiated reasons.
- Members of the school management team should demonstrate a high level of communication and conflict resolution skills during the implementation of an assessment policy.

The implementation of an assessment policy is a complex matter and depends on a particular school context. From the provided guidelines, it is clear that an inclusive approach, a positive culture of teaching and learning and continuous monitoring are key aspects to consider for the implementation of an assessment policy. The general nature of the preceding guidelines necessitates a focus on assessment guidance to the educator.

3.11.3 ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE TO THE EDUCATOR

The managerial guidance of the school management team is directed to and involve specifically the educator. The following guidelines for the school

management team with a specific focus on the educator are applicable (Levin & Nolan, 2004:162; Coleman *et al.*, 2003:79):

- Educators must be involved in the decision-making process with relation to assessment matters of the learning area or subject.
- Educators must demonstrate that they are well prepared for their daily professional work in the classroom and this forms part of the supervision task of the school management team. All assessment strategies are based on accepted principles of learning that necessitates preparation.
- Educators have to provide evidence of assessment planning and recording according to an assessment policy adopted by school management and school governing body.
- Guidance must be provided to educators in order to explain and clarify the assessment criteria and requirements to all learners.
- Guidance are needed to educators who are obliged to communicate and explain all the expected outcomes and the accompanying assessment methodology applicable to a specific learning activity.
- Educators need guidelines according to policy guidelines to encourage the learners so that they can achieve the outcomes through appropriate assessment methods.

The educator fulfils a pivotal role in the implementation of an assessment policy and therefore needs clear guidelines from the school management team to eliminate any misunderstandings with conflict potential.

3.11.4 SYNTHESIS

Whatever the functions are for the members of the school management team, the effectiveness of the implementation of an assessment policy is determined to a great extent by the management structures and systems and how well all the various policies are integrated in a whole school management system. Despite the barriers and limitations inherent to the South African education system, there is

considerable scope for the members of the school management teams to exercise strong leadership to ensure assessment practices of a high standard as part of an effective teaching and learning programme in schools. By providing guidance for assessment practices, the school management team and educators address the academic and emotional needs of learners in a way that benefits the learners most effectively in their own idiosyncratic context.

The specific context in which assessment is applied is a key aspect for consideration by the school management team because an assessment policy must not be *context-blind*. In conclusion, the school management team in close cooperation with the educators, need to recognise the specific context of the school as well as that of the learners to focus accordingly on assessment strategies that account for specific needs and outcomes.

The implementation of a management plan for assessment in the school and the guidance by the school management team has to be continuously monitored and reviewed for the purpose of adaptation to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

3.12 REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The main task during a review phase is to evaluate what was being done to identify and address the primary problems and challenges. A valid and accurate evaluation of the successes and failures of all interventions is of paramount importance for the purpose of future alignment. Measurement of the assessment process tells the school management team and educators what is working and how well. Reliable evaluation data provides concrete evidence of implementation and impact that again generates and builds support. In the final instance, measurement provides the necessary information that stimulates continued change (Wildermuth & Gray, 2005:30,32).

An effective review process depends on the setting of clear criteria before implementation and on having a well-planned strategy for continuously tracking measurement during all assessment practices in the school. Measuring without

having collected initial data, generally limits the usefulness of the process, because both the process and the results need to be evaluated against the initial status. The success of any endeavour in this regard rests firmly on reliable feedback, adhering to applicable policies and the commitment of educators and members of the school management team to follow-up initiatives.

Monitoring and reviewing interventions in a school context must be developmental of nature and based on agreed-upon protocol. The actions and results of an evaluation nature have to be documented in reports and records (Department of Education, 2001a:28). The monitoring and reviewing planning has to account for the idiosyncratic context of the school, because schools differ and these differences have an impact in the implementation of assessment practices. Reliable evidence gathered by means of a well-planned and executed plan is hence essential for the adaptation and upgrading of a management plan.

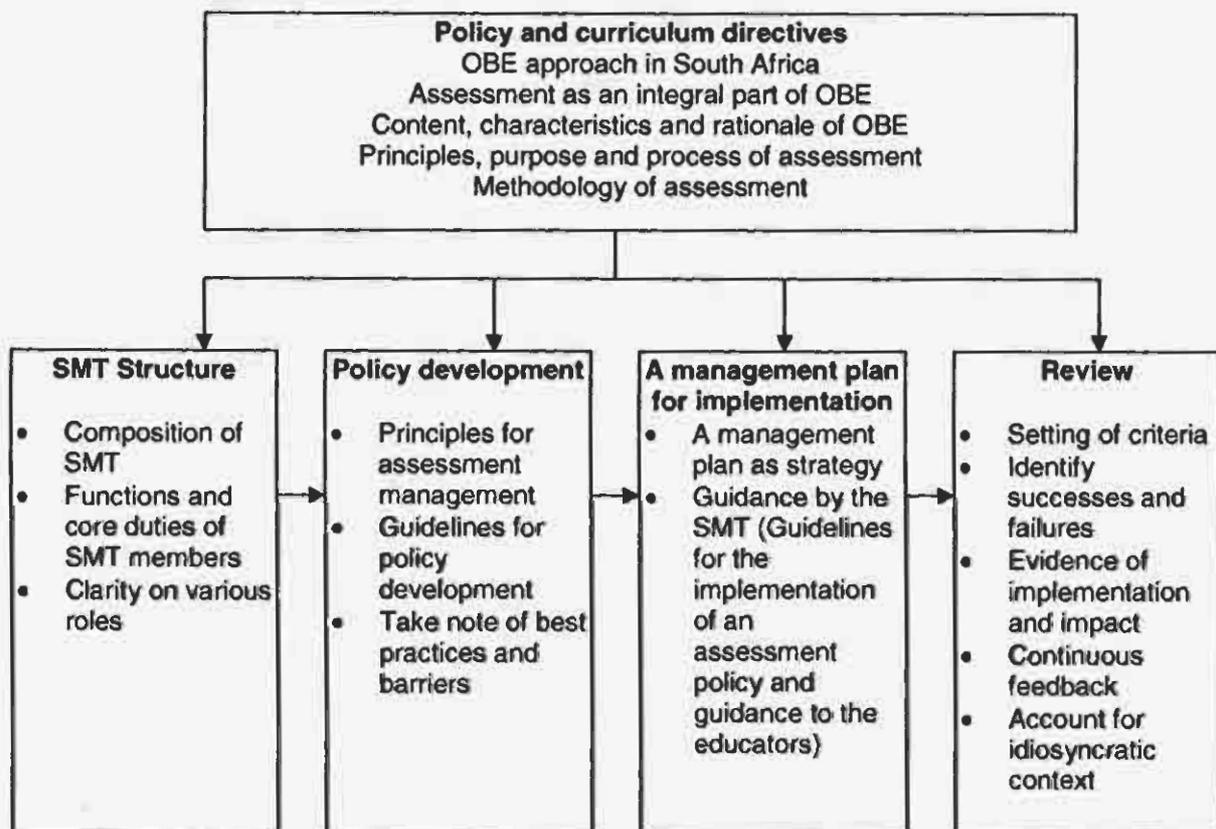
Each of the previous sections constitutes a specific component of a strategy for the implementation of assessment in schools by the school management team and makes it consequently possible to describe a theoretical framework for the management of assessment in schools.

3.13 A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS TO MANAGE ASSESSMENT IN SCHOOLS

An analysis and interpretation of the preceding overview from literature leads to the identification of a certain process that encompasses specific sections for the compiling of a theoretical framework for school management teams to manage assessment in schools. The use of the term process refers in this sense to deal with something in a series of phases in time by means of a particular course of action or series of operations to bring about a result (Reader's Digest, 1998:48; DEL, 2000). A framework in this sense refers to a schematic description as a theoretical construction or parameter that consists of inferred sections of a particular process (Dictionary.com, 2006).

An illustration of this process represents a theoretical framework for the management of assessment by school management teams and can be interpreted as a schematic synthesis of the preceding sections that constitutes a systematic management framework (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: A theoretical framework for school management teams to manage assessment in schools



The different sections of a theoretical framework for the management of assessment by school management teams can be briefly described as follows:

3.13.1 POLICY AND CURRICULUM DIRECTIVES

Policy and curriculum directives as released by the national and provincial departments of education serve as a basis and provide the parameters for the implementation of an outcomes-based approach in the South African education system (cf. par. 2.2). The Revised National Curriculum Statement (2002) states that Outcomes-based Education aims to enable all learners to achieve their maximum potential by setting the outcomes to be achieved at the end of the

learning process. An important aspect of Outcomes-based Education is the assessment of the attainment of the outcomes to determine the level of achievement. In this sense, all members of school management teams have to adhere to the directives of the policy and provide effective managerial guidance and strong leadership in this regard in their respective schools.

In order for clear managerial guidance, school management teams have to account of the fundamental premises that underpin Outcomes-based Education (cf. par. 2.2.1.2). Any managerial involvement with respect to assessment must reckon with the fact that assessment forms an integral part of Outcomes-based Education (cf. par. 2.3.1). Assessment is no longer regarded as an end result of schooling, but is implemented as integrated outcomes-based assessment to enable learners to assess their own performance, set goals for progress and to promote further learning. School management teams are required to provide guidance to educators for the teaching process to adapt and progress according to the learners' pace to assist learners to realise their full potential (cf. par.2.3.1). In order to provide effective managerial guidance, it is a prerequisite for all members of the school management team to have a clear understanding of the content, characteristics and rationale of Outcomes-based Education and the related integration of assessment (cf. par. 2.3.2). Managerial involvement of school management teams must further account for the principles, purpose and process of assessment (cf. par. 2.4 - 2.10).

Once the policy prescriptions and requirements are clear, effective managerial guidance depends on effective organisational structures in schools for implementation.

3.13.2 THE STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM

The needs and particular circumstances of each school determine the composition of the school management team. It is accepted that a school management team consists of a group of school management specialists who work formally as a team under the guidance of the school principal (cf. par. 3.2). A well-devised management structure ensures that each member of the school management team knows exactly the expectations and requirements are to implement an

assessment policy in the school. For this purpose, the roles and core duties of each member must be formally stated as parameters for management and leadership intervention (cf. par. 3.3 & 3.4). Members of school management teams also have to take cognisance of their roles as managers and leaders with respect to the implementation of an assessment policy in schools (cf. par. 3.5).

With effective management structures in place, the next logical step in the management of assessment in schools is to ensure a situation-specific assessment policy for the school.

3.13.3 POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Each school is viewed as a self-reliant learning organisation that has to take the responsibility for developing its own school related policies according to national and provincial directives. A policy, in this case a school assessment policy, provides specific guidelines and directives for the implementation of an assessment plan in the school. An assessment policy has to indicate *what* is intended by assessment, *how* to achieve the assessment objectives, *who* is responsible for certain assessment actions and *when* to take actions in connection with assessment (cf. par. 3.6). It is expected from the school management team to initiate and facilitate the assessment policy process as well as to accept responsibility for the implementation of such a policy (cf. par. 3.6.1 & 3.6.2).

3.13.4 A MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A formal and well-considered management plan as an accepted and agreed-upon strategy to implement assessment as an integrated part of Outcomes-based Education is necessary to provide clear guidance and purpose to all involved. A management plan for assessment directs all interventions and actions related to assessment in the school (cf. par. 3.10). A major advantage of a management plan for assessment is that it indicates clearly the various roles, responsibilities, actions and target dates for implementation. These clear and agreed-upon requirements are favourable to ensure a conducive teaching and learning environment and climate for the effective implementation of an assessment policy. Another consequence of importance of the utilisation of a management plan is that it held the different role players accountable according to the requirements of the

assessment management plan which again is based on the assessment policy. A management plan for assessment has to utilise in-service training opportunities and must include a continuous and end of cycle review initiatives to identify and redress any shortcomings (cf. par. 3.10).

3.13.5 REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT

A management strategy for the implementation of assessment in schools has to include a review process to evaluate what was being done to identify and address the primary problems and challenges (cf. par. 3.12). The continuous measurement of the successes and failures of the implementation of assessment in schools is an important aspect for the purpose of future alignment. Reviewing of the implementation of an assessment policy according to a specific management plan and predetermined criteria tells the school management team, educators and learners what is working and how well (cf. par. 3.12). The idiosyncratic nature and particular circumstances of each individual school has to be accounted for in the review process to identify situation-specific problems.

3.13.6 SYNTHESIS

The effective management of assessment as an integral part of Outcomes-based Education by the school management team necessitates a specific process approach that consists of a series of phases to ensure the timely achievement of objectives related to the implementation of assessment in schools. A schematic illustration was provided to represent the various phases, namely: policy and curriculum directives; the structure of the school management team; policy development; a management plan for implementation, and a review phase. The process approach provides an overview of a management strategy for members of a school management team to ensure the effective management of assessment in schools.

3.14 CONCLUSION

The chapter has sought to analyse the composition of the school management team with more emphasis on the roles of a school management team. The literature review describes the job description of each member of the school management team. The role of the school management team is to lead and manage educators and learners consistently to ensure the smooth running of the

school. In essence, the leadership role allows the school management team to lead and manage the school in totality according to the vision, objectives and needs of the school. The role of the school management team can also be seen as part of continuous process, whereby the school management team performs management activities or management tasks in relation to the management of an assessment policy to achieve and improve teaching and learning.

This chapter has further outlined the need for creativity from the school management team by using their leadership influence and managerial authority to commit educators to work in a conducive environment and provide educators with relevant resources needed. Other roles of the school management team outlined are to guide educators to ensure that the gathered evidence of assessment is reliable, valid, fair, transparent and flexible. The school management team should also ensure that assessment is done according to the assessment policy. The school management team should support educators with relevant information pertaining to an assessment process from the national and provincial department. In the implementation of an assessment policy the school management team needs to be committed to their managerial tasks in order to encourage educators to teach and assess learners effectively. A theoretical framework for the management of assessment by the school management team was devised on the basis of identified and applicable sections of literature. A synthesis was accordingly developed to formulate a process as a management strategy for school management teams to manage assessment as part of Outcomes-based Education in schools.

The aim of this chapter was to bring to the fore the roles of the school management team and to develop a management strategy for the implementation of an assessment policy in schools. One of the roles of the school management team is to promote education of learners. Thus, the information or evidence gathered on an assessment process will be used to help learners' development and improve the process of teaching and learning. The commitment of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy according to a well-planned management strategy will give prompt and accurate feedback to the

parents and the departmental officials on the effectiveness of the assessment process.

The next chapter explains the research design and methodology of the empirical section.

CHAPTER 4

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter three a literature overview of the role of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy in schools was provided. The previous chapters form a theoretical framework for this research report, while this chapter introduces the empirical research.

A detailed description of the research design in this chapter is provided in response to the research questions of *what* to investigate and *how* to do it? The reason for the selection of a specific research design and accompanying research methodologies is also described in reaction to the research question of *why* to do the research in a particular way to investigate the research problem. The answering of these inquisitive questions is dealt with according to the following topics in the chapter: the purpose of the empirical research, the research design, the construction of the questionnaire, assurance of reliability and validity, statistical analyses, population, ethical aspects and administrative procedures.

This chapter aims to describe the outline of a systematic, methodological and focused investigation of the research problem, i.e. to determine the extent of the functioning of school management teams with regard to the implementation of assessment policies in primary schools in the Jouberton education district.

4.2 PURPOSE OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The empirical research section aims to describe an applicable research design and methodology as a scientific process to gather reliable and valid information for the purpose of analysis and interpretation to meet the requirements of the research problem. The central problem statement of this research is to determine the extent of the role of school management teams in implementing an assessment policy in the primary schools of the Jouberton education district in the

North West Province. The secondary aims of the empirical research are to gather and analyse information to determine the extent and occurrence of:

- an understanding of related concepts, policies and curriculum directives by members of school management teams (cf. par. 2.2 – 2.10),
- the functioning and outline of prevailing school management structures (cf. par. 3.2 – 3.5),
- the involvement of school management members concerning assessment policy development (cf. par. 3.6 – 3.9),
- the implementation of a management plan to ensure effective assessment in schools (cf. par. 3.10 & 3.11), and
- an evaluation of the management strategy for assessment in schools (cf. par. 3.12).

An analysis of the above-gathered data and findings led to the development recommendations and guidelines for members of school management teams to oversee the effective implementation of an assessment policy in primary schools of the Jouberton education district of the North West Province (cf. chap. 5).

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A *research design* refers to a systematic plan according to which relevant data is collected, analysed and interpreted to investigate a particular research problem in a scientific manner (Mouton, 2002:55, 56; Henning *et al.*, 2004:30). For the purpose of this research study a research design is viewed as the selecting of specific research procedures which are applied to acquire valid and reliable data for the purpose of empirically grounded analyses, conclusions, generalizations and guidelines formulation.

The research design of this investigation is based on a *cross-sectional, empirical survey*. An approach of a quantitative survey was undertaken which aimed to provide descriptive findings from the respondents as members of the school

management teams from the primary schools in the Jouberton education district. The particular research design of an empirical survey was chosen because of its applicability on gathering data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature or existing conditions (Mouton, 2002:152,153; De Vos *et al.*, 2005:375). Leedy and Ormrod (2001:101) further states that the quantitative method is specifically useful to answer questions about relationships among measured variables with the purpose of exploring, predicting and analysing phenomena. A survey is particularly suitable to administer questionnaires for the purpose to collect data from participants about their views, judgements and experiences (Gall *et al.*, 1996:289). Mouton (2002:153) regards the high measurement reliability and construct validity as strengths of a survey as research method.

A specific limitation of the survey method is regarded as a lack of depth that leads to surface level analysis of data that are context specific (Mouton, 2002:153). Hence, the following strategies were followed to minimise the occurrence of bias and possible shortcomings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:223):

- Clear and uniform instructions to respondents for the completion of questionnaires.
- Questionnaire items were scrutinised for content that promotes bias, e.g. presupposed and leading items.
- Comprehensive reporting of factors that might influence the data, e.g. accurate indications of non-respondents.
- Follow-up actions to non-respondents for completion and returning of questionnaires.

