

CHAPTER TWO

THE FUNDAMENTAL NATURE AND MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY FOUNDATIONAL EDUCATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The importance of the early years to children's lives is now beyond question. A good beginning to life is well recognised as the foundation for future development, health and wellbeing, not only in the early years, but also throughout life. Children of any nation are its future. A country, a movement, a people that does not value its youth and children, does not deserve its future (Tambo cited by Palmi, 2007:1). Quality foundational education is imperative in preparing young children to succeed in schools and become better citizens. This is as important in South Africa as in any country in the world where the failure rate in Grade 12 is high. To curb this high failure rate in upper classes, managers of ECD sites should regard management of quality as of essence.

In this chapter the overview of early childhood education, international and national trends in ECD, early childhood development, and quality in foundational education, models of quality education, quality assurance and management in ECD will be discussed.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Early Childhood Education (ECE) requires an understanding of the international and national trends. ECE is seen in the perspective of how children develop. These aspects will be discussed in this section.

2.2.1 International trends in ECD

By the early 1900s, ECD was a part of American life but, although the field was established, there was no uniform approach or programme for the care and education of the young (Seefeldt & Barbour, 1994:7). There was no concept of early childhood as a professional field, serving children from birth up to eight years of age, and there were

divisions among those who worked in kinder-gardens, nursery schools and child-care centers (Seefeldt & Barbour, 1994:7) and years of growth lay ahead before the field would have its own identity.

According to Deepa (2003:4), ECE in India is a significant input to compensate for early environmental deprivations at home as it provides a stimulating environment to children. While it is expected to provide the necessary maturational and experiential readiness to the child to meet the demands of the primary curriculum, it also impacts on the enrolment and retention of girls in primary schools by providing substitute care facility for younger siblings. The well being of children has been a concern and has been an integral part of the country's developmental planning. At independence, pre-school education was primarily in the hands of a few voluntary organizations. The Indian government does not have any body to describe standards and or persons running the centres, to submit documents that they meet the standards and then register the centre (Neugebauer, 2007:62).

In New Zealand, the government has made provision for free ECE for up to 20 hours a week for three to four year olds. Funding for the centres is based on the qualified (degree trained) educators as well as the number of children attending the service. At least all educators will be required to be qualified and registered by 2012 (Neugebauer, 2007:62).

In the Sub-Saharan region, challenges to successful implementation of quality ECD are diseases, severe malnutrition and developmental delays. Neugebauer (2007:66) indicates that wars, famine, migration, domestic violence and a lack of basic social services have all taken their toll on vulnerable children. These problems could affect the quality of ECD provision.

2.2.2 National trends in ECD

Approximately 40% of young children in South Africa, before the change from apartheid to democracy, had been growing up in families of abject poverty and neglect. Children raised in such poor conditions are most at risk of infant death, low birth-weight, stunted growth and poor adjustment to school, increased repetition and dropping out of school

(Gauteng Department of Education, 2001:3). These factors made it even more imperative for the Department of Education to put in place an action plan to address the early learning opportunities of all learners, especially those living in poverty.

During the apartheid era (prior 1994), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) played a prominent role in the provision of ECD service to black children, who were largely neglected by the apartheid government (Rule, 2005:121). Timely and appropriate interventions were regarded as important for the reversal of the effects of early deprivation and maximization of the development of these children's potential. The role of ECD NGOs in the post-apartheid era has shifted to one of uneasy partnership as a new ECD dispensation has unfolded over the last decade with an increasing formalisation, regulation and institutionalisation of the field (Rule, 2005:121).

Most transformation has occurred in the area of policy development. There has been considerable transformation over the past years in the field of ECD in South Africa. The ECD policy White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Development and the Constitution facilitated the change in the provision of ECD. The purpose of the White Paper 5 (SA, 2001b:5) was to protect the child's rights so as to develop his or her full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential. Its formulation was also based on the need to redress the apartheid government ECD status which had few policies and regulations for children (Neugebauer, 2007:66). By implementing this policy, the Department of Education aims at creating opportunities for processes by which children from birth to at least nine years grow and thrive, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally and socially (Gauteng Department of Education, 2001:3). The emphasis on ECD is based on the terms of Section 29 of the Constitution which indicates that every child has the right to basic education. The rights of children stated in Section 28, are specifically non-negotiable rights. The principles that guide ECD intervention are given on the basis of the Constitution (SA, 1996).