The data collected from the survey enabled the researcher to realise the primary and secondary research aims (cf. par. 4.2). With the stated outline of the research design as a point of departure, the research process focussed subsequently on the following research methods and procedures.

4.4 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

A questionnaire was selected as data collection method to obtain facts, opinions and experiences from the members of school management teams from primary schools in the Jouberton education district. In order to conduct the survey, a *structured questionnaire* was developed as a measurement instrument to capture the required data from the study population. A structured format for the questionnaire was chosen to include, in addition to the structured closed-ended questions, also probing open-ended questions that explored the responses to the closed-ended questions for the purpose of greater depth and the gaining of additional information.

The questionnaire was designed to be completed anonymously by the respondents. A cover letter (cf. Appendix I) was written to accompany each questionnaire. The cover letter explained the purpose of the research and contained important information for the completion of the questionnaire as well as detailed information about the return procedures.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:197) support the use of a questionnaire as a measurement tool of investigation because of the following advantages associated with the use of a questionnaire:

- Confidentiality of the information is ensured as the questionnaire allows for anonymity.
- The questionnaire can be administered in different ways, for instance it can be mailed or be self-administered.
- Distribution is cost effective with respect to time, money and travelling.
- Once constructed skilfully, the researcher may ask somebody else to administer the questionnaire on his/her behalf.
- The questionnaire assists to focus the respondent's attention on all significant items.

Questionnaires can only be successfully administered when respondents are motivated to respond and are knowledgeable to the contents of the questionnaire.

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:197) also describe the following disadvantages associated with the use of questionnaires:

- A high non-response rate is common in the use of questionnaires.
- Questionnaires are sometimes completed by someone other than the targeted respondent.
- Respondents may misinterpret some items of the questionnaire.
- Unreliable responses may occur from respondents.

Precautions, as describe in the following sections, were taken to minimise the above-mentioned limitations and to enhance the validity and reliability of the questionnaire as a primary instrument for data collection in this research.

4.4.1 THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was constructed in alignment with the theoretical framework for school management teams to manage assessment in schools according to research aim 2 (cf. par. 1.3), a literature overview (cf. par. 3.13) and the secondary research aims (cf. par. 4.2). The questionnaire items were mainly formulated in formats such as biographical related, scale ratings, ranking and short yes-no indications. The questions were mostly stated in closed-ended format to encourage committed participation for the purpose of quantification and analysis. Closed-ended questions ascertain the degree, frequency and comprehensiveness of the phenomenon under investigation, i.e. the role of school management teams to manage assessment in schools, by offering the respondent the opportunity to select from one or more response choices. Response opportunities by means of open-ended questions were however also included where particular questionnaire items needed clarification or further explanation. Gall *et al.* (1996:296) and De Vos *et al.* (2005:174) support the use of both forms of questions in a questionnaire to obtain clarity and explore more information about the thinking behind a closed-ended response and to obtain some idea of the spectrum of responses.

Principles of questionnaire construction were adhered to in order to counteract a possible low return rate that is associated with mailed questionnaires, which is, according to De Vos *et al.* (2005:167), below 30%. Principles accounted for during

the construction of the questionnaire were among other (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:170-172):

- The principle of economy so that respondents can communicate as much information as possible in the briefest possible time.
- The format of the questionnaire was developed to have a professional appearance with a clear, neat and easy to follow layout in support of accuracy and completeness.
- Clear and precise directions and instructions for completion of the questionnaire were provided.
- The defined theoretical framework as described in the literature study (cf. par. 3.13) functioned as parameter for the questionnaire in accordance to research aims.
- Thorough attention was given to question formulation.
- Pilot testing of the questionnaire was part of the research design.

4.4.2 THE OUTLINE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The following sections of the questionnaire were identified (cf. Appendix II):

- **Section A: General and biographical information**
Questions in this section (question items 1 – 9) aimed to gather information of a general nature and background of the school as well as essential biographical information about the selected respondents.
- **Section B: Information about relevant concept understanding as well as policy and curriculum directives**
Section B of the questionnaire (question items 10.1 – 11.3) has in its sight the gathering of information about the respondents' understanding of applicable assessment concepts, relevant policy and curriculum directives (cf. par. 2.2 – 2.10).

- **Section C: Information concerning policy development and utilisation**

Questions in section C (question items 12.1 – 13.2) was formulated to obtain information from the respondents about the development process and utilisation of an assessment policy in the primary schools of the Jouberton education district (cf. par. 3.6 - 3.9).

- **Section D: Information with reference to the employment of a management plan**

Questions in section D (question items 14.1 – 19.2) were included to determine the extent of the implementation of a management plan and a review process by school management teams to ensure effective assessment standards and practices in the primary schools of the Jouberton education district (cf. par. 3.10 – 3.12).

4.4.3 SCALE SELECTION

A Likert scale as a category partition scaling method was adopted as recording technique for the responses on the questionnaire to capture the frequency and intensity of involvement of educational leaders in their role as members of school management teams with reference to the management of assessment in the schools. The Likert rating scale requires a response on a given continuum and is particularly useful for the purpose of evaluation and quantification of data as part of a research survey (Masters & Keeves, 1999:48; Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:197; Creswell, 2003:18; De Vos *et al.*, 2005:180). A four point rating scale was selected because of the advantage of either lower or higher response values as representation of the extent of the understanding, experience or judgement of the respondents with respect to the management of assessment by school management teams in the applicable schools.

4.4.4 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The reliability and validity of the questionnaire was optimised to provide reliable and valid data for analyses and interpretation. *Reliability* deals with consistency and stability over time. Reliability means that the gathered data does not vary and

that the method of conducting a study can be reproduced or replicated by other researchers. Reliability means accordingly that if the same variable is measured under the same conditions, a reliable measurement will produce the same or nearly the same measurements (Gall *et al.*, 1996:254; Coleman & Briggs, 2002:61; De Vos *et al.*, 2005:163;).

The development of a theoretical framework for school management teams to manage assessment in schools (cf. par. 3.13), according to a literature study (chap. 2 & 3), which formed the basis for the development of the questionnaire, meets the requirement of clear conceptualising of the construct and subsections to increase the reliability of the questionnaire (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:163). The findings were also cross-checked with the findings from the pilot study (Coleman & Briggs, 2002:61) to improve the reliability.

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient as statistical method was also applied to determine the internal consistency of individual question items as a further measure of reliability. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient for each of the three related sections (B, C & D) of the questionnaire is:

Table 4.1: The Cronbach Alpha coefficient

Questionnaire	Coefficient
Section B	0.87
Section C	0.91
Section D	0.94

The relative high value (>1.7) of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient for all three the questionnaire sections indicated a high level of internal consistency between the individual question items. Section A was not taken into consideration because the particular section only dealt with general and biographical information.

Validity points to the "correctness" without which research measurement becomes meaningless. Validity is defined as the appropriateness and meaningfulness of inferences made from recorded and calculated scores. In essence, validity refers

to the extent to which an empirical measure accurately reflects the concept it is intended to measure (Gall *et al.*, 1996:249, Coleman & Briggs, 2002:65 & De Vos *et al.*, 2005:160). Validity is increased if the method and procedures of measurement are designed and executed in accordance to the standards of the scientific community (De Vos, 2005:167). The internal validity of this research was optimised by a sanctioned research design and approved methodology to investigate the extent of the management of assessment in schools.

A pilot study was conducted to ensure that the outline and formulation of the questions in the various sections of the questionnaire were reasonable and intelligible. The objectives of piloting the questionnaire were to obtain feedback and evidence that respondents share the same understanding of the question items (construct validity claim) and whether the respondents were stating their true opinion by determining whether similar opinions on other measures of the same construct were expressed (concurrent validity claim) (Gall *et al.*, 1996:291). The pre-tested questionnaire provided space for respondents to provide criticisms and recommendations for improving the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

4.4.5 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistical techniques were applied to organise, summarise and interpret the quantitative data. Measurements were mainly recorded as scores indicated by means of a four point Likert scale with a range from a low to a high level of the variable of interest. Measurements of central tendency were applied to describe the average of selected sets of scores to obtain indications of typical tendencies and outliers. The raw scores were statistically converted to derive scores for the purpose of quantitative interpretation. The statistically derived scores consisted of *frequencies*, *means* and *rank* scores to represent a particular statistical position of individual or categories of recorded responses.

4.5 QUALITATIVE METHOD

In addition to the quantitative nature of the empirical research, a qualitative measurement was also utilised. The rationale to combine quantitative and qualitative methods of measurement and analysis was to (Anderson, 2004:213):

- elucidate more comprehensive responses,
- provide additional information,
- allow for unexpected developments,
- clarify underlying logic, and to
- explain distinctive circumstances, approaches, opinions and practices of different respondents.

Quantitative and qualitative methods of measurement and accompanying analyses are compatible and complementary to each other in a research design and are considered as appropriate to meet the particular demands of the nature of the research in its full complexity (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:359, 360). The qualitative method involves the inclusion of supplementary open-ended questions to the structured scale questions of the questionnaire.

4.5.1 Open-ended questions

Open-ended questions were integrated as an important part of the questionnaire, because the closed-ended structure of questions cannot probe and elaborate sufficiently into the respondents' opinions and experiences. Open-ended questions elicit further responses that are embedded in the unique words and expressions of the respondents (Gall *et al.*, 1996:289, 290). The purpose of the empirical research to determine the extent of the management of assessment in primary schools of the Jouberton education district of the North West Province supports the incorporation of open-ended questions to discover the respondents' logic, reasoning and frame of reference. Open-ended questions also permit creativity, self-expression and the provision of richness of detail (Neuman, 1997:241). Neuman (1997:241) further supports the mixing of closed and open-

form questions to reduce the disadvantages of the question form as measuring instrument.

4.5.2 QUALITATIVE DATA

The analysis of responses from open-ended questions in the questionnaire was done according to a qualitative response analysis procedure as recommended by Gall *et al.* (1996:322) and De Vos *et al.* (2005:334). The analysis procedure entails the following:

- Managing and organising of data.
- Evaluation of responses.
- Generating categories, themes and patterns.
- Searching for alternative explanations.
- Writing the report.

The process of analysis is rather like a circular approach than a fixed linear approach which implies that the above-mentioned procedures are viewed as guidelines and not as rigid prescriptions (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:334).

4.6 POPULATION

The reference to *population* in this research report refers to the members of a defined group of people to whom the research results are applicable to. The population is in other words the group of people to whom the research report wishes to generalise the findings and results (De Vos *et al.*, 2005:193). The population of this research study is described as all the primary schools of the Jouberton education district of the North West Province. The school principal, deputy school principal and three heads of department as members of the school management team of each selected primary school acted as respondents for the survey.

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a sample as a small portion or subset from the described population with the intent of representing the specific

population (Gall *et al.*, 1996:220; Glenborg, 1996:5; Wisker, 2001:214; De Vos *et al.*, 2005:194). The official list of all sixteen (16) primary schools in the Jouberton education district of the North West Province was accepted as the *study population* for this research (cf. appendix III) (Neuman, 1997:203). No sample was drawn from the sixteen primary schools and the empirical investigation was based on all the primary schools in the Jouberton education district.

The school principal, deputy principal and three heads of department (one from each phase, i.e. the foundation, intermediate and senior phase) from the selected schools as study population were identified as respondents to complete the questionnaire. The respondents per primary school were selected because of their specific roles as educational leaders and as members of the school management teams of their respective schools. Consequently, five respondents as members of the school management team were selected *per school* to participate in the research. The total of respondents was eighty (80) members of school management teams (16 schools x 5 members of school management teams).

The questionnaires were personally distributed by the researcher to the above-described schools and respondents with the permission of the Superintendent General of the Department of Education from the North West Province and the Acting Regional Executive Manager in the Southern Region (cf. Appendix IV).

4.7 ETHICAL ASPECTS

Adherences to ethical aspects of research, which are embodied in individual and professional codes of conduct, were accounted for during the development and conduct of the empirical investigation of this research. The underlying principles of educational research are regarded as commitment to honesty, an avoidance of plagiarism and respect for the dignity and privacy the participants in the research (Coleman & Briggs, 2002:73). The following related ethical aspects were accounted for (Neuman, 1997:196; Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:107):

- Respondents were not subjected to any risk of unusual stress, embarrassment or loss of self-esteem.
- Consent and approval for the research in schools was granted by the Superintendent General of the Department of Education and the Acting Regional Executive Manager in the Southern Region from the North West Province (cf. Appendix IV). These letters were presented with the questionnaires to the respondents to encourage their participation in the research. Information was also provided to the participants concerning the nature and purpose of the research, participation requirements e.g. activities and duration, confidentiality and contact information of the researcher.
- The right to professional privacy was guaranteed by a written statement in the cover letter (cf. Appendix I).
- The researcher subscribed to the ethical requirement to report the findings of the research in a complete and honest fashion.

Ethical issues are expected to emerge mainly with regard to permission to carry out the research, the participation of respondents, the community and public as well as the processes employed to analyse data (Coleman & Briggs, 2002:81). The researcher was cautious to avoid any harm to participants in the light of the research theme concerning responses about the management of assessment in primary schools. In this regard, the rights of participants were respected, anonymity and confidentiality were assured, deception was avoided and the purpose of the research was made clear. The research was conducted in a manner to minimise the intrusion to participants' professional working life.

4.8 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Permission to conduct the research to include the primary schools of the Jouberton education district in the North West Province was obtained from the Superintendent General of Education in the North West Province and the Acting Regional Executive Manager of the Southern Region (cf. Appendix IV). Copies of these letters were included with each questionnaire for the attention of the

respondents. The researcher personally collected the completed questionnaires from all primary schools. A cover letter (cf. Appendix I) with clear guidelines and instructions was also provided with each questionnaire. A period of one week was allowed for the respondents to complete the questionnaire before it was collected by the researcher at each respondent.

Arrangements were also finalised with the Statistical Consultation Services of the North West University to statistically process the gathered data.

4.9 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The Statistical Consultation Services of the North West University processed the data. Frequencies, percentages and mean scores were calculated as well as standard deviation values. The reason for choosing these descriptive statistics was to determine the extent of the role of the school management team in implementing an assessment policy in primary schools in the Jouberton education district.

The four point Likert scale of the questionnaire was merged into two main groupings to facilitate and support an analysis of more specific interpretations with reference to either low or high values. Consequently, a mean score of 1.6 or less from the four categories of the Likert scale (no extent and little extent) was interpreted as of a low or negative value, while a mean score of 3.2 and higher was interpreted as of a high or positive value (some extent and great extent). These specific values of reference (1.6 and 3.2) were selected as markers within the four point scale to serve as indicators of either low (negative) or high (positive) values. This procedure was applied continuously for the interpretation of sections B, C and D of the questionnaire.

4.10 PRE-TEST

A pre-test, which includes respondents from three different schools, was done before the questionnaires were handed to the intended population. The pre-test sample of respondents did not form part of the study population. Selected

respondents from the management teams of three primary schools (cf. par. 4.6) accordingly completed the questionnaires. The pre-test was done to determine whether the outline, format and wording was clearly formulated and understandable and how long it takes to complete the questionnaire. Some of the questions were re-formulated because it were not clear enough and it took respondents fifteen to twenty minutes to complete the questionnaire.

4.11 RETURN RATE

The following table presents the number of questionnaires delivered as well as the return rate received back.

Table 4.2 Return rate of questionnaires

Total handed out	Total received back	% Feed back
80	75	93,8%

The high return rate of the questionnaires can be ascribed to the personal involvement by the researcher. The questionnaires were personally delivered and after one week collected again. The personal involvement was possible because the study population was part of a reachable geographical area, namely the Jouberton education region. However, there were still 5 respondents who did not complete the questionnaires and were also not able to provide it afterwards.

4.12 RESULTS: QUANTITATIVE DATA

Quantitative data collected by this research regarding the extent of the role of the school management team in implementing an assessment policy in primary schools in the Jouberton education region are presented and interpreted as follows:

4.12.1 SECTION A: GENERAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Section A, question items 1-9, aimed to gather information of a general and biographical nature of the school and the school management teams (cf. par.4.4.2). Table 4.3 summarises the responses of section A, question items 1-9:

Table 4.3: General and biographical information

Item no.	Question	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender:		
	Male	32	43.84
	Female	41	56.16
	NR	2	
	Total (respondents)	75	100
2	Age:		
	20-29	0	0
	30-39	24	32.43
	40-49	32	43.24
	50-59	17	22.97
	60+	1	1.35
	NR	1	
Total (respondents)	75	100	
3	Highest academic qualification:		
	Std 10	18	26.47
	B.A.Degree	11	16.18
	B.Ed.Hons	35	51.47
	Masters Degree	4	5.88
	Doctor's Degree	0	0
	NR	7	
Total (respondents)	75	100	
4	Professional Qualification:		
	PTC	2	3.17
	JPTD	5	7.94
	SPTD	12	19.05
	STD	9	14.29
	NPDE	1	1.59
	HED/PGCE	24	38.10
	FDE	5	7.94
	ACE	3	4.76
	Other	2	3.17
	NR	12	
	Total (respondents)	75	100

Item no.	Question	Frequency	Percentage (%)
5	Position in school:		
	HOD	45	60.00
	Deputy-Principal	16	21.33
	Principal	14	18.67
	Total (respondents)	75	100
6	Experience in position:		
	0-5	11	14.67
	6-10	35	46.67
	11-15	10	13.33
	16-19	5	6.67
	20 +	14	18.67
	Total (respondents)	75	100
7	Learner enrolment:		
	100-399	0	0
	400-799	6	37.50
	800-999	5	31.25
	1000+	5	31.25
	Total (schools)	16	100
8	Number of SMT:		
	-3	0	0
	4	10	13.51
	5	16	21.62
	6+	48	64.86
	NR	1	
	Total (respondents)	75	100
9	Number of educators:		
	-9	0	0
	10-19	10	13.89
	20-29	42	58.33
	30+	20	27.78
	NR	3	
Total (respondents)	75	100	

NR = No Response

An analysis and interpretation of the general and biographical data according to table 4.3 can be described as:

- **Gender (Question 1)**

The majority of respondents (members of the school management teams) are females (56,16%) and males represent (43,84%) of the remaining percentage. The data clearly indicate that female educators are in the majority in management positions and are indeed well represented in the school management teams within the Jouberton education region.

- **Age (Question 2)**

Responses to the category of age group indicate that the majority of respondents are part of the age groups 40-49 years (43.24%) and 30-39 years (32.43%). The age group 50-59 years accounts for 22.97%, while the age group 60+ years is only represented by one respondent. The responses to the category of age grouping show that the members of the school management teams are matured people with extensive life experience.

- **Highest academic qualification (Question 3)**

Most of the respondents are in possession of a B.Ed.Hons. degree (51.47%) while 16.18% of the respondents have a B.A. degree. The relative high response to std 10 (grade 12) as the highest academic qualification (26.47%) must be interpreted together with the next question item concerning the obtainment of a professional education qualification that follows on the senior certificate qualification at school level. With 51.47% (B.Ed.Hons.) and 5.88% (M.Ed.) of the respondents who completed a postgraduate academic qualification, it can be deduced that the respondents are academically well qualified. It is noteworthy that 7 respondents did not completed this particular question item (NR = 7).

- **Professional qualification (Question 4)**

The majority of respondents are professionally qualified with a variety of applicable professional qualifications. The qualification with the most representation is the Higher Education Diploma or Postgraduate Diploma in Education (38.10%), followed by the Senior Primary Teaching Diploma (19.05%) and Secondary Teaching Diploma (14.29%). The rest of the professional qualifications are all represented to some extent (cf. table 4.3). The collected data illustrate that the respondents as members of school management teams are mostly professionally qualified as educators with some form of professional education. An aspect of concern of this question item is the occurrence of 12 non-responses - the most non-responses in all the question items of section A. The high occurrence of non-responses may be ascribed to a misunderstanding of the question or a lack of knowledge of the various acronyms used to represent the professional qualifications in the questionnaire.

- **Position in school (Question 5)**

The responses of position in the school are representative of the various positions as members of the school management team. The responses are divided into Heads of Department (60.0%), deputy principals (16.0%) and school principals (14.0%).

- **Experience in position as indicated in question 5 (Question 6)**

The respondents with managerial experience of more than 5 years as a member of the school management team constitutes 85.34%, while respondents with less than 5 years experience only account for 14.67%. It is evident from the responses that the majority of respondents have more than 5 years of experience as a member of a school management team.

- **Learner enrolment (Question 7)**

The sizes according to the learner enrolment of the participating 16 schools are evenly distributed according to the responses, i.e. smaller schools (400–799 learners) 37.50%, medium schools (800–999 learners) 31.25% and bigger schools (100+) (31.24%). The respondents are thus representative of smaller, medium and bigger primary schools within the Jouberton education region.

- **Number of members of school management team (Question 8)**

The majority of respondents indicate that they are part of a management team that consists of more than 5 members (86.48%). The rest of the respondents indicate that they are part of a management team that consists of 4 members (13.51%). It can be deduced from the data that the participating schools in the research have management teams with at least four members while the majority has five or more members. It is however not clear how many of the members are in an acting position or permanently appointed.

- **Number of educators in your school (Question 9)**

The majority of respondents (58.33%) indicate that they are part of a staff of between 20-29 educators. Respondents that are part of a staff complement per school of more than 30 educators are 27.78% and it can be concluded that this response form part of the bigger schools because educator allocation is based on the numbers of learners enrolled. Only 13.89% of the respondents indicated that they are part of a staff of between 10 and 19 educators.

An analysis of the above section can be summarised that the respondents (members of school management teams) in this research consist of mostly females (56.16%). A further analysis was not made of the level of representation, e.g. head of department, deputy principal and principal, because it was not part of the research aims. It could however be deduced that female educators were well

represented as members of the school management teams. The age groups of the respondents indicated that they were matured educators who mostly have experience of more than five years in their current management position. The learner and staff numbers of the schools were representative of smaller, medium and bigger schools of the Jouberton education district. In conclusion, about the personal and general data section it can be summarised that a variety of respondents from a variety of schools did participate in this research.

4.12.2 SECTION B: CONCEPTUALISATION

A four point Likert scale questionnaire was used for this research (cf. par. 4.4.3) to determine the extent of an understanding from the members of school management teams of the study population in terms of assessment concepts, relevant policies and curriculum directives. The interpretation of low and high values from the recorded responses was done according to the procedure stated in par. 4.9. Section B of the questionnaire was further divided into the subsections of:

- Concept understanding (question items 10.1-10.5);
- Empowerment initiatives (question items 10.6 & 10.7), and
- Aspects of OBE (question items 11.1-11.3)

4.12.2.1 Concept understanding (question items 10.1-10.5)

The responses from this section are presented as:

Table 4.4: Concept understanding

Rank	Item no.	Question	Mean	Std dev	Scale-ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Concept understanding: To what extent does the school management team ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	10.2	regard assessment as part of the learning process?	3.73	0.47	0	0	1	1.33	18	24.00	56	74.67
2	10.1	regards assessment as part of OBE?	3.65	0.51	0	0	1	1.33	24	32.00	50	66.67
3	10.3	support various methods of assessment?	3.30	0.74	0	0	12	16.22	28	37.84	34	45.95
4	10.5	Has knowledge about OBE assessment?	3.11	0.67	2	2.67	7	9.33	47	62.67	19	25.33
5	10.4	demonstrate competence about OBE?	3.01	0.71	3	4.00	9	12.00	47	62.67	16	21.33

Scale rating: 1 = No extent, 2 = Little extent, 3 = Some extent and 4 = Great extent

The responses to the relevant question items are discussed in the following paragraphs.

- **Assessment as part of learning process (Question 10.2)**

This item received the highest mean score (3.73). Assessment as part of the learning process is overwhelmingly supported by the respondents (74.67% to a great extent; 24.0% to some extent). This response indicates that assessment is regarded by the respondents as an integrated part of the process of teaching and learning and not something separate. This indication is in accordance with the findings from literature that prescribe an integrated assessment approach (cf. par. 2.2).

- **Assessment as part of OBE (Question 10.1)**

This item received the second highest mean score (3.65). The majority of respondents regarded assessment as part of Outcomes-based Education (66.67% to a great extent; 32.0% to some extent),

which is in line with the literature overview (cf. par. 2.3.1). Assessment is thus not regarded as something that is in isolation from the OBE approach. It is however noteworthy that 32.0% of the respondents regarded assessment to some degree as part of OBE. This response indicated uncertainty on the part of the respondents or a view that assessment is not in total part of OBE, but only partially part of a bigger system.

- **Support various methods of assessment (Question 10.3)**

This item also received a high mean score (3.30). Most respondents were of the opinion that the members of the school management teams support various assessment methods. It is notable that 37.84% of the respondents supported various methods of assessment to some extent, while 16.22% of the respondents indicated support to various methods of assessment to a little extent. Although in the minority, it is clear that a lack of support to a variety assessment methods by some members of school management teams did occur in some instances.

- **Knowledge about OBE assessment (Question 10.5)**

According to the two main groupings of either low (1.6) or high (3.2) mean values (cf. par. 4.9), the mean of this question item (3.11) just fell outside the high value grouping of 3.2. This response points to a view among members of the school management teams that indicated a lack of knowledge about OBE assessment to some extent. Only 25.33% of the respondents responded to a great extent to this question, while the majority of respondents (62.67%) responded to some extent. Despite of the near high mean value (3.11), 9.33% of the respondents were of the opinion that members of the school management teams have knowledge about OBE assessment only to a little extent, while 2.67% of the respondents viewed the occurrence of this particular knowledge as of no extent. The relatively high mean value (3.11) must not be interpreted that the knowledge level of OBE assessment is satisfactorily, because some responses of a more

negative value did occur and need to be accounted for purposes of further interpretation and findings.

- **Demonstrate competence about OBE (Question 10.4)**

This question item presented a mean score of 3.01 about the demonstration of competence by members of the school management with regard to OBE. The majority of respondents (62.67%) considered the demonstration of OBE competence only to some extent, while 21.33% of the respondents rated the demonstration of OBE competence to a great extent. On the other side of the scale, 12.0% of the respondents regarded this particular competence to some extent, while 4.0% of the respondents were of the opinion that this competence is demonstrated to no extent.

This section can be summarised that most of the respondents conceptualised assessment not as something to be implemented in isolation, but viewed assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. It is noteworthy to mention that uncertainty among some members of the school management teams were recorded concerning this particular aspect. Most of the respondents indicated satisfaction about their knowledge and competency levels, but some recordings did occur where sufficient knowledge and competency were questioned by some of the respondents, which points to a need for training and development in this regard.

4.12.2.2 Empowerment initiatives (question item 10.6)

The responses from this question item is presented as:

Table 4.5: Empowerment initiatives

Rank	Item No.	Question	Mean	Std dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Empowerment initiatives: To what extent does the school management ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	10.6	empower educators to understand assessment? <i>No-response = 1</i>	3.09	0.74	2	2.70	11	14.86	39	52.70	22	29.73

Scale rating: 1 = No extent, 2 = Little extent, 3 = Some extent and 4 = Great extent

The responses to the relevant question items of this section are accordingly discussed:

- **Empowerment initiatives (Question 10.6)**

This question item presented a mean score of 3.09 about the extent of empowerment initiatives to educators that are provided by the school management teams to make assessment more understandable. More than half of the members of the school management teams (52.70%) responded to some extent, while 29.73% of the respondents indicated that they provide empowerment initiatives to a great extent to educators. Although in the minority, 14.86% of the respondents are of the opinion that empowerment initiatives are provided only to a little extent. Members of school management teams who are of the opinion that empowerment initiatives with regard to assessment are provided to no extent account for 2.70%. It can be deduced that the majority of the members of the school management teams are positive that empowerment initiatives are provided, but there are still room for improvement because some negative responses indicated a lack in this regard.

4.12.2.3 Aspects of OBE (Questions 11.1-11.3)

The responses from this section are presented as:

Table 4.6: Aspects of OBE

Rank	Item No	Question	Mean	Std dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Aspects of OBE: To what extent does assessment in your school ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	11.3	measure learner achievement? <i>No-response = 1</i>	3.49	0.71	2	2.70	3	4.05	26	35.14	43	58.11
2	11.2	enable the SMT to monitor the teaching process?	3.37	0.73	2	2.67	5	6.67	31	41.33	37	49.33
3	11.1	contribute to lifelong learning?	3.29	0.75	2	2.67	7	9.33	33	44.00	33	44.00

Scale rating: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

The responses to this section are described as follows:

- **Measure learner achievement (Question 11.3)**

This item received the highest mean score in this particular section (3.49). Most of the respondents (58.11% to a great extent and 35.14% to some extent) were of the opinion that assessment in their respective schools is measuring learner achievement. This positive response indicated that assessment is regarded as a functional method or procedure to measure learner achievement (cf. par. 2.9). It is however, notable that 4.05% responded to little extent and 2.70% responded to no extent in their judgement about assessment as a method to measure learner achievement. It could be that the respondents refer in this particular instance to assessment as part of the OBE approach and not specifically as measurement of learner achievement.

- **Enable the school management team to monitor the teaching process (Question 11.2)**

This item received the second highest mean score (3.37). The majority of the respondents (49% to a great extent; 41.33% to some extent) indicated that assessment enable them to monitor the teaching process in their respective schools. A small number of respondents (6.67%) responded to little extent while 2.67% responded to no extent to this question item. This represents 9.34% of the respondents who are of the opinion that assessment is not enabling the members of the school management team to monitor the teaching process effectively. Despite the majority of positive responses, there are some occurrences where members of school management teams feel that they are not able to monitor the teaching process by means of assessment involvement. It remains a question in such cases what other measures there are for the monitoring of the learning process.

- **Assessment contributes to lifelong learning (Question 11.1)**

This item also received a high mean score of 3.29. Most of the respondents were of the opinion that assessment contributes positively to lifelong learning. It is remarkable that 44.0% of the respondents viewed assessment to contribute to a great extent to lifelong learning and that the exact number of respondents, namely 44%, is of the same opinion to some extent. Responses representing a more negative view to the contribution of assessment to life long learning (to a little extent - 9.33%; to no extent – 2.67%) are symptomatic of uncertain school managers who do not understand the integrated nature of assessment as part of OBE to contribute to the ideal of life long learning (cf. par. 2.4). Assessment as an essential part of OBE with its accompanying implications is a possible theme for further research.

The data from this section can be summarised that the majority of respondents viewed assessment as a functional procedure to measure learner achievement in the school. Most of the respondents also indicated that they are able to monitor the assessment process in their respective schools as members of the school management team. Instances were however recorded where some of the respondents indicated an inability to monitor the assessment process effectively. It can be deduced that a need to some extent exists for the development of ability to monitor assessment in the school as members of the school management team. The respondents were in support of the view that assessment contributes to life long learning.

4.12.3 SECTION C: ASSESSMENT POLICY

Section C of the questionnaire (items 12.1-13.2) was formulated to obtain information from respondents about the utilisation of an assessment policy in primary schools (cf. par. 4.4.2). This section was further divided into the subsections of:

- Policy aspects (questions 12.1-12.7)
- Consultation (questions 13.1-13.2)

4.12.3.1 Policy aspects (questions 12.1-12.7)

The responses from this section are presented in table 4.9:

Table 4.7: Policy aspects

Rank	Item No	Question	Mean	Std Dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
School assessment policy: To what extent does the school assessment policy ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	12.7	describe what it intends to achieve? <i>No-response = 3</i>	3.18	0.76	2	2.78	9	12.50	35	48.61	26	36.11
2	12.5	provide guidelines for the achievement of outcomes? <i>No-response = 3</i>	3.15	0.71	2	2.78	7	9.72	41	56.94	22	30.56
2	12.4	link to the strategic mission of the school? <i>No-response = 2</i>	3.15	0.79	3	4.11	9	12.33	37	47.95	26	35.62
4	12.3	reflect national and provincial directives? <i>No-response = 3</i>	3.04	0.81	4	5.56	10	13.89	37	51.39	21	29.17
5	12.1	account for the specific needs of learners? <i>No-response = 3</i>	2.90	0.75	4	5.56	12	16.67	43	59.72	13	18.06
6	12.6	define the functions of the school assessment team? <i>No-response = 4</i>	2.90	0.93	6	8.45	16	22.54	28	39.44	21	29.58

Scale rating: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

(Question item 12.2 is an open-ended question and part of the qualitative section.)

The responses to the question items are discussed in following sections:

- **Policy describes what it intends to achieve (Question 12.7)**

This item received the highest mean score (3.18) in this particular section. Albeit the mean score (3.18) just fell outside the high value grouping of 3.2 (cf. par 4.9), 36.11% of the respondents responded to a great extent that the assessment policy in their respective schools describes what it intends to achieve, while just about half of the respondents (48.61%) responded to some extent. This response is indicative of a view among 84.73% (36.11% + 48.61%) of the members of school management teams that were convinced that the school's assessment policy describe what it intends to achieve. It can be concluded that assessment goals and objectives are part of the policy formulation. The frequency scores of 12.50% (to a little extent) and 2.78% (to no extent) represent the view of those respondents who did not agree that their school's assessment policy describe what it intends

to achieve. Clear and unambiguous goals and objectives are thus lacking in this case or the respondents were unaware of such goals and objectives. The latter reason may be indicative why three respondents did not answer this question.

- **Assessment policy provides guidelines (Question 12.5)**

This question item has a mean score of 3.15. More than half of the respondents (56.96%) rated the provision of guidelines for the achievement of outcomes to some extent, while almost a third of the respondents (30.56%) rated this item to a great extent. This positive response indicated that the schools' assessment policies are indeed providing guidelines for the achievement of outcomes. The recording of some negative responses (9.72% to a little extent; 2.78% to no extent) points to the insufficient formulation of guidelines in some policies or to ignorance by some members of school management teams in this regard.

- **Strategic mission statement (Question 12.4)**

This item received the same mean score of 3.15 and thus the same ranking as the previous question item. The frequencies to this item revealed that 47.95% of the respondents agreed to some extent, while 36.62% agreed to a great extent that their school's assessment policies are linked to the strategic mission statements of their respective schools. This accounts for a majority of positive responses of 84.57% (47.95% + 36.62%) from the respondents who are convinced of the link between the assessment policy and strategic mission in their schools. The minority of the respondents (12.33% to a little extent and 4.11% to no extent) are not in support of this particular link between assessment policy and strategic mission. This situation could be ascribed to a lack of such link or that these respondents are not aware of the existence of such a link. The uncertainty of some of the respondents could be the reason for the occurrence of two non-responses.

- **National and provincial directives (Question 12.3)**

This item received a mean score of 3.04. The majority of the members of school management (51.38% to some extent and 29.17% to a great extent) are positive that their schools' assessment policies reflect national and provincial directives. The recording of some negative responses concerning this question item (13.89% to a little extent and 5.56% to no extent) are proof that the mentioned directives are regarded by some respondents as not part of their schools' assessment policies. Uncertainty of the incorporation of the related directives into policy may be a reason why three respondents did not answer this question.

- **Account for the specific needs of learners (Question 12.1)**

This item received a mean score of 2.90. Only 18.06% of the members of school management teams are of the opinion that their schools' assessment policies account to a great extent for the specific needs of learners, while 59.76% rated this item to some extent. The majority of respondents were thus positive that the specific needs of learners are addressed in their schools' respective assessment policies. It is however notable that on the other side of the scale, 16.67% of the respondents responded to a little extent and 5.56% of the respondents viewed this aspect to no extent. Although in the minority, there are respondents that were of the opinion that the needs of learners are not sufficiently accommodated in their schools' assessment policies. These responses of a more negative nature account for 22.23% (16.67% + 5.56%) of the total responses and may be indicative of a particular need to address. Uncertainty or not enough knowledge about the issue could be the reason why three respondents did not answer this question.