Several provincial departments and local government departments support ECD in an uncoordinated way, which has resulted in gaps and an overlapping of functions particularly in the areas of funding and resourcing (Gauteng Department of Education, 2001:4). All departments have an important role to play in developing efficient support

systems and delivering cost-effective ways of working together in order to achieve the greatest output with extremely limited resources (Gauteng Department of Education, 2001:4).

The main challenge for the South African government is to help break the cycle of poverty by increasing access to ECD programmes, particularly for poor children, and to improve the quality of these programmes (Meier & Marais, 2007:29; Gauteng Department of Education, 2001:5).

2.3 EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)

The definition of ECD, as it is currently used internationally, can be divided into two parts namely, early childhood and child development (De Witt, 2009:4). The early childhood and child development will be discussed in this section.

2.3.1 Early childhood

ECD refers to a process by which children from birth to about nine years, grow and thrive physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally and socially (Birken, 2004:5; SA, 1996:3; Gauteng Department of Education, 2001:14; SA, 2001a:8; UNESCO, 2004:82; UNICEF, 2004:14). The term ECD was originally selected because it conveys the importance of a holistic approach to child development and signifies an appreciation of the importance of considering a child's health, nutrition, education, psycho-social, physical and additional environmental factors within the context of the family and the community (SA, 1996:3; Gauteng Department of Education 2001:14; SA, 2001a:12; UNESCO, 2004:82).

Seifman and Surrency (2004:16) affirm that ECD is a combination of education, health and skills development, and involves laying a sound foundation from which a child can grow to become a functional human being. Seifman and Surrency (2004:16) further assert that ECD includes all interventions directed at children or their caregivers, preferably integrated as a package of services that support the holistic development of the child.

The above definition implies that a child should be developed from birth up until she/he reaches the independent stage which involves all stakeholders, being responsible for her/his growth. Erasmus (2006:75) argues that the reception year which is referred to as 'Grade R', is part of the Foundation Phase (Grade R to 3) in the General Education and Training Band on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Grade R focuses on learners in the ages between five and six years. Piaget refers to this age-group (2-7) as the pre-operational stage. It is called pre-operational stage because operational thinking is absent (De Witt, 2009:16). Piaget terms this stage pre-operational because children are not yet able to use their developing mental capabilities systematically and, thus, do not yet understand concrete logic, and cannot mentally manipulate information. They learn to use and to represent objects by images and words (De Witt, 2009:15).

Piaget describes the pre-operational stage as a stage for acquisition of motor skills. During this stage, children's thought processes are developing. The vocabulary of a child is expanded and developed, as the child changes from babyhood, toddler stage into that of 'little people' (Butterworth & Harris, 2002:4; Thomas, 2000:22).

In the pre-operational stage, the child acquires a mastery of a language and becomes able to use words to represent objects and images in a symbolic fashion (Butterworth & Harris, 2002:4; De Witt, 2009:18; Thomas, 2000:22). Thus, language development is one of the hallmarks of this period. During the pre-operational stage, the following aspects become evident, according to De Witt (2009:130):

- Children become increasingly adept at using symbols, as evidenced by the increase in playing and pretending. For example, a child may use an object to represent something else, such as, pretending to be a broom, a horse, or to be driving a brick as if it is a car;
- Role-playing also becomes important at this stage. Children often play roles of "mommy", "daddy", "doctor" and many others;
- Children can classify objects by a single feature: e.g. group together all the red blocks regardless of shapes or all the square blocks regardless of colour;

- Children are egocentric, which means that they tend to interpret the world exclusively their own positions. They do not understand that others see things and objects from a different perspective from their own. For example, a child will beat the chair that hurts him as if it will also feel the pain, like a human being or an animal; and
- During this phase of development, children have no general understanding of categories of thoughts that adults take for granted, for example, ideas such as causality, speed, weight or number.