- **Policy defines the roles and functions of the school assessment team** (Question 12.6)

The mean score of this item is 2.90. Almost a third of the members of school management teams (29.58%) are confident that their schools' assessment policies define their roles and functions sufficiently, while 39.44% were rated this aspect role and function description to some extent. It could be deduced that the majority of respondents are satisfied that their roles and functions are provided in their schools' assessment policies. This question item revealed however that 30.99% of the respondents (22.54% to a little extent and 8.45% to no extent) are not satisfied that their roles and functions as members of the school management are sufficiently described in the related policies. This data represent a need to review the assessment policies for the inclusion of the roles and functions of members of school management teams. Uncertainty may the reason why four respondents did not answer this question.

The above-reported responses can be summarised that the data indicated that the respondents held the view that their respective schools' assessment policies describe what it intends to achieve by means of clear formulated goals and objectives. Responses were however recorded that the indicated a lack of clear and unambiguous goals and objectives in assessment policies. According to the respondents, guidelines based on national and provincial directives for the achievement of stated goals and objectives were part of their schools' assessment policies. A minority of respondents were not able to acknowledge a link between their schools' assessment policy and the schools' related strategic mission statement. The particular aspect points to a need to clarify the link between the purpose of assessment and the schools' mission statement. A further development area highlighted by the responses was that the diverse needs of learners were not sufficiently addressed by the current assessment practices. A significant number of respondents (30.99%) reported dissatisfaction that the applicable assessment policy did not describe their roles and functions as

members of the school management teams. The description of clear and relevant roles and functions is identified as a need for policy inclusion.

4.12.3.2 Consultation (questions 13.1-13.2)

The responses from this section are presented in table 4.8:

Table 4.8: Consultation

Rank	Item No	Question	Mean	Std dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Consultation process: To what extent does the school management team ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	13.2	consult educators for the development of an assessment policy?	3.04	0.92	5	6.85	14	19.18	27	36.99	27	36.99
2	13.1	facilitate a development process for assessment?	2.97	0.87	5	6.85	13	17.81	34	46.58	21	28.77

Scale rating: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

The responses to this section are described in the following paragraphs:

- **Consultation of educators for the development of an assessment policy (Question 13.2)**

This item has a mean score of 3.04 about the consultation of educators by the school management team in the development of an assessment policy. Equal percentages of 36.99% of the respondents responded to a great extent as well as to some extent about consulting educators concerning the development of an assessment policy in their schools. This response indicated that the majority (73.98%) of the members of the school management teams consult their educators for the development of assessment policies in their respective schools. On the other side of the scale, 19.18% of the respondents indicated the occurrence of educator consultation to a little extent, while 6.85% of the respondents were regarded this aspect to no extent. The importance of broad consultation is well known with regard to policy development, and the frequency of 26.03% (19.18% + 6.85%) from the members of the school management teams who are negative about this aspect, is alarming concerning the consultation of educators by

school management teams about an issue as important as the development of an assessment policy.

- **The SMT facilitates a policy development process (Question 13.1)**

This item received a mean score of 2.97 to indicate the involvement of the school management team (SMT) to facilitate the policy development process for assessment. The higher values of frequencies from the responses to this question item are 28.77% to a great extent and 46.58% to some extent. Together these scores represent 75.35% of the responses who are positive about the facilitation of the policy development process. The responses of a negative nature were recorded as 17.81% to a little extent, while 6.85% responded to no extent about this item. Together these responses represent 24.66% of the respondents who were of the opinion that the SMT did not sufficiently facilitate the development of their schools' assessment policies. This value (24.66%) is almost a quarter of the total of responses and thus points to a lack of involvement by the members of the SMT to facilitate the development process with regard to an assessment policy.

The responses in the above-reported section of data indicated that educators were consulted in the development of the school's assessment policy. Some responses of non-consultation however did occur among the members of school management teams and points to a lack of broad consultation. Most of the members of school management teams were positive about their facilitation of the policy development process for assessment. The data revealed however that almost a quarter of the respondents indicated a more negative response to this aspect of policy development, which can be interpreted as a need to increase the facilitation involvement of respondents.

4.12.4 SECTION D: MANAGEMENT PLAN

Section D (question items 14.1-19.2) aimed to obtain information from respondents to determine the extent of the implementation of a management plan and the review process by the school management team to ensure effective assessment standards and practices in primary schools of the Jouberton education district (cf. par. 4.4.2). Section D of the questionnaire was further divided into the following subsections:

- Status of management plan (question items 14.1-14.4)
- Functions of role players (question items 15.1-15.2)
- Support from the Department of Education (question items 16.1-16.2)
- Role of SMT (question items 16.3-16.14)
- Evaluation and review (question items 16.15-16.17)
- Assessment implementation (question items 17.1-17.5)
- Resources (question items 17.6-17.7)
- Personal experiences (question items 18.1-18.3)
- Assessment training (question 19.1-19.2)

4.12.4.1 Status of management plan (question 14.1-14.4)

The responses from this section are presented in table 4.9:

Table 4.9: Status of management plan

Rank	Item No.	Question	Mean	Std Dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Status of management plan: To what extent is a management plan for assessment ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	14.4	communicated to all educators in the school? <i>No-response=2</i>	3.23	0.89	5	6.85	7	9.59	27	36.99	34	46.58
2	14.3	implemented in your school? <i>No-response=2</i>	3.08	0.88	5	6.85	10	13.70	32	43.84	26	35.62
3	14.2	part of the school's development plan?	3.04	0.87	5	6.85	11	15.07	33	45.21	24	32.88
3	14.1	developed in your school?	3.04	0.90	6	8.22	10	13.70	32	43.84	25	34.25

Scale: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

- **A management plan for assessment is communicated to all educators (question item 14.4)**

This item received the highest mean score of 3.23. Most of the respondents (46.58% to a great extent, 36.99% to some extent) were of the opinion that the school's management plan is communicated to all educators in the school. However 9.59% responded to a little extent and 6.85% to no extent. This low value of responses is an indication that some members of the school management team failed to communicate the management plan to all educators (cf. par. 3.3). Uncertainty or an inability to express a judgement concerning this particular matter may be the reason for two no-responses.

- **A management plan for assessment is implemented in schools (question 14.3)**

This question item received the second highest mean score of 3.08. The relative high value of the mean score is interpreted as a positive response from members of the school management team that a management plan for assessment is implemented in their respective schools. This interpretation is supported by a positive response of 79.46% from the respondents (43.84% to some extent plus 35.62% to a great extent). The recording of responses that varied between 13.70% (to a little extent) and 6.85% (to no extent) represents the view of a minority of respondents who are of the opinion that a management plan for assessment is not implemented in their schools. Uncertainty to express a precise judgement concerning this aspect may be the reason for two no-responses.

- **A management plan for assessment is part of the school's development plan (question 14.2)**

This item received a mean score 3.04, which is still a relative high value of respondents who regard their schools' assessment plans as part of an overall school development plan. This interpretation is supported by 32.88% of the respondents who rated this item to a great

extent and 45.21% of the respondents who are convinced to some extent. However, 15.07% of the respondents reacted to a little extent and 6.85% of the respondents viewed this item as occurring to no extent. There are thus some members of school management teams who do not view their management plan for assessment as part of the school's development plan (cf.par.3.10). An interpretation can be that some of the respondents regard assessment as something separate and not part of an overall development plan for the school.

- **A management plan for assessment is developed in schools (question 14.1)**

This item received the same mean score as the previous question item, namely 3.04. The majority of the members of school management teams who participated in this research (78.09%) are positive that a management plan for assessment is developed in their respective schools (43.84% to some extent and 34.25% to a great extent). It is notable that 13.70% of the respondents are only of the view to a little extent that the mentioned assessment plan is developed in their schools, while 8.22% viewed this item as to no extent. The total responses of 21.92% (13.70% + 8.22%) of a more negative nature is indicative of members of the school management teams who are not sure that a management plan for assessment was developed in their schools. A possible reason may be that some members of the school management teams were not involved during the development process of such a school plan for assessment (cf. par. 3.10).

The responses indicated that the management plan for assessment in the school was communicated to educators by most of the members of the school management teams. A low score (6.85%) was recorded for insufficient communication in this regard. The research results of this section indicated that most of the respondents were of the opinion that a management plan for assessment was implemented in their respective schools. Some respondents (6.85%) were however of the opinion that a management plan was not implemented in their schools. The same tendency also occurs with regard to the

respondents' view about assessment as part of the school's development plan. The majority of respondents support this particular aspect, but some responses (6.85%) were recorded as an indication that assessment is not viewed as part of the school's development plan. A common characteristic among the responses to this section is that most members of the school management teams responded positive to the various question items, but in each case some responses of a negative nature were also recorded.

4.12.4.2 Functions of role players (questions 15.1)

The responses from this section are presented as:

Table 4.10: Functions of role players

Rank	Item No.	Question	Mean	Std Dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Functions of role players: To what extent does the school management plan for assessment ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	15.1	indicate the assessment functions of all role players? <i>No-response = 5</i>	3.06	0.87	5	7.14	9	12.86	33	47.14	23	32.86

Scale: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

(Question 15.2 is an open-ended question.)

- **Functions of the role players (Question 15.1)**

This question item has a mean score of 3.06, which is still regarded as a relative high value representative of respondents who are of the opinion that the management plan for assessment is providing the functions for the relevant role players. An analysis of the data reveals that 32.6% of the respondents rated this aspect to a great extent, while 47.14% of the respondents to some extent. Uncertainty among members of school management teams about the functions of role players as part of the management plan for assessment is represented by the frequency values of 12.86% (to a little extent) and 7.14% (to no extent). The reason for this might be that the school management teams of some schools lack managerial and professional development

as preconditions for a management plan for assessment (cf.par.3.10). Uncertainty to express a precise judgement about this particular aspect may be the reason for the occurrence of five no-responses.

4.12.4.3 Support from the Department of Education (Questions 16.1 & 16.2)

Table 4.11 summarises the responses on the support by the Department of Education and the role of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy.

Table 4.11: Support from the Department of Education

Rank	Item No	Question	Mean	Std Dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Support by Department of Education: To what extent does the school management team					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	16.2	receive support from the education department to manage assessment?	2.48	0.89	9	12.00	32	42.67	23	30.67	11	14.67
2	16.1	receive guidance from the education department to manage assessment?	2.44	0.92	12	16.00	28	37.33	25	33.33	10	13.33

Scale: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

- **Receiving of support from the Department of Education (Question 16.2)**

Responses to the extent of support from the Department of Education account for a mean score of 2.48 which is more or less in between a low and high value (cf. par 4.9). A further analysis of the data revealed that the majority of respondents (54.67%) is of the opinion that they are not receiving sufficient support from the Department of Education to manage assessment in the schools (12.0% to no extent and 42.67% to a little extent. The respondents who are more positive about the support from the Department of Education to manage assessment account for 45.34% of the frequencies (30.67% to some extent and 14.67% to a great extent). This item of the questionnaire indicates clearly a need for support from the Department of Education to the members of school management teams in the Jouberton education district.

- **Receiving guidance from the Department of Education (Question 16.1)**

Responses about the extent of guidance received from the Department of Education produced a mean score of 2.44 from the frequencies which is more or less neutral between a low and high value (cf. par 4.9). A further analysis of the recorded data showed that the majority of respondents (53.33%) is of the opinion that they are not receiving sufficient guidance from the Department of Education to manage assessment in the schools (16.0% to no extent and 37.33% to a little extent). The members of the school management teams who are more positive about the guidance received from the Department of Education to manage assessment account for 46.66% of the frequencies (33.33% to some extent and 13.33% to a great extent). Together with the previous item, this particular section of the questionnaire indicates a lack of sufficient guidance from the Department of Education to the members of school management teams in the Jouberton education district to manage assessment effectively.

The research results of this section indicated a split between those respondents (54.67%) who were of the view that they did not receive sufficient support from the Department of Education and those respondents (45.34%) who regarded the support as sufficient. The same pattern was also found in the question item about sufficient guidance from the Department of Education, namely 53.33% responded negatively, while 46.66% responded positively to this aspect. It can be deduced that there was some supportive and guiding intervention by the Department of Education, but did not include all respondents because of the recorded negative responses.

4.12.4.4 The role of the school management team (Question items 16.3 - 16.14)

The responses from this subsection are presented as:

Table 4.12: The role of the school management team

Rank	Item No.	Question	Mean	Std Dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Role of the School management team: To what extent does the school management team ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	16.10	report learners' achievement to parents? <i>No-response=1</i>	3.68	0.60	1	1.35	2	2.70	17	22.97	54	72.97
2	16.11	assist in the recording of learners' achievement?	3.44	0.64	1	1.33	3	4.00	33	44.00	38	50.67
3	16.12	ensure that the management plan for assessment is known to educators? <i>No-response=1</i>	3.23	0.80	2	2.70	11	14.86	29	39.19	32	43.24
4	16.13	make resources available?	3.13	0.74	2	2.67	10	13.33	39	52.00	24	32.00
5	16.14	ensure supervision of assessment practices?	3.07	0.81	2	2.67	16	21.33	32	42.67	25	33.33
6	16.6	guide educators in the selection of assessment standards?	2.99	0.80	1	1.33	21	28.00	31	41.33	22	29.33
7	16.8	guide assessment activities to improve the learning process?	2.92	0.75	3	4.00	15	20.00	42	56.00	15	20.00
8	16.7	check learners' portfolios?	2.91	0.82	4	5.33	17	22.67	36	48.00	18	24.00
9	16.4	take the lead in the implementation of an assessment policy? <i>No-response=1</i>	2.78	0.93	7	9.46	20	27.03	29	39.19	18	24.32
10	16.3	has knowledge about their leadership role to manage assessment in the school?	2.77	0.69	2	2.67	22	29.33	42	56.00	9	12.00
11	16.9	train staff members in areas of assessment?	2.68	0.92	7	9.33	26	34.67	26	34.67	16	21.33

Scale: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

Question items 16.5 and 16.17 are open-ended questions. The responses of this section are reported and analysed in the following paragraphs:

- **Reporting of learners' achievement to parents (Questions 16.10)**

The highest mean score of this section of 3.68 was recorded in question item 16.10. This high mean value (cf. par. 4.9) points to a positive view among the respondents that learners' achievement is

effectively reported to the parents by the members of the school management team. This interpretation is supported by 95.94% of the respondents (22.97% to some extent and 72.97% to a great extent). Only 4.05% of the respondents (2.70% to a little extent and 1.35% to no extent) were of the opinion that the members of school management teams did not report the learners' achievement to the parents. An overall impression from the data is that the members of school management teams from the Jouberton education district are reporting the learners' achievement to the parents.

- **Assist in recording of learners' achievement** (Question item 16.11)

The question item has a high mean value of 3.44 which represents the view of the respondents about their assistance in the recording of learners' achievement during the assessment process. The majority of respondents (94.67%) were according to the data convinced of their assistance in this regard (50.67% to a great extent and 44.0% to some extent). A small number of the members of school management teams (5.33%) are not convinced of their assistance in the reporting of learners' achievement (4.0% to a little extent and 1.33% to no extent). It can be stated that a significant number of respondents have reported that they do assist in the reporting of learners' achievement.
- **Ensure that the management plan for assessment is known to educators** (Question item 16.12)

A mean score of 3.23 is recorded in this question item about the involvement of members of the school management team to ensure that the management plan for assessment is known to educators. A significant part of the respondents (82.43%) were of the opinion that they were taking steps to ensure that the management plan for assessment was known to educators (49.19% to some extent and 43.24% to a great extent). There were however some members of the school management teams (17.56%) who did not support this particular aspect of the questionnaire (14.86% to a little extent and 2.70% to no extent). It can be deduced that in some of the school

management teams there are room for improvement to make the assessment plan better known to educators.

- **Making resources available** (Question item 16.13)

The measurement of the extent in which members of the school management team make resources available, produced a mean score of 3.13 from the frequencies according to the scale ratings. Most of the members of the school management team (84.0%) were satisfied that they make resources available to ensure effective assessment in the school (52.0% to some extent and 32.0% to a great extent). Responses of a negative nature did occur, namely 16.0% of the members of the school management teams were of the opinion that they did not make resources sufficiently available (13.33% to a little extent and 2.67% to no extent). Although the majority of responses are positive (84.0%), some responses of a negative nature did occur (16.0%) which is indicative of an opinion that there is a need to make more resources available to enhance the effectiveness of assessment in the schools.

- **Ensure supervision of assessment practices** (Question item 16.14)

This question item has a mean score of 3.07 which represents a positive view about the supervision from the members of the school management teams in connection with assessment practices. The most respondents (76.0%) were of the opinion that supervision of assessment practices is ensured by the members of the school management teams (42.67% to some extent and 33.33% to a great extent). The number of respondents that did not support this aspect was almost a quarter (24.0%) of the total of respondents (21.33% to a little extent and 2.67% to no extent). The question item reveals a certain lack of and need for supervision with regard to assessment practices by some members of school management teams.

- **Guide educators in the selection of assessment standards** (Question item 16.6)

A mean score of 2.99 was recorded from the scale ratings in this question item about the guidance to educators by the school management to select assessment standards. Most of the respondents (70.66%) are positive about this aspect (41.33% to some extent and 29.33% to a great extent). Responses of a more negative nature account for 29.33% (28.0% to a little extent and 1.33% to no extent). Although the more negative part of the responses are quite high (29.33%), it is only 1.33% who reported the provision of guidance to no extent. It can however be summarised in this case that attention need to be given to guide educators in the selection of assessment standards.

- **Guide assessment activities to improve the learning process** (Question item 16.8)

A mean score of 2.92 was recorded in this question item concerning the guidance of assessment activities to improve the learning process. The majority of respondents (76.0%) were convinced that guidance for assessment by the school management is provided to improve the learning process (56.0% to some extent and 20.0% to a great extent). On the other side of the scale there were 24.0% of the respondents who rated the guidance for assessment activities on a more negative note (20.0% to a little extent and 4.0% to no extent). Like the previous question item, a lack and accompanying need for improvement in the guidance concerning assessment activities by members of the school management is deduced from the data.

- **Check learners' portfolios** (Question item 16.7)

The involvement of the members of school management teams concerning the checking of learners' portfolios is presented by a mean score of 2.91 from the scale ratings. Most of the respondents (72.0%) were positive about this aspect of the questionnaire (48.0% to some

extent and 24.0% to a great extent). The responses of a negative nature account for a total of 28.0% (22.67% to a little extent and 5.33% to no extent). These negative responses indicate a certain extent of non-involvement from the members of the school management team in checking learners' portfolios. It should be part of the control management task of school management to also check assessment submissions at learner level.

- **Leading the implementation of an assessment policy** (Question item 16.)

A mean score of 2.78 was recorded from the scale ratings concerning leading from the school management team to implement an assessment policy. The total of responses that represents a view in support of this aspect is 63.51% (39.19% to some extent and 24.32% to a great extent). The responses not in support of leading from school management to implement an assessment policy are relative higher in this particular section of the questionnaire, namely 36.49% (27.03% to a little extent and 9.46 to no extent). The initiative to take the lead from school management to implement an assessment policy is questionable according to the data of this question item. This situation is significant if taken into account that the respondents themselves were members of the school management team.

- **Knowledge about leadership role** (Question item 16.3)

The recording of data about the respondents' knowledge of their leadership role to manage assessment in the school produced a mean score of 2.77, well below the high indicator of 3.2 as determined in par. 4.9. An analysis of the responses according to the scale rating revealed that 68.0% of the respondents consider themselves as knowledgeable about their leadership role to manage assessment in the school (56.0% to some extent and 12.0% to a great extent). The respondents who were in doubt of their knowledge levels about their leadership role accounted for 32.0% (29.33% to a little extent and 2.67% to no extent). The relative high number of negative responses

indicates an uncertainty about the required leadership knowledge to manage assessment effectively in the schools.

- **Training of staff members** (Question item 16.9)

A mean score of 2.68 were recorded concerning the training of staff members by school management in areas of assessment. Most of the respondents (56.0%) indicated that they were involved in the training of staff members with regard to assessment (34.67% to some extent and 21.33% to a great extent). A total of 44.0% of the respondents indicated educator training involvement by the school management team to a lesser extent (34.67% to a little extent and 9.33% to no extent). The responses to this question item indicated that training in assessment to staff members were undertaken by most of the members of school management (56.0%), but a significant number of respondents were only involved to a little extent or to no extent in assessment training of staff members. The importance and complexity of assessment practices in the school necessitate training initiatives and school management has to fulfil an important role in this regard.

The question item about the reporting of learners' achievement to parents received a high score (95.91%), which is indicative of ways that the school management team implemented to keep the parents informed about this aspect. It is also evident from the recorded responses that the members of the school management were actively involved in the recording of learners' achievement. This state of affairs points to the level of teamwork between members of the school management teams and educators to record achievement results of learners. The majority of respondents (82.43%) were convinced that they were making sure that the management plan for assessment was being made known to educators. Most of the respondents (84.0%) were also positive that they were making sufficient resources available to educators for effective assessment. Related aspects from this particular section of the question items like supervision of assessment practices, selection of assessment standards, guidance of assessment activities, checking of learner portfolios and leading the implementation of an assessment

policy were also positively supported by the majority of members of school management teams.

It is significant that 32.0% of the respondents were in doubt about their leadership role to manage assessment in the schools. This aspect must be interpreted in coherence with the aspect on educator training by the school management team. The question can be asked – how can members of school management teams be involved in the training of educators if they are not sure of their leadership role with regard to assessment?

4.12.4.5 Evaluation and review (Question items 16.15 & 16.16)

The responses from this subsection are presented as:

Table 4.13: An evaluation and review process

Rank	Item No.	Question	Mean	Std Dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Evaluation and review: To what extent does the school management team ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	16.15	evaluate existing assessment practices?	3.04	0.76	1	1.33	17	22.67	35	46.67	22	29.33
2	16.16	conduct review process? <i>No-response=1</i>	2.84	0.84	6	8.11	15	20.27	38	51.35	15	20.27

Scale: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

(Question 16.17 is an open-ended question.)

An analysis of the responses is described as:

- **Evaluation of assessment practices (Question item 16.5)**

A mean score of 3.04 was recorded in this question item about the evaluation of assessment practices by the school management team. A significant number of the members of school management teams (76.0%) indicated that they evaluate the assessment practices in school (46.67% to some extent and 29.33% to a great extent). Responses on the other side of the scale accounted for 22.67% to a little extent and only 1.33% to no extent. The data points to the conducting of evaluation activities of assessment to a more or lesser

degree as indicated in schools by members of the school management team.

- **The conduct of a review process (Question item 16.6)**

The mean score for the responses according to the scale rating is 2.84 for this question item. Most of the respondents (71.62%) were of the opinion that the members of the school management teams did conduct a review process of assessment practices (51.35% to some extent and 20.27% to a great extent). Respondents who did not support this aspect account for 28.38% (20.27% to a little extent and 8.11% to no extent). A review process is necessary for future alignment and the data indicated that there exists a need in some schools to implement a review process.

It is evident from the responses that the school management teams who participated in this research did engage in evaluation of assessment practices in their schools. A notable 22.67% indicated that evaluation only happened to a little extent, which points to a developmental need in this regard. The same tendency was found concerning the conduct of a review process; the majority (74.62%) of respondents were positive about the conduct of a review process, while 20.27% were of the opinion that reviewing only happened to a little extent.

4.12.4.6 Assessment implementation (question items 17.1-17.5)

The responses from this subsection are presented as:

Table 4.14: Assessment implementation

Rank	Item No.	Question	Mean	Std Dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
To what extent are the following assessment aspects applicable in your school situation?					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	17.2	The implementation of assessment differs between learning areas.	2.96	0.72	5	6.67	6	8.00	51	68.00	13	17.33
2	17.5	The management plan for assessment is flexible to provide room for educators' creativity.	2.95	0.75	3	4.00	14	18.67	42	56.00	16	21.33
3	17.1	The emphasis is on quality of work, rather than quality of learning. <i>No-response = 1</i>	2.85	0.75	5	6.76	12	16.22	46	62.16	11	14.86
4	17.3	Coordination of assessment within a particular learning area is a problem.	2.69	0.87	8	10.67	19	25.33	36	48.00	12	16.00
5	17.4	Coordination of assessment between different learning area is a problem.	2.56	0.84	10	13.33	20	26.67	38	50.67	7	9.33

Scale: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

An analysis of the responses is described in the following paragraphs:

- **Assessment implementation differs between learning areas (Questions 17.2)**

The mean score of this question item was 2.96. Most respondents (85.33%) were convinced that the implementation of assessment in their schools differs between learning areas (68.0% to some extent and 17.33% to a great extent). Respondents who did not support this aspect account for 14.67% (8.0% to a little extent and 6.67% to a great extent). It can be concluded from this data that the implementation of assessment differs indeed between learning areas.

- **Flexibility of management plan (Questions 17.5)**

A mean score of 2.95 was recorded for this question item. The majority of respondents (77.33%) were in support of the statement that the school's management plan for assessment is flexible to provide room for the creativity of educators (56.0% to some extent and 21.33% to a great extent). The number of respondents who did not support the mentioned statement was 22.67% (18.67% to a little extent and 4.0% to no extent). Although in the minority, there are members of school management teams who regard their schools' management plans as not flexible enough to accommodate the creativity of educators.

- **Emphasis on quality of work (Questions 17.1)**

This question item has a mean score of 2.85. Most of the respondents (77.02%) were of the opinion that the emphasis of assessment in their respective schools is on quality of work, rather than on quality of learning (62.16% to some extent and 14.86% to a great extent). The rest of the respondents (22.98%) did not support the above-mentioned assessment aspect (16.22% to a little extent and 6.76% to no extent). The data points to a tendency that assessment practices in the schools are more focused on quality of work instead of a focus on quality of the learning process. Although in the minority, some schools focused their assessment on the quality of learning.

- **Problem of coordination within a particular learning area (Questions 17.3)**

The mean score of this question item was 2.69. The majority of respondents (48.0% to some extent and 16.0% to a great extent) were of the opinion that the coordination of assessment within a particular learning area posed a problem. A lesser number of respondents (36.0%) rated this assessment aspect as not a serious problem (25.33% to a little extent and 10.67% to no extent). It can be deduced from the data that the coordination of assessment within a particular learning area is experienced by the majority of respondents as a

problem. There were however a significant number of respondents who did not view this aspect as a problem.

- **Problem of coordination between different learning areas**
(Questions 17.4)

A mean score of 2.56 was recorded in this question item. There were a more evenly distribution of responses with a majority of respondents (60.0%) who did experience a problem with the coordination of assessment between different learning areas (50.67% to some extent and 9.33% to a great extent). The number of respondents who did not experience a significant problem in this regard account for 40.0% (26.67% to a little extent and 13.33% to no extent). There are clearly a division of opinions among members of the school management teams with regard to this particular assessment aspect. It can be deduced that coordination is more effectively conducted in some schools than in other and points a development area in relation to this particular aspect.

The research results revealed that the implementation of assessment in practice differentiate between learning areas according to the requirements and needs of the different learning areas. Most respondents (77.33%) were in support that their schools' management plan for assessment was flexible enough to provide room for the creativity of educators.

A notable feature from the research results is that the respondents were of the opinion that the emphasis of assessment in their school was more fixed on the quality of work than on the quality of the learning process. Such an approach to assessment may neglect the circumstances and learners as an individual by focusing on a one-sided manner on the quality of work alone. Another problem with regard to assessment in the school was that coordination of assessment within and between learning areas was experienced as a difficulty by the respondents.

4.12.4.7 Resources (question items 17.6 - 17.7)

The responses from this subsection are presented as:

Table 4.15: **Resources** (Questions 17.6 – 17.7)

Rank	Item No.	Question	Mean	Std Dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Resources: To what extent are the following aspects applicable?					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	17.6	Lack of resources for effective assessment is a problem. <i>No-response=2</i>	2.71	0.95	10	13.70	16	21.92	32	43.84	15	20.55
2	17.7	Resources allocation between educators is a problem to implement assessment. <i>No-response=1</i>	2.70	0.92	8	10.81	21	28.38	30	40.54	15	20.27

Scale: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

The responses are analysed and interpreted as follows:

- **Lack of resources for effective assessment is a problem**

(Question 17.6)

The mean score of this question item is 2.71. Most of the respondents (64.39%) were of the opinion that a lack of resources for effective assessment was a problem (43.84% to some extent and 20.55% to a great extent). Those respondents who did not support this particular statement account for 32.62% (21.92% to a little extent and 13.70% to no extent). The data indicated that most of the members of the school management teams did experience problems to conduct assessment effectively because of a lack of resources. Those respondents from school management teams who did not indicate this aspect as a problem may have sufficient resources or utilised the available resources more creatively.

- **Resource allocation between educators is a problem**

(Question 17.7)

The mean score for this question item is 2.70. The majority of the members of the school management teams (60.81%) responded positively to this statement (40.54% to some extent and 20.27% to a

great extent). Most respondents regarded thus the allocation of resources between educators as a problem to implement assessment. Those respondents who did not experience the allocation of resources between educators as a problem are according to the data 39.19% of the respondents (28.38% to a little extent and 10.81% to no extent). A problem with resource allocation between educators may lead to friction and conflict and may thus spill to other areas of the teaching profession. This aspect is indicative of the importance to ensure fair and transparent allocation of resources between educators.

Difficulties related to the availability and allocation of resources for the effective implementation of assessment in the schools were recorded. This situation represents a need to address for the sake of effective teaching and learning and to ensure harmonious cooperation between school management teams and educators from all the learning areas.

4.12.4.8 Personal experiences (Question items 18.1-18.3)

The responses from this subsection are presented as:

Table 4.16: Personal experiences

Rank	Item No.	Question	Mean	Std Dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Personal experiences: To what extent do experience ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	18.2	a need for the SMT to improve their competency to manage assessment? <i>No-response = 1</i>	3.15	0.77	1	1.35	14	18.92	32	43.24	27	36.49
2	18.1	confidence to manage assessment? <i>No-response = 1</i>	2.92	0.74	2	2.70	17	22.97	40	54.05	15	20.27
3	18.3	difficulty to translate the requirements from assessment theory into the practice of school life? <i>No-response = 1</i>	2.76	0.77	5	6.76	18	24.32	41	55.41	10	13.51

Scale: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

The responses of this section are analysed and interpreted as follows:

- **Experience a need to improve competency (Question 18.2)**

The mean score of this question item is 3.15, which is near to the indicated high value of 3.2 (cf. par. 4.9). The majority of the members of the school management team (79.73%) indicated that they experience a need to improve their competency to manage assessment (43.24% to some extent and 36.49% to a great extent). Some respondents (20.27%) indicated that they did not experience a need to a high degree for the improvement of their competence to manage assessment in the school (18.92% to a little extent and 1.35 to no extent). The data points to need among members of the school management teams to improve their competency to manage assessment more effectively in schools.

- **Experience confidence to manage assessment (Question 18.1)**

The mean score of this question item is 2.70. Most of the members of the school management team (74.32%) express their view that they have confidence to manage assessment in their respective schools (54.05% to some extent and 20.27% to a great extent). It is notable that a quarter of the respondents (25.67%) experienced confidence to manage assessment to a little extent (22.97%), while 2.70% experience confidence to no extent to manage assessment. Although the majority of respondents considered their confidence to manage assessment as adequate, the component of respondents who are in doubt of their confidence, points to a need for the enhancement of their confidence. This particular aspect of assessment can be interpreted as in coherence with the previous item about the rating of the respondents' competence with regard to the management of assessment.

- **Experience difficulty to translate theory in practice (Question 18.3)**

The mean score of this question item is 2.76. The data reveals that 68.92% of the members of the school management teams experience difficulty to translate the requirements from assessment theory into the school practice (55.41% to some extent and 13.51% to a great extent).

Almost a third of the respondents (31.08%) did not experience difficulty in this regard (24.32% to a little extent and 6.76% to no extent). The noteworthy indication of a difficulty to translate theory into practice (68.92%) may be indicative of a lack of training to interpret related assessment policies and guidelines in this regard.

The majority of members of school management teams expressed a need for the improvement of their competency to manage assessment. Although not in the majority, a significant number of respondents (25.67%) recorded a lack of confidence to manage assessment. It could be deduced that the two aspects of competence and confidence is related to some extent which may be the reason why most of respondents (68.92%) found it difficult to translate the requirements from assessment theory into that of school practice.

4.12.4.9 Assessment training (Question items 19.1 - 19.2)

The responses from this subsection are presented as:

Table 4.17: Assessment training

Rank	Item No.	Question	Mean	Std Dev	Scale ratings							
					1		2		3		4	
Assessment training: To what extent did you receive ...					F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	19.1	in-service training to manage assessment?	2.20	0.94	18	24.00	33	44.00	15	20.00	9	12.00
2	19.2	assessment training with continuous support? <i>No-response = 1</i>	2.05	0.96	25	33.78	27	36.49	15	20.27	7	9.46

Scale: 1=No extent, 2=Little extent, 3=Some extent and 4=Great extent

The responses of this section are analysed and interpreted as follows:

- **Receive in-service training (Question 19.1)**

A mean score of 2.20 was recorded in this question item about the extent of in-service training to manage assessment that the members of school management teams received. Most of the respondents indicated that they received in-service training only to a little extent (44.0%), while almost a quarter of the respondents (24.0%) indicated

that they did not receive any training in this regard. Those members of the school management teams who responded positively to this aspect account for 32.0% of the respondents (20.0% to some extent and 12% to a great extent). The data from this question item points to a lack of adequate in-service training for members of the school management teams to manage assessment effectively in their respective schools.

- **Receive training with continuous support (Question 19.2)**

A mean score of 2.05 was recorded for this question item about in-service training with continuous support. Most respondents (70.27%) expressed their view that they did not receive training with continuous support (36.49% to a little extent and 33.78% to no extent). The number of respondents who supported the statement from this question item account for 20.27%, while 9.46% of the respondents were sure that they received training with continuous support. From the research results of this section, it is deduced that a lack of continuous support with the provision of training prevails among members of the school management teams.

This concluded the quantitative section of the empirical research. The following section deals with the qualitative section of the empirical research.

4.13 RESULTS: QUALITATIVE DATA

The qualitative data regarding the extent of the management of assessment by the school management team in the primary schools of the Jouberton education district of the North West Province, was captured to elucidate more comprehensive responses and to clarify underlying logic (cf. par. 4.5). The qualitative part of this research report consists of integrated open-ended questions as part of the questionnaire. The aim for the inclusion of the open-ended questions was to elicit further responses that were embedded in the unique wording of the respondents. The methodological procedure for the analysis of the qualitative data entailed the transcribing and organising of responses, evaluation of responses, identifying patterns and categories, searching for alternatives and

lastly, to write the report. The discussion of the qualitative data is presented according to sections B, C and D of the questionnaire.

4.13.1 SECTION B: EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES (Question item 10.7)

The aim of open-ended question 10.7 was to obtain a descriptive response of what initiatives were implemented to empower educators with regard to the implementation of assessment in schools. The responses to the open-ended questions were firstly transcribed from the questionnaire and organised in table form. The next step was to evaluate the recorded responses to identify relevant categories, patterns and themes (cf. par. 4.5.2). The main categories from this question item (10.7) were identified as:

- Informal initiatives
- Formal initiatives

The identified categories are discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.13.1.1 Informal initiatives

The first category in terms of the collected responses was identified as informal initiatives, because these initiatives are not regarded as part of formal empowerment programme from the Department of Education, e.g. planned empowerment initiatives within a formal accreditation structure. The responses of this category are presented in Table 4.18:

Table 4.18: Informal empowerment initiative

Rank	Responses	Frequency
1	Phase meetings and discussions	9
1	Peer assessment	9
3	Mentoring	5

The presented data indicated that 9 respondents stated that phase meetings and discussions were held to empower educators to implement assessment. It can be ascribed from the data that the members of the school management team share their own viewpoints about assessment during these phase meetings and discussions. The mutual consultation is in relation to the research theme about

the role of the school management in the implementation of an assessment policy. Peer assessment was the next informal initiative that was recorded. The frequency revealed that 9 respondents pointed out that peer assessment is utilised as an empowerment initiative to understand assessment. The reason for the high ranking of peer assessment can be ascribed to the practice in education where colleagues assist and support each other during the implementation of assessment. The last informal initiative about educator empowerment was recorded by 5 respondents as mentoring. This informal initiative is in line with the literature overview (cf. par. 3.4.3) whereby the school management team provide support and guidance as mentor to educators with regard to understanding assessment. Mentorship however is not limited to membership of the school management team; a senior educator can also fulfil the role of a mentor for assessment based on experience or expertise. The responses indicated that the informal empowerment activities are initiated among staff members of the school to increase their competency about assessment.