ECD practitioners have to be aware of these hallmarks so as to be able to develop learners effectively.

Children below the age of nine, learn best when they have objects to manipulate and chances to explore the world around them; when they can experience and learn from trial-and-error within a safe and stimulating environment (De Witt, 2009:5). At about the age of nine, they begin to view the world differently. They can manipulate ideas and learn concepts mentally and are less dependent on objects. Thus, in terms of learning theory, the period from birth through age of nine, presents a developmental continuum (De Witt, 2009:3).

2.3.2 Child development

Britto, Kagan and Brookes-Gunn (2003:6) and De Witt (2009:6) regard child development as the dynamic and continuous process of physical, social, emotional and mental change that occurs in sequence with each change building on the preceding stage. They further emphasize that development occurs as a child is able to handle consistently more complex levels of moving, thinking, speaking, feeling and relating to others.

Myers (2001:4) also defines child development as the process of change in which the child comes to master more and more complex levels of moving, thinking, feeling and

interacting with people and objects in the environment. Development involves both a gradual unfolding of biologically determined characteristics and the learning process. Learning is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, habits and values through experience, experimentation, observation, reflection, study and instruction (De Witt, 2009:4). In line with these definitions, child development has been seen as a process of change in the development of a child.

According to Erasmus (2006:73), development in young children should be holistic, thus, social, emotional, physical and intellectual. He asserts that it is not simple to separate the different areas of development in young children. De Witt (2009:4) emphasizes that development in childhood is connected to future development and never ends as long as people live.

The domains of development of children are discussed below:

2.3.2.1 Social development

Social development refers to the child's concept of self and an ability to understand and anticipate the social behaviour, thoughts and motives of others (De Witt, 2009:34; UNICEF, 2004:34). Scott-Little, Kagan and Frelow (2003:22) assert that social development has to do with sharing and being considerate towards others. This is important because babies and young children are self-centred; they see themselves as the centre of their world (Erasmus, 2006:73; Vasta, Haith & Miller, 1995:33). Socially competent children are able to communicate, understand and identify adult roles and enter cooperative role relationships with educators (Davin & Van Staden, 2005:47).

For the above reasons, to ensure quality foundational education, practitioners and school management teams need to engage in programmes that develop learners' concept of self and abilities to relate to others (UNICEF, 2004:54). The self centred behaviour of younger children has to be weaned off in Grade R by engaging the

learners in programmes of cooperation that are typical of school activities. Engagement in fantasy play will help learners to develop socially and learn to resolve conflicts in their lives (De Witt, 2009:23).

2.3.2.2 Cognitive development

Cognitive development of a young child refers to aspects and functions relating to thinking and ideas, that is, all aspects of his perceptual faculty (De Wit, 2009:6). This includes motor, perceptual, memory and linguistic development and the development of intelligence. Erasmus (2006:73) and Myers (1993:11) posit that the foundation for cognitive development is laid through play. Grade R practitioners are expected to encourage children to explore their world to discover what works. UNICEF (2004:36) indicates that children that learn through play tend to show creativity when they sing, dance, draw, paint and work out problems for themselves. De Witt (2009:23) affirms that children are eager to learn, and never stop asking questions.

2.3.2.3 Physical development

Physical development involves the growth of the body, the changes in its internal structure and its functioning (De Wit, 2009:5). According to Erasmus (2006:73), Lerner and Kline (2006:233), Scott-Little et al., (2003:22) and UNICEF (2004:33), children need to exercise their muscles so that they learn to move easily and with confidence. Their eye-hand co-ordination comes from being encouraged to run, climb, jump, hop and balance. It is important to encourage children to keep their bodies safe and healthy as early as possible. They need to be able to demonstrate an understanding of, and participate in activities that promote movement and physical development (Davies & Van Staden, 2005:185; De Witt, 2009: 12).