4.13.1.2 Formal initiatives

The second category concerning the empowerment initiatives for educators was identified as formal initiatives. The responses are presented in table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Formal initiatives

Rank	Response	Frequency
1	Workshops	31
2	In-service training	5
3	Subject specialist	3

The presented data about the formal initiatives revealed that 31 respondents regarded workshops as the main formal initiative to empower educators with regard to the implementation of assessment. This response can be related to the series of formal workshops that were organised and presented by the education authorities to empower the educators in assessment. This assumption however does not exclude the possibility that workshops may be organised by the school management teams as part of a development programme within the school. The second empowerment initiative that was regarded as formal by 5 respondents was in-service training. In-service training is an umbrella term, which can point to a

variety of empowerment initiatives. The particular response indicated however that respondents did participate in some kind of in-service training. The third formal initiative as indicated by 1 respondent, was the use of a subject specialist. This is a single response and an indication that the experience and expertise of a subject specialist is not widely used. This state of affairs points to the potential of subject specialists within the school that is not utilised sufficiently.

The general significance of the presented data was for the school management team to identify exemplars of empowerment initiatives for educators from practice to understand assessment. This data revealed that members of school management teams who participate in this research made use of various empowerment initiatives to guide and support educators with assessment in their respective schools. The collected data is in line with the empowerment initiatives as identified in literature (cf. par.3.4.3 & 3.11.2).

4.13.2 SECTION C: SPECIFIC NEEDS OF LEARNERS (Question 12.2)

The rationale of question item 12.2 was to determine what the respondents view as specific needs of learners with regard to assessment in the school. The gathered data was organised into categories of meaningful groups as recorded by the respondents' understanding of specific needs of learners. The identified categories are:

- Learner performance
- Holistic development
- Remedial programmes

The identified categories are described accordingly in the following paragraphs.

4.13.2.1 Learner performance

Table 4.20 summarises the first category of learner performance as a specific need as identified by the respondents.

Table 4.20: Learner performance

Rank	Response	Frequency
1	Writing skills	24
2	Language proficiency comprehension	15
3	Knowledge and intellectual abilities	4
4	Effective use of assessment techniques	2
5	Factors influencing teaching and learning	1
5	Resources	1
5	Time	1

The learner performance category revealed a number of specific learner needs to consider during the development of an assessment policy. The learner performance category revealed that writing skills was viewed as the most important need among learners with regard to the implementation of an assessment policy in schools (frequency: 24). This response can be interpreted that the respondents expect from an assessment policy some guidelines to differentiate in the assessment of learners' writing skills that will improve the teaching and learning process. The second need from the category of learner performance was recorded as language proficiency and comprehension as a specific learner need that should be accounted for by an assessment policy (frequency: 15). This response is an indication that the school management team should consult all educators in the development of assessment policy in order to include various teaching and learning strategies, which will provide guidance in improving learners' language proficiency and comprehension. The third identified learner need indicated that 4 respondents viewed that knowledge and intellectual abilities should also be considered in the development of an assessment policy. This response could be that the use of various forms of assessment is required for the assessment of learner achievement with specific reference to learners' knowledge and intellectual abilities. The collected data further revealed that 2 respondents considered the effective use of assessment techniques as specific need to guide learner performance in the school. This response is an indication that an assessment policy should provide different policy guidelines and directives for the implementation of a variety of methods, forms and techniques of assessment and be used effectively to improve and support learners' performance in the school. The learner performance category also included factors influencing

teaching and learning in which 1 respondent regarded that these factors should be considered as part of specific assessment needs of learners. The reason this response could be that the assessment policy should account more specifically for teaching and learning strategies for learner achievement. The inclusion of resources was viewed by 1 respondent as part of learners' specific needs. It can be concluded that the availability and utilisation of resources play a vital role in the assessment process of learners' performance and achievement. Guidelines for the utilisation of resources in the assessment policy will enable the school management team to provide guidance for the implementation of resources during the teaching, learning and assessment processes (cf. par.3.11.2). The data also indicated that 1 respondent regarded time as a specific need for learners. The reference to time can be interpreted as the need for time to conduct effective assessment or the time needed for learners to engage effectively in the learning process.

The importance of the data on the learner performance category brought to the fore some examples of specific needs of learners that the assessment policy should account for. This listed needs from this category on learner performance are in line with the needs found in the literature study (cf. par. 3.6.2). The next category concerning specific needs for learners was recorded as holistic development

4.13.2.2 Holistic development category

Table 4.21 summarises the responses on holistic development as part of the specific assessment needs of learners.

Table 4.21: Holistic development

Rank	Response	Frequency
1	Developmental needs	6
2	Environmental aspects and social background	5
3	Physical growth and development	3

The holistic development category recorded learners' developmental needs as the highest rated need with regard to assessment (frequency: 6). The data suggested

that learners' developmental needs should be included in the assessment policy. The inclusion of developmental needs will provide guidelines to focus on the development of learners in totality. The second highest recorded need in relation to the holistic development of learners was environmental aspects and social background as a specific need of learners (frequency: 5). It can be inferred that this response supported the importance of the integration of learners' environmental aspects and social background to the teaching, learning and assessment processes. The last aspect of the holistic development category (frequency: 3) was recorded as physical growth and development. The reason for this response could be that learners' physical growth and development should be part of the assessment process in order for the school management team to understand the learner in a holistic manner and to refer learners to experts if deemed necessary. The importance of the holistic development category is highlighted by most of the strategic mission statements of schools where emphasis is placed on the holistic development of learners. This aspect should accordingly form part of the process of assessment in schools. The responses from this category are in line with the findings from the literature overview (cf. par. 3.6.1).

The last category of responses from open-ended question 12.2 (section C) on assessment policy was remedial programmes.

4.13.2.3 Remedial programmes

Table 4.22 summarises responses according to the category of remedial programmes.

Table 4.22: Remedial programme

Rank	Response	Frequency
1	Learning barriers	5

The responses (frequency: 5) indicated that learning barriers was identified as a specific need of learners that need to be addressed in an assessment policy. This particular response is an indication that an assessment policy should identify different learning barriers that could have a negative impact on learners'

performance and achievement and to provide suggestions to overcome those barriers. It is the responsibility of the school management team to take the lead for the implementation of remedial programmes to minimise the impact of learning barriers. This response confirms what was found in the literature study (cf. par. 3.6).

It can be concluded that the various aspects as identified by the responses with regard to the specific needs of learners should be accounted for in the assessment policy of a school. The assessment policy should account for among other learners' performance, their holistic development and the provision of remedial programmes. It can further be stated that the assessment policy should also provide guidance to educators to implement various strategies in relation to the specific needs of learners with the support and assistance of the school management team. The above categories were identified in relation to specific needs of learners as viewed by members of school management teams, i.e. learner performance, holistic development and remedial programmes. The relation between the collected data and the research theme is that the role of the school management team includes guidance for the implementation of an assessment policy that accounts for a variety of specific needs of learners. The importance of the gathered data is that it informs the school management team to put into place managerial mechanisms to address the specific needs of learners (cf. par. 3.6.2).

4.13.3 SECTION D: A MANAGEMENT PLAN (Question 15.2)

The purpose of this open-ended question (15.2) was to determine the extent in which the respondents understand the functions of the various role players in relation to the management of assessment. This question is divided in accordance to the composition of the school management team *viz*, the principal, the deputy-principal and the head of department. The responses to each category of the school management team are discussed in the following section.

4.13.3.1 Functions of the school principal

The recorded responses of the functions of the school principal are presented in table 4.23.

Table 4.23: Functions of the school principal

Rank	Response	Frequency
1	Manages, plans, control and supervise assessment	32
2	Facilitate the development of assessment policy, consult all educators	18
3	Monitor and oversee the implementation process and support educators	15
4	Ensure safe keeping of assessment records <i>No response = 5</i>	5

The highest recorded function of the school principal in relation to the management of assessment was that principals' functions were to manage, plan, control and supervise assessment (frequency: 32). The functions from this open-ended question are in line with the functions as determined in the literature review (cf. par. 3.4.1). The second function as indicated by the responses (frequency: 18) pointed out that the principal has to facilitate the development of an assessment policy by consulting with all educators. The third ranked function of the principal (frequency: 15) showed that the principal has to monitor and oversee the implementation of assessment and to provide support to the educators as a function to manage assessment. The last function (frequency: 5) according to the responses about the functions of the principal pointed out that the principal has the function to ensure the safe keeping of assessment records. The recording of 5 no-responses may be attributed to uncertainty about the functions of the school principal. The general significance of the presented data about the functions of the principal emphasises in particular the principal's leadership role as a member of the school management team concerning the management of assessment in the school. The next sub-question of open-ended question 15.2 deals with perceptions of the functions of the deputy-principal.

4.13.3.2 Functions of the deputy principal

The deputy principal is regarded as the second in-charge in primary schools and assists the principal in the management and leadership of the school. Table 4.24 outlines the collected data in relation to the functions of the deputy principal.

Table 4.24: Functions of the deputy-principal

Rank	Responses	Frequency
1	Assist the principal in planning, implementation, controlling and coordination of a management plan	27
2	Monitor heads of departments' written reports on the management of assessment	25
3	Safe keeping of assessment records	4
4	Provide support and give guidance to educators	3
5	Liaise with departmental officials with regard to the management of assessment <i>No-responses = 4</i>	2

The recorded responses revealed that the function with the highest ranking (frequency: 27) was that of assistance to the principal in the planning, implementation, controlling and coordinating of a management plan for assessment. The responses indicated that the deputy-principal deputises the principal during his or her absence and otherwise works jointly with the principal to manage the school programme, including the management of assessment. The second highest ranked function of the deputy-principal (frequency: 25) indicated that the deputy-principal monitor and control the heads of department's written reports on the management of assessment. This response could be seen in the light of a line management structure where the heads of departments are directly accountable to the deputy principal of the school. The third recorded function of the deputy-principal (frequency: 4) pointed out that the deputy principal shares the responsibility with the principal to ensure the safe keeping of all assessment records in the school. This response can be ascribed to the function of the deputy principal that assists the principal in the administration of all school records, including that of assessment records. The recorded responses (frequency: 3) also indicated that guidance and support to educators are viewed as a function of the deputy principal with regard to the management of assessment in the school. The last function of the deputy principal according to the opinion of the respondents (frequency: 2) showed that the deputy principal has to liaise with departmental officials with regard to the management of assessment. This response is in line with the functions of the school management team according to the findings of the

literature overview (cf. par. 3.4.2). The gathered data emphasises the importance of an understanding of the functions of the deputy-principal concerning the management of assessment in school, because an understanding of roles and functions is essential for the effective management of assessment in schools. A possible reason why 4 respondents did not respond to this question could be uncertainty about the functions of the deputy-principal.

The last sub-question of open-ended question 15.2 about the functions of role players in relation to the management of assessment was that of the heads of department in the school.

4.13.3.3 Head of department

The head of department is third level of management in the school management structure and is particularly in charge to manage a specific phase in primary schools (cf. par. 2.4.3). Table 4.25 summarises the responses about the functions of the heads of department to manage assessment in schools.

Table 4.25: Functions of the heads of department

Rank	Responses	Frequency
1	Monitor assessment process	23
2	Plan, organise and control assessment in phase	15
3	Provide direct guidance and support to educators	12
3	Train and develop educators to understand assessment	12
5	Assessment records	4
6	Share information with other role players concerning assessment	3
7	Attend workshops	2
	<i>No-response = 4</i>	

The responses to this question item indicated that the highest-ranking function of the heads of department to manage assessment (frequency: 23) was to monitor the assessment process in his or her assigned area of responsibility in the school. The second function of the head of department to manage assessment (frequency: 15) was recorded as the function to plan, organise and control the assessment process in a specific area of responsibility. The next function of the head of department (frequency: 12) was recorded as the function to provide direct

guidance and support to the educators in his or her phase of the school. The head of department works in close relation with the educators in his or her department and therefore strong and clear guidance as well as support are needed from the head of department to manage assessment effectively. The respondents (frequency: 12) recorded the training and developing of educators as part of the function of the head of department to manage assessment. It can be inferred that the head of department has an important function to empower the educators in his or her department by training and developmental initiatives to effectively implement the school's assessment policy. The collected data (frequency: 4) also revealed that a function of the head of department is to ensure the safekeeping of assessment records. It is viewed by the respondents that the head of department not only has to control and check the recording of assessment by educators and learners, but also has to ensure the safekeeping of these records for the purpose of control by other members of management in education (cf. par. 3.4.3). Another function recorded by the respondents (frequency: 3) was that of sharing information of assessment with other role players in education, which include other schools. It can be concluded that this function of the sharing of assessment information has to do with the clustering of primary schools in Jouberton education district and the jointly training of colleagues from the cluster of schools concerning the implementation of assessment. The last recorded function to manage assessment in this open-ended question (frequency: 2) was that of heads of departments have to attend workshops to increase their competency to manage assessment more effectively. The reference to this particular function of attending workshops represents a terrain for further investigation and research to determine the role of the department of education with regard to assessment curriculum and presentation issues as well as the impact of related training.

The presented data is particularly of importance to the heads of department to understand their functions better as it is outlined in the Employment of Educators Act no 76 of 1998 (cf. par. 3.4.3). The recorded responses indicated that the respondents could state a variety of functions according to the different roles of the members of school management teams. These functions of various role players from the school management team are in line with the functions identified in the literature study (cf. par. 3.3 to 3.4.3).

The next open-ended question (16.5) as a subsection of section D focused on the involvement of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy.

4.13.4 INVOLVEMENT OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ASSESSMENT POLICY

The rationale of this open-ended question (16.5) was to determine the extent of involvement of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy. The responses to this question was categorised into two groups, namely:

- Professional development
- Management matters

The above-identified categories will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.13.4.1 Professional development

The professional development category was identified according to responses related to the involvement of members of the school management team in developing educators in the implementation of an assessment policy. Table 4.26 summarises the collected responses on the professional development category.

Table 4.26: Professional development

Rank	Responses	Frequency
1	Taking a lead role in the implementation process	20
2	Guidance and internal workshops	8
3	Drawing of a year plan for the monitoring of an assessment policy	7

The recorded responses indicated that members of the school management team (frequency: 20) viewed their involvement as taking a leading role in the implementation process of assessment. The involvement by taking a leading role can be ascribed that respondents are confident in leading and managing the implementation process of assessment. The data gathered from this question

item is in relation with the research theme concerning the role of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy. The next category of responses (frequency: 8) was identified as particular involvement in guidance to educators and the conduct of internal workshops to improve the implementation of an assessment policy. This involvement is an indication that the school management team is specifically involved in the implementation process by presenting workshops to colleagues to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of an assessment policy in their respective schools. The third professional development category (frequency: 7) revealed that school management teams draw a year plan for the monitoring of the assessment process in their schools. This response points to long-term planning (1 year) as part of the management of assessment in the school. The responses in the professional development category are in accordance with the findings from the literature study (cf. par. 3.10). The next category of open-ended question 16.5 was identified as management matters.

4.13.4.2 Management matters

An analysis and evaluation of responses to the open-ended question led to the identification of a category of management matters because of inherent corresponding relevance from the responses. The responses to this particular category is summarised in table 4.27 as part of the question about the involvement of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy.

Table 4.27: Management matters

Rank	Responses	Frequency
1	Control educator and learners portfolios	12
2	Regular school management team meetings	10
3	Discuss strategies for the implementation of an assessment policy	6
4	Establish a school assessment team	5
5	Establish an intervention committee	1

The recorded responses indicated that respondents (frequency: 12) explained that the involvement of members of the school management team mostly includes the control of educators' and learners' portfolios. This response is an indication that

educators' and learners' portfolios should be checked at regular intervals to improve the effective monitoring of the implementation of an assessment policy in the school. The gathered data on this section is in line with the findings from the literature overview (cf. par.2.10.2.1 & 3.4.3). The responses also revealed that respondents (frequency: 10) viewed regular school management team meetings as important to ensure the effective implementation of an assessment policy in the school. The fourth rated response to the category of management matters (frequency: 6) indicated that the discussion of strategies for the implementation of an assessment policy is also viewed as element of involvement by the members of the school management team. The reason for this particular response could be that regular discussion will enhance the understanding of assessment policy strategies among all relevant role players in the school. The next responses pointed to the establishment of school assessment team (frequency: 5) and an intervention committee (frequency: 1). The establishment of an assessment team and an intervention committee is an indication that the respondents were aware of the advantages associated with the assistance and guidance related to this assessment structures to facilitate, coordinate and implement an assessment policy in the school. The intervention committee is especially of value in more serious cases where intervention in the teaching and learning process is deemed necessary because the learning outcomes were not achieved. These specific responses are also in relation to the findings of the literature overview (cf. par.3.6).

Uncertainty about the nature of involvement of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy could be the reason why 4 respondents did not respond to this question item. It could also be possible that some of the members of the school management teams were not acquainted with the national and provincial directives on the implementation of an assessment policy. A further possibility may be that school structures are not in place for assessment process such as the development of an assessment policy and the implementation thereof.

It can be concluded from the above-stated responses that the majority of respondents indicated their competency and commitment to the implementation of an assessment policy in their respective schools. The various ways of

involvement by members of the school management team is the assessment process in the school is in line with the findings from literature (cf. par.3.11-3.11.2).

The last open-ended question (question item 16.17) as part of the section of a management plan focused on the review process.

4.13.5 THE REVIEW PROCESS

The aim of open-ended question 16.17 was to determine how often is a review process for assessment conducted in the respondents' respective schools. An analysis and evaluation of the responses to this question led to the identification of two categories:

- A short-term review process
- A long-term review process

The responses to the question item about how often a review process was conducted in the schools of the respondents will be discussed in the next paragraphs.

4.13.5.1 A short-term review process

A short-term review process was identified to describe the time frame of reviewing as indicated by the collected data. Table 4.28 summarises the short-term review process as conducted in the primary schools of the respondents.

Table 4.28: A short-term review process

Rank	Responses	Frequency
1	Review on quarterly basis	36
2	Review twice per term	6
3	Review on continuous basis	4

The responses to this open-ended question indicated that most respondents (frequency: 36) conducted a review process on a quarterly basis. This is an indication that most primary schools in the Jouberton education district conducted at least quarterly reviews to evaluate their assessment policies and practices to

improve learner performance and achievement. The second identified group of responses (frequency: 6) indicated that a review process for assessment implementation is conducted twice per term. This response could be the result of specific guidelines from an assessment policy that prescribes a review process to be conducted twice per term. The third identified group of short-term review responses (frequency: 4) revealed that a review process was conducted on a continuous basis. Although in the minority, the response of a continuous basis is an indication that some primary schools regard the review process as an important process that should be conducted frequently in order to correct what was done in assessment.

It can be concluded that the majority of the respondents conducted a review process in the short-term to determine what is working and how well it is working with regard to the implementation of assessment in the school. The frequency of conducting a review process over the short-term corresponds with the recommendations as portrayed in literature (cf. par. 3.12). The next category in relation to the review process was the conducting of a review process over the long-term.

4.13.5.2 A long-term review process

A long-term review process indicated a longer interval to conduct a review process for the implementation of an assessment policy. Table 4.29 summarises the responses the category of a long-term review process.

Table 4.29: A long-term review process

Rank	Long term	Frequency
1	Twice per year	5
2	Once a year	4

The responses to this category of a long-term review process indicated the conduct of a review process occurs in some instances as twice per year (frequency: 5), while incidences of once per year were also recorded (frequency: 4). The occurrence of these review processes can be attribute that some schools review their assessment practices in accordance to the prescription as dictated in

the assessment policy. It could be concluded there are no rigid guidelines concerning the period to conduct a review process and schools seemingly have some flexibility with regard to the intervals to conduct a review process for the implementation of assessment in their schools.

This question item has an indication of non-involvement by 13 respondents with regard to the review process. The reason for these particular responses could be that some members of school management teams were not aware of a management plan for the implementation of a review process as part of an assessment policy.

It can be concluded that the majority of respondents evaluate their assessment policy and address challenges encountered during the implementation process according to the outcomes of a review process. However, incidences were recorded of respondents that do not review their assessment policies, which can be a consequence of school management teams who do not have or follow a management plan for the implementation of an assessment policy. The involvement of the school management team in reviewing the school's assessment policy is an important management task through which the school management team is able to identify weaknesses and needs in order to implement proper intervention strategies. Without a review process to determine what is working and how well is working, the quality of the teaching, learning and assessment processes are in question.

The above-outlined analysis and interpretation of the supplementary qualitative responses from the integrated open-ended questions as part of the structured questionnaire proved that it meet the rationale for the inclusion of the qualitative section. The reason for the inclusion of the qualitative section was to elucidate more comprehensive responses, the gathering of additional information and the clarification of underlying logic and to explain practices, circumstances and opinions (cf. par. 4.5). The demands and complexity of the nature of the research necessitated space to respond in a qualitative manner for the sake of unique self-expression and the provision of specific exemplars.

4.14 SUMMARY

The chapter started with a description of a research design that aims to provide a systematic outline of the research process and methodology to investigate the stated research problem (cf. par. 5.2). A specific research design of a survey and related methodologies were selected and applied to yield optimum reliable and valid results for analysis and interpretation. Careful attention was paid to detail for increasing the expectancy for a high return rate of questionnaires. This aspect was further strengthened by the personal delivery and collection of questionnaires by the researcher (return rate 93.8%). The design and implementation of all research actions were planned and executed to account for essential ethical matters to achieve trustworthy results. The research design and related methodologies was developed with the aim to obtain reliable and valid data to formulate innovative management guidelines for educational leaders to manage assessment effectively in primary schools in the Jouberton education district of the North West Province.

The responses from the structured quantitative section of the questionnaire revealed that the respondents were experienced, professionally qualified members of their schools' management teams. Noteworthy was that the majority of members of the school management teams that participate in the research were female managers (56.16%). The responses indicated that most of the respondents' conceptualise assessment not as something to be implemented in isolation, but is viewed as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Incidences were recorded of respondents who were uncertain about their knowledge and competency to implement assessment effectively in the schools. This particular aspect is indicative of a development area to be addressed by the education authorities. The majority of respondents were also of the opinion that assessment is a functional procedure to measure learners' achievement in the school and contributes to life long learning. The responses further points to a degree of satisfaction that the schools' assessment policies have clear stated goals and objectives. Some responses were however recorded where respondents expressed a need for the description of specific roles and functions of

members of school management teams concerning the implementation of an assessment policy in the school.

The results from the quantitative responses indicated that the schools' management plan for assessment was communicated to relevant role players in the school. The responses with reference to support and guidance received from the department of education in relation to assessment were divided where 54.67% respondents rated this aspect as negative, while 45.34% responded positively to this question item. According to the data it could be summarised that the department of education needs to improve their support and guidance programmes for assessment in the schools. The respondents were of the opinion that their schools' management plans for assessment were flexible enough to provide room for the creativity of educators to implement assessment in an idiosyncratic manner. A response for concern was that the respondents viewed the emphasis of assessment on quality of work rather than on the quality of learning by the learners. The individuality and diversity of learners may not be recognised in a focus that is narrowly fixed on quality of work alone. The availability and allocation of resources to effectively implement an assessment policy was also pointed out as an obstacle that needs to be addressed.

The respondents qualitatively recorded a variety of formal as well as informal initiatives to empower educators to implement assessment effectively in school. Examples provided were phase meetings and discussions, peer assessment, mentoring, workshops, in-service training and the utilisation of a subject specialist. Specific needs of learners were also identified to accommodate in an assessment policy like among other: writing skills, language proficiency, intellectual abilities, resources, time application, social background, physical growth and learning barriers. These specific needs are important exemplars from practice that can be of value for consideration during the development or review of an assessment policy. Valuable responses were recorded with regard to the description of the various roles and functions of the school principal, deputy principal and heads of department with regard to assessment in a school (cf. par. 4.13.3). It was also reported that the members of school management teams were involved in the professional development and managing of educators to implement an

assessment policy in the school. A review process of the assessment process was conducted in the long-term or short-term to identify strengths and weaknesses for future alignment of assessment practices and approaches.

The responses from both the quantitative and qualitative sections are considered supplementary to the theoretical framework for the management of assessment in schools as described in par. 3.13. The responses provided additional information about the various sections of the theoretical framework, namely that of policy directives, the role and function of the school management team, assessment policy development, a management plan and a review process.

The findings and recommendations for this research are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief summary according to the various chapters of the research about the role of the school management team in implementing an assessment policy in the primary schools of the Jouberton education district in the North West Province. The summary is followed by a description of the findings of the research in accordance with the stated research aims. This chapter is concluded with the formulation of recommendations as guidelines for the school management team to implement assessment in the primary schools of the Jouberton education district in the North West Province.

5.2 RESEARCH SUMMARY

Chapter 1 provides background information and orientation to the research theme that started with a description of a shift of the teaching and learning emphasis away from mere rote learning to the realisation of achievable educational outcomes. This particular shift manifested in the implementation of the outcomes-based approach in education with major implications for the curriculum component of assessment. The National Assessment Policy (Department of Education, 1998b:8) requires from members of the school management team to manage the implementation of an assessment policy to ensure that assessment is fair, reliable and valid. However, a lack of specific guidelines for the members of the school management team to effectively manage assessment in schools was identified. This situation of need for guidelines for the school management team served as a rationale and motivation for this research and led to the formulation of a problem statement that focuses on the role of the school management team in implementing an assessment policy in primary schools of a particular education district.

The problem statement was divided into research questions to establish definite parameters and a specific focus for the research process. The problem statement together with the research questions made the formulation of precise research aims possible to guide the research process. An applicable research design and methodology was accordingly selected and described as an explanation of how the research process was intended to be carried out, which included amongst other data collection and analysis techniques.

In chapter 2 the research theme revolved around the assessment requirements applicable to teaching and learning in the school. A key aspect that was dealt with in chapter 2 was the matter of an Outcomes-based approach (OBE) as adopted in the South African education system. The essence and link of OBE with the implementation of assessment in schools was investigated and described in this chapter. Sub-themes related to OBE and assessment were incorporated in the investigation to arrive at an understanding of the specific assessment requirements for schools. The sub-themes were among other different approaches to OBE and assessment, concept clarification, relevant principles, purposes, types of assessment, methods of assessment and the recording and reporting of assessment. It was concluded in this chapter that the success of the implementation of Outcomes-based education and assessment in schools depends largely on the role that is fulfilled by the school management team. It was determined in this chapter that it is the responsibility of the school management team to ensure that an assessment policy is properly developed and implemented in accordance with the National Assessment Policy.

The roles of different role players were described to highlight the importance of all stakeholders in the implementation process of assessment that is fair and transparent for all (cf. par. 2.8 - 2.8.3). The requirement of recording and reporting of learners' achievement by utilising available resources was described to inform learners and parents about progress and achievements. Reporting was further explored between the school and community that encompass feedback of the results from assessment in the school to encourage parents' involvement and participation in the school programme (cf. par. 2.10).

Chapter 3 focused on the composition of the school management team and the description of the responsibilities of different members of the school management team in implementing an assessment policy (cf. par. 3.2, 3.4). This chapter also dealt with the role of the school management team in relation to teaching and learning activities (cf. par. 3.3). The core duties and management role of the various members of the school management team concerning the implementation of an assessment policy was determined and outlined (cf. par. 3.4). The unfolding of the research and frequent references necessitated a brief explanation of the concepts of management and leadership. It was determined that leadership could not be separate from management, because management is a process whereby leadership is an integral part in leading people to fulfil set objectives (cf. par. 3.5). By managing and leading, the school management team needs to be creative in motivating and inspiring staff members by using their leadership influence and managerial authority.

A key aspect of the research was to get clarity on the issue of an assessment policy as an indication of what is intended, how to achieve the objectives, who is responsible and when to take appropriate action (cf. par. 3.6). For this reason guidelines were formulated for policy development and specific aspects were identified for inclusion in a policy document for assessment in the schools. Credibility of assessment is assured if procedures and practices are being governed by certain principles. For this reason, principles of assessment were identified and described, namely: reliability, validity, fairness, transparency and flexibility (cf. par. 3.7). In relation to the implementation of an assessment policy, characteristics that are associated with the successful implementation of an assessment policy as well as related barriers were identified and described (cf. par. 3.8 & 3.9). The accumulated information thus far was sufficient to develop and described a proposed management plan to implement an assessment policy in schools (cf. par. 3.10). The proposed management plan was followed by an investigation about the implication of guidance required from members of the school management team to ensure effective assessment practices in the school (cf. par. 3.11). The preceding information of this chapter formed a coherent basis for the development of a theoretical framework for school management teams to manage assessment in schools. The compiled framework can be interpreted as a

synthesis of the preceding descriptions related to research theme of assessment (cf. par. 3.13). The framework consists of different sections i.e. policy and curriculum directives, the school management structure, policy development, a management plan for implementation and a review process.

Chapter 4 reported the empirical research with the aim to describe an applicable research design and methodology as a scientific process to gather reliable and valid information for the purpose of analysis and interpretation to meet the requirements of the research problem as stated in chapter 1. The research design of this investigation was based on a quantitative, cross-sectional, empirical survey with the aim to provide descriptive findings from the respondents as members of school management teams (cf. par. 4.3). In order to conduct the survey, a structured questionnaire was developed as a measurement instrument to capture the required data from the study population (cf. par. 4.4). Descriptive statistical techniques were applied to organise, summarise and interpret the quantitative data. In addition to the quantitative nature of the empirical research, a qualitative measurement was also utilised to provide supplementary information and to explain distinctive circumstances, approaches, opinions and practices. The qualitative method involved the inclusion of supplementary open-ended questions to the structured scale questions of the questionnaire (cf. par. 4.5). The population of this research was identified as members of the school management teams of the primary schools of the Jouberton education district of the North West Province. Caution was taken by the researcher during the development and conduct of the empirical research to adhere to the ethical aspects of research, which are embodied in individual and professional codes of conduct (cf. par. 4.7). A high return rate of the questionnaires (93.8%) was achieved that can be attributed to the personal involvement by the researcher for the distribution and collection of the questionnaires.

The presentation, analyses and interpretation of the quantitative data were reported according to the four sections of the questionnaires, namely: general and biographical information (Section A), conceptualisation (Section B), assessment policy (Section C) and a management plan (Section D). The qualitative data were reported according a methodological procedure that entailed the transcribing and

organising of responses to the open-ended questions, evaluation of responses, identification of patterns and categories, searching for alternatives and eventually the writing of the report.

The results from the quantitative and qualitative parts of the research proved to be complementary to the theoretical framework for the management of assessment in schools as developed by the researcher in par. 3.13. The results provided complementary information about the different sections of the theoretical framework, namely that of policy directives, the role and function of the school management team, assessment policy development, a management plan and a review process. The support of the results provided substantiation for the theoretical framework for the management of assessment in the schools.

The following section describes the findings of the research in accordance to the research aims.

5.3 FINDINGS

The findings of the research are stated in relation to the research aims as stated in chapter 1, par. 1.3.

5.3.1 FINDINGS IN RELATION TO RESEARCH AIM 1

The first research aim according to par. 1.3 was to determine the prerequisites of an assessment policy for implementation in schools. The findings in relation to the first research aim are:

- Assessment is an essential component of Outcomes-based Education that encompasses the measurement of the attainment of set outcomes. Assessment accordingly determines the level of achievement that serves as basis for the future alignment of the teaching and learning process (cf. par. 2.2.1).
- Assessment is an integral part of the learning and teaching process. The planning of assessment strategies happens simultaneously with the planning of teaching and learning strategies. Assessment is not

to be isolated as an end result of a schooling process or term, but is in a coherent manner an integral part of the teaching and learning action (cf. par. 2.3.1).

- A definitional description of assessment is determined as: Assessment as an integral part of the education process is instrumental to personal development and life long learning. Assessment involves a systematic and planned process of collecting, recording and communication of measurable information on achievement about knowledge, skills and attitudes according to nationally agreed standards to ensure successful teaching and learning (cf. par. 2.3.2).
- There are specific principles and purposes that serve as a fundamental framework and guidelines to provide a degree of uniform interpretation and implementation of assessment in the practice of the South African education system (cf. par. 2.4 & 2.5).
- Assessment implies a typology of assessment practices to meet specific circumstances and requirements. The main types of assessment were identified as diagnostic, formative, summative and continuous assessment (cf. par. 2.6).
- Methods of assessment vary in context and educators should choose appropriate methods in accordance to the assessment standards. The selected method should provide a range of opportunities for learners to demonstrate their skills, values and attitudes (cf. par. 2.9).
- The recording and reporting of assessment information is a core part of the assessment process and should be used to give feedback to learners, educators, school management teams, departmental officials and parents (cf. par. 2.10).

This concluded the findings with regard to research aim 1.

5.3.2 FINDINGS IN RELATION TO RESEARCH 2

The second research aim according to par. 1.3 was to determine the role of the school management team to implement an assessment policy in the primary

schools of the Jouberton education district. This particular research aim was further refined and expanded in chapter 4 (Empirical Research), par. 4.2. The findings in relation to the second research aim are:

- A definitional description is: A school management team is a group of education specialists with managerial authority who work formally as a team under the guidance of a senior member of the team, generally accepted as the principal. A school management team is generally composed of the principal, deputy principal and heads of department for the foundation, intermediate and senior phases in primary schools that comprise these posts (cf. par. 3.2).
- The role of the school management team is to provide managerial leadership for whole school development according to specific needs to develop a culture of cooperation, accountability and commitment with a focus on learner achievement (cf. par. 3.3). The school management team needs to motivate and inspire educators by using their leadership influence and managerial authority to enable educators to work in a conducive environment for effective teaching and learning (cf. par. 3.5).
- Although the role of the school management team can be interpreted in a broad manner, there are specific national core duties for every member of the school management team (cf. par. 3.4).
- The school management team is compelled to initiate and facilitate a development process to compile an assessment policy for adoption by the school assessment team. There are general guidelines for the development of an assessment policy (cf. par. 3.6).
- The implementation of an assessment policy by the school management team takes place according to certain principles applicable for effective assessment, i.e. reliability, validity, fairness, transparency and flexibility (cf. par. 3.7).
- Characteristics associated with the successful implementation of an assessment policy in schools were determined (cf. par. 3.8).

- Barriers that may be an obstacle to the successful implementation of an assessment policy in schools were determined (cf. par. 3.9).
- The school management team must have a management plan for the implementation of assessment in school according to determined goals and objectives to deal effectively with all assessment requirements in the school (cf. par. 3.10).
- Assessment guidance is part of the professional managerial actions and quality assurance programme of the school management team to ensure a standard of assessment as part of an overall purpose statement of the school (cf. par. 3.11).

Research aim 2 (par. 1.3) was supplemented by the secondary aims of the empirical section of the research. The findings are described in the following section.

5.3.3 FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE SECONDARY AIMS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

5.3.3.1 Research aim 1: To determine the extent of an understanding of related concepts, policies and curriculum directives

Most respondents conceptualise assessment not as something to be implemented in isolation, but viewed assessment as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Satisfaction of the knowledge and competency levels of the respondents were recorded, but some need exists for training in this regard (cf. par. 4.12.2.1).

5.3.3.2 Research aim 2: To determine the extent of the functioning of prevailing school management structures

Most respondents were of the opinion that the functioning of prevailing school management structures was sufficient to support the effective implementation of assessment in the schools. However, some negative responses did occur which are indicative of a possible review concerning the functioning of structures. The majority of respondents were of the opinion that assessment is a functional

procedure within their school management structures to measure learner achievement effectively (cf. par. 4.12.2.2).

5.3.3.3 Research aim 3: To determine the extent of the involvement of school management members concerning assessment policy development

The data from the empirical section indicates that the respondents held the view that their respective schools' assessment policies describe what it intends to achieve by means of clear formulated goals and objectives. Clarity is however needed to some extent with regard to the link between the purpose of assessment and the school's mission statement (cf. par. 4.12.3.1).

5.3.3.4 Research aim 4: To determine the extent of the implementation of a management plan to ensure effective assessment in schools

The respondents recorded that a management plan for assessment was implemented in their schools and was communicated to educators. The management plan was also regarded as part of the school's development plan and not something different (cf. par. 4.12.4).

5.3.3.5 Research aim 5: To determine the extent of an evaluation of the management strategy for assessment in schools

Most respondents responded positive by indicating that the school management team in their schools did conduct a review process of the management strategy for the implementation of assessment in their schools. They reported that an evaluation process is necessary for future alignment (cf. par. 4.12.4.5).

This concluded the findings related to research aim 2.

5.3.4 FINDINGS IN RELATION TO RESEARCH AIM 3

The third research aim according to par. 1.3 was to develop management guidelines for school management teams to ensure effective assessment practices in primary schools in the Jouberton education district. The findings in relation to the third research aim are accordingly formulated as guidelines for the school

management teams of the primary schools in the Jouberton education district to ensure the effective implementation of an assessment policy.

The following assessment guidelines are formulated and based on the literature overview and results from the empirical research.

- **Guideline 1**

Guidance for the purpose of effective assessment must be based on shared leadership and an inclusive approach between members of the school management team, educators and learners.

Motivation: The leadership role of the school management team is to lead and to manage the school effectively and in totality according to the vision, objectives and needs by involving staff members in a participative manner. (cf. par. 3.3 & 3.5.2).

- **Guideline 2**

Assessment practices are essential to be viewed as an integral part of the teaching and learning process within the school.

Motivation: Assessment is not an end result of schooling as in the traditional practices of the past, but is an integral part of the Outcomes-based Education approach in the South African education system (cf. par. 2.3).

- **Guideline 3**

The school management team in cooperation with the school assessment team must develop a context-specific assessment policy as an integral part of the school's management and policy structure. The school's assessment policy must be in accordance with national and provincial policy directives.

Motivation: Each school is viewed as a self-reliant learning organisation that has to take the responsibility for developing its own school related policies (cf. par. 3.6)

- **Guideline 4**

A management plan as an accepted and agreed-upon strategy with assessment-specific goals and objectives is a prerequisite for the successful implement of assessment in the school context.

Motivation: A management plan is required as part of the Whole School Development programme to direct actions and to provide clarity of focus on matters of assessment. A management plan further indicates role, functions and responsibilities with designated accountability to the various role players (cf. par. 3.10).

- **Guideline 5**

The school management team should provide continuous guidance and support and avail optimum resources according to the need of educators and learners.

Motivation: The work of educators and learners happen within a specific context of a particular school, which is influenced by the school management structures and actions. In this sense the school management team has an important role to fulfil concerning guidance with regard to the implementation of an assessment policy in the school (cf. par. 3.11.2).

- **Guideline 6**

Regular and systematic supervising and evaluation of assessment practices of educators and achievement levels of learners must form part of the implementation of an assessment policy.

Motivation: Educators have to provide evidence of assessment planning and recording according to an assessment policy adopted by school management team and the school governing body (cf. par. 3.11.3).

- **Guideline 7**

Members of the school management team should demonstrate a high level of professional and conflict resolution skills during the implementation of an assessment policy.

Motivation: Educators must be involved in the decision-making and implementation processes with relation to assessment in each learning area, phase or subject (cf. par. 3.11.3).

- **Guideline 8**

The school management team should initiate in-service empowerment initiatives to improve the assessment competency of educators.

Motivation: In-service training opportunities must be created to enhance the knowledge and skills levels of educators to ensure the most effective assessment practices (cf. par. 3.13.4).

- **Guideline 9**

The school management team must continuously improve their own competency with regard to assessment to stay ahead of new developments and trends.

Motivation: Effective leadership and management are expected from all members of the school management team to provide professional and competent guidance, assistance and support at all times in the school (cf. par. 3.3).

- **Guideline 10**

The school management team must ensure a review process for assessment in the school to evaluate what was being done to identify the primary problems and challenges for future alignment.

Motivation: Reliable evaluation data provides concrete evidence of implementation and impact that again generates and builds support (cf. par. 3.12).

5.4 POSSIBLE THEMES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The research about this particular topic of the role of the school management team in relation to assessment in schools identified a number of possible themes for further research. These themes for possible further research are:

- An investigation to the specific role of the school principal in implementing an assessment policy in schools.
- An investigation about the role of the department of education in implementing an assessment policy in schools.
- A comparison of assessment standards in schools, both locally and internationally.
- What assessment methods, techniques and instruments are most effective in specific contexts?
- What barriers are obstacles to the effective implementation of an assessment policy in schools?
- What are the competency and satisfaction levels of educators with regard to the implementation of an assessment policy in schools?

5.5 CONCLUSION

In this research it was found that assessment is an essential component of the Outcomes-based Education approach as it is practiced in the South African education system. The implementation of assessment is guided by principles and purposes which serve as parameters for the implementation of an assessment policy in schools. Assessment is not a rigid process that is context-blind, but allow for flexibility to accommodate creativity and context-specific circumstances. The role of the school management team was determined to provide inspirational leadership and managerial authority to enable educators to work in a school

environment conducive to effective teaching and learning. The school management team has to develop an assessment policy and an accompanying management plan for implementation according to agree-upon goals and objectives.

A theoretical framework was developed which serves as a broad indication or "route map" for the implementation of an assessment policy in schools. The research was concluded with the formulation of specific guidelines (according to research aim 3) for the school management teams of the primary schools in the Jouberton education district to implement an assessment policy.

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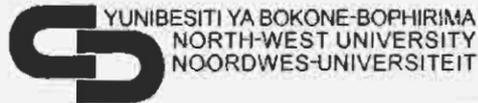
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APPENDIX 1

Faculty of Education Sciences
 Graduate School of Education
 Private Bag X6001
 POTCHEFSTROOM
 2520

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www.puk.ac.za / e-mail: nsohjvv@puk.ac.za

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 Nagraadse Skool vir Opvoedkunde
 Privaatsak X6001
 POTCHEFSTROOM
 2520

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For attention: **The School Principal**
 The Deputy School Principal
 The Head of Department

15 August 2006

Dear Sir / Madam

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY

Fully aware of and with respect to your tight working schedule, I confidently request your participation in a research study.

The research deals with the role of the management team in the implementing of an assessment policy in the primary schools of the Jouberton education district. The purpose of the research is accordingly to determine the extent of the role of school management teams in the primary schools of the Jouberton education district. The outcome of the research has in its sight the formulation of innovative guidelines for members of school management teams to provide effective leadership and guidance with regard to the implementation of assessment in primary schools. Informed consent was obtained from **mr. H.M. Mveli**, (Superintendent General of Education in the North West Province) and **dr. S. H. Mvula** (Acting Regional Executive Manager).

It will take at most 20 minutes of your precious time to complete the questionnaire. . Your unanimous responses will be held in strictest confidence. Your cooperation is highly appreciated and is regarded as a valuable contribution for generating new knowledge in relation to the management of assessment in schools.

Sincerely yours,

.....
Me Mavis S. Kgadima

M.Ed. Student: North-West University: Potchefstroom Campus

APPENDIX II

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ASSESSMENT POLICY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF THE JOUBERTON EDUCATION DISTRICT: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: NORTH WEST PROVINCE

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1 Gender?

Male	1
Female	2

2 Age group in years?

20 - 29	1
30 - 39	2
40 - 49	3
50 - 59	4
60 +	5

3 Highest academic qualification?

Std 10	1
B.A. Degree	2
B.Ed.Hons. Degree	3
Master's Degree	4
Doctor's Degree	5

4 Professional qualification?

PTC	1
JPTD	2
SPTD	3
STD	4
NPDE	5
HED /PGCE	6
FDE	7
ACE	8
Other:	9

5 Position in school?

Head of Department	1
Deputy-Principal	2
Principal	3

6 Experience in position as indicated in 5?

0 - 5 years	1
6 - 10 years	2
11 - 15 years	3
16 - 19 years	4
20 + years	5

7 Learner enrolment in your school?

100 - 399	1
400 - 799	2
800 - 999	3
1000 +	4

8 Number of members of School Management Team?

- 3	1
4	2
5	3
6 +	4

9 Number of educators in your school?

- 9	1
10 - 19	2
20 - 29	3
30 +	4

SECTION B: CONCEPTUALISATION

10 To what extent does the School Management Team ...

No Extent	Little extent	Some extent	Great extent
-----------	---------------	-------------	--------------

- 10.1 regards assessment as part of Outcomes-based Education? 1 2 3 4
- 10.2 regards assessment as part of the learning process? 1 2 3 4
- 10.3 support various methods of assessment? 1 2 3 4
- 10.4 demonstrate competence about Outcomes-based Education? 1 2 3 4
- 10.5 has knowledge about Outcomes-based Education assessment? 1 2 3 4
- 10.6 empower educators to understand assessment? 1 2 3 4
- 10.7 *If applicable*: Name at least **two** of the initiatives from 10.4 to empower educators:

11 To what extent does assessment in your school ...

- 11.1 contribute to lifelong learning? 1 2 3 4
- 11.2 enable the School Management Team to monitor teaching process? 1 2 3 4
- 11.3 measure learner achievement? 1 2 3 4

SECTION C: ASSESSMENT POLICY

12 To what extent does the school assessment policy ...

- 12.1 account for the specific needs of learners? 1 2 3 4
- 12.2 What do you regard as the specific needs of learners with regard to assessment in your school?

- 12.3 reflect national and provincial directives? 1 2 3 4
- 12.4 link to the strategic mission statement of the school? 1 2 3 4
- 12.5 provide guidelines for the achievement of outcomes? 1 2 3 4
- 12.6 define the functions of the school assessment team? 1 2 3 4
- 12.7 describe what it intends to achieve? 1 2 3 4

13 To what extent does the school management team ..

- 13.1 facilitate a policy development process for assessment? 1 2 3 4
- 13.2 consult the educators for the development of an assessment policy? 1 2 3 4

SECTION D: A MANAGEMENT PLAN

14 To what extent is a management plan for assessment ...

No Extent	Little extent	Some extent	Great extent
-----------	---------------	-------------	--------------

- 14.1 developed in your school? 1 2 3 4
- 14.2 part of the school's development plan? 1 2 3 4
- 14.3 implemented in your school? 1 2 3 4
- 14.4 communicated to all educators in the school? 1 2 3 4

15 To what extent does the school management plan for assessment...

- 15.1 indicate the assessment *functions* of all role players? 1 2 3 4

15.2 Briefly summarise, according to your understanding, the *functions* of the following role players in relation to the management of assessment:

PRINCIPAL:

.....

DEPUTY-PRINCIPAL:

.....

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT:

.....

16 To what extent does the school management team...

- 16.1 receive guidance from the education department to manage assessment? 1 2 3 4
- 16.2 receive support from the education department to manage assessment? 1 2 3 4
- 16.3 has knowledge about their leadership role to manage assessment in the school? 1 2 3 4
- 16.4 take the lead in the implementation of an assessment policy? 1 2 3 4

16.5 *If applicable:* Explain briefly the involvement of the school management team in the implementation of an assessment policy:

.....

.....

- 16.6 guide educators in the selection of assessment standards? 1 2 3 4
- 16.7 check learners' portfolios? 1 2 3 4
- 16.8 guide assessment activities to improve the learning process? 1 2 3 4

16.9	train staff members in areas of assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
16.10	report learner's achievement to parents?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
		No Extent	Little extent	Some extent	Great extent
16.11	assist in the recording of learners' achievement?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
16.12	ensure that the management plan for assessment is known to educators?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
16.13	make resources available to ensure the effective implementation of a management plan for assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
16.14	ensure supervision of assessment practices?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
16.15	evaluate existing assessment practices?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
16.16	conduct a review process for the future alignment of the management plan for assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
16.17	Explain how often is a review process for assessment conducted in your school?				
17	To what extent are the following assessment aspects applicable in your school situation?				
17.1	The emphasis of assessment is on quality of work, rather than quality of learning.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
17.2	The implementation of assessment differs between learning areas.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
17.3	Coordination of assessment within a particular learning area is a problem.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
17.4	Coordination of assessment between different learning areas is a problem.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
17.5	The management plan for assessment is flexible to provide room for educators' creativity.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
17.6	The lack of resources for effective assessment is a problem.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
17.7	Resource allocation between educators is a problem to implement assessment.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
18	To what extent do you experience ...				
18.1	confidence to manage assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
18.2	a need for the School Management Team to improve their competency to manage assessment?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
18.3	difficulty to translate the requirements from assessment theory into the practice of school life?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

19 To what extent did you receive ...

19.1 in-service training to manage assessment?

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

19.2 assessment training with continuous support?

1	2	3	4
---	---	---	---

This is the end of the questionnaire.**Thank you very much for your time and cooperation to complete this questionnaire.****DIVISION AND NUMBER OF QUESTION ITEMS**

<i>Section A:</i>	General Information	1 – 9	General information	(7)
<i>Section B:</i>	Conceptualisation	10.1 – 10.5	Concept understanding	(5)
		10.6 – 10.7	Empowerment initiatives	(2)
		11.1 – 11.3	Aspects of OBE	(3)
<i>Section C:</i>	Assessment policy	12.1 – 12.7	Policy aspects	(7)
		13.1 – 13.2	Consultation	(2)
<i>Section D:</i>	A management plan	14.1 – 14.4	Status of management plan	(4)
		15.1 – 15.2	Functions of role players	(2)
		16.1 – 16.2	Support from Department of Ed.	(2)
		16.3 – 16.14	SMT role	(12)
		16.15 – 16.17	Evaluation & review	(3)
		17.1 – 17.5	Assessment implementation	(5)
		17.6 – 17.7	Resources	(2)
		18.1 – 18.3	Personal experiences	(3)
		19.1 – 19.2	Assessment training	(2)
				[61]

The researcher: **M.S. KGADIMA**
 1 Couzyn Street
 Elandia
 KLERKSDORP
 2571

Cell: 0833003515

.....

.....

Date

APPENDIX III**LIST OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS: JOUBERTON EDUCATION DISTRICT**

1. Akofang
2. Are-itshokeng
3. Boitumelo
4. Dephetogo
5. Edisang
6. Ithuseng
7. Itirele
8. Kakatlela
9. Khayaletu
10. Masedi
11. Mokolokotoane
12. Sediko
13. Thea-merafe
14. Tiang
15. Zamukulunga
16. Zimele-geqe

APPENDIX IV

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH



Lefapha la Thuto la Bokone Bophirima Onderwys Departement van Noord-Wes Department of Education

Garona Building, First Floor, Mmabatho • Private Bag X2044 • Mmabatho 2736 • Tel.: (018) 387-3429 • Fax: (018) 387-3430
e-mail: pjansen@nwpg.gov.za / agadu@nwpg.gov.za

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL

Enquiry: Mphiliso Tyatya
Tel: 018 387 3429
Fax: 018 387 3430

06 July 2006

**To: Ms. M.S. Kgagadima
Klerksdorp**

**From: Mr. H.M. Mveli
Acting Superintendent-General**

Subject: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH SURVEY

Receipt of your correspondence regarding the afore-going matter is hereby acknowledged. The content is noted and accordingly, approval granted for you to conduct the research as requested.

Please take note that such permission is granted subject to the following provisions: -

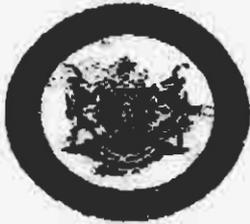
- That you notify the Regional Office concerned of your intended visit to identified schools
- That you notify the Principals of the identified schools in advance to arrange logistics for your envisaged visits.
- That in the course of carrying out your research, such should not tamper with the normal processes of learning and teaching
- That you will make your research product available to the NW Department of Education should you be requested to do so.

With my best wishes.

Yours sincerely

**Mr. H.M. MWELI
ACTING SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL**

Cc: Southern Regional Executive Manager: Dr. S.H. Mvula



**Department of Education
Lefapha la Thuto la Bokone Bophirima
Onderwys Departement van Noord-Wes**

Teemane Building
8 Greyling Street
Private Bag X1256
POTCHEFSTROOM 2520
TEL: 016 - 299 8216
FAX: 016 - 294 8234
Enquiries: MR H MOTARA
e-mail: hmotara@nwodg.gov.za

CES: PROFESSIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE - OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
SOUTHERN REGION

31 July 2006

Mrs M S Kgadima
1 Couzyn Street
ELANDIA
KLERKSDORP 2571

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH SURVEY:
TOPIC: THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS IN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ASSESSMENT POLICY IN THE
JOUBERTON PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

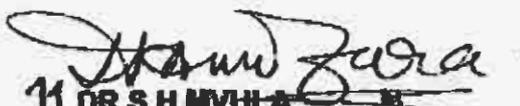
The above matter refers.

Permission is herewith granted for you to conduct a research survey at the primary schools in Jouberton, Matlosana APO under the following provisions.

- the activities you undertake at school should not tamper with the normal process of learning and teaching.
- you inform the principals of your identified schools of your impending visit and activity.
- you provide my office with a report in respect of your findings from the research.
- you obtain prior permission from this office before availing your findings for public or media consumption.

Wishing you well in your endeavour.

Thanking you


DR S H MVULA
ACTING REGIONAL EXECUTIVE MANAGER
SOUTHERN REGION

cc Mrs M A Motang - APO Manager: Matlosana



Re a diru mo dikolong Ons werk in ons skole We are working in our schools Re a sebetsa dikolong
Siyasebenz' ezikoleni Ho tirha eswikolweni Re a shuma zwikoloni Siya sebenta etikoleni
 Siyasebenz' ezikoleni Siya beetsaga ezikoleni/Conditional