Various sport codes, for example, aerobics, physical training, dance, swimming, gymnastics, netball, athletics, tennis, rugby, soccer and other sports activities are marvel to observe and help the young ones to practise, enjoy and learn such activities

at a very early age, yet some will be starting life-long careers (SA, 2005:4). The onus lies with the school managers and practitioners to groom the young ones to have correct postures, muscle growth and inter-human relations that always go with such activities.

2.3.2.4 Emotional development

According to De Witt (2009:6), an emotion is a complex condition which is characterised by the activation of the central and autonomic nervous systems, intestinal reactions and feelings such as fear, anger, anxiety, compassion and disgust. Davin and van Standen (2005:4) affirm that emotional development occurs when the child has knowledge, understanding and a positive acceptance of the self. As children grow up and find themselves in many different situations, they learn to name and understand their feelings. Many children have to deal with grief, fear and anxiety as they face death of family members and others close to them; therefore their emotional development is of importance (Erasmus, 2006:73; UNICEF, 2004:34). A sense of self-efficacy and security are central to emotional development, as is relative freedom from anxiety that impedes social and intellectual behaviour (De Witt, 2009:29).

When practitioners encourage learners to do role play, emotional scenarios and interact with each other as well as s concerning their emotions, they thus create environments for learners to better understand their emotions. Though Life Skills, feelings of fear, anger, joy, anxiety, compassion and disgust can be better understood by learners. The role of school managers is to support by ensuring that such activities are being facilitated.

The domains of development cannot be separated from one another; they each make a contribution to the whole child as a holistic being. The domains of a child's development discussed above convey the importance of an integrated approach to child development and signify an appreciation of the importance of considering a child's health, nutrition,

education, psychosocial and additional environmental factors within the context of the family and the community (Arnold, Bartlett, Gowani & Merali, 2006:7; SA, 2001b:14; UNICEF, 2000:4). The next section defines key concepts which are used in this research.

2.4 QUALITY IN FOUNDATIONAL EDUCATION

In this section, quality indicators, models of quality, tools for ensuring quality and quality assurance will be analysed.

2.4.1 Indicators of quality

Quality is the single most important issue in education, business and government today. In an effort to ensure quality education in schools, Pandor (2009:8) appealed to South African educators to promote quality learning and teaching. According to Gordon and Brown (2004:43), quality is related to improving professional practice and working conditions in ECD, advocating for high quality ECD programmes and building and maintaining networks of strong, diverse and inclusive ECD programmes. It is believed that children who receive quality foundational education are more likely to be successful in a variety of areas later in their lives (Mims, Scott-Little, Lower, Cassidy & Hestenes, 2008:1). Quality foundational education needs to provide young learners with a sense of continuity between home and school. Continuity becomes possible in the presence of quality indicators and strong partnership between the school and home (Meier & Marais, 2007:142). The data on quality indicators is summarized in the figure below:

The next section discusses key concepts which are used in this research.

Figure 2.1 Summary of data on the indicators of quality



The concepts of quality education will be discussed below.

2.4.1.1 Quality education

It is universally accepted that children who receive good quality education tend to thrive, whereas children who are given poor quality education may be placed at risk. Quality of education, according to Mirza (2003:8) means setting standards which make a pavement for assessment of standards, comparability of programmes, and accountability for meeting the targets (SA, 2001b:5). Quality education refers to a system of education that through programming process, structure and content, enables learning environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities (UNICEF, 2000:2).

Thus, quality education's objective is to promote healthy families and communities in a child-friendly environment through the provision of quality education and health care, meeting the needs and protecting the best interest of the child (UNICEF, 2000:2). Therefore, quality education requires the development of systems of education that closely connect a child-centered learning environment with community development (SA, 2002:3).

Quality education should be seen as a transformative process of implementation, accountability and the pursuit of excellence (Forbes, 2003:6; Jafthas, 2004:30). Mirza

(2003:8), UNESCO (2004:1) and UNICEF (2000:4) concur with this statement, adding that the quality education output can be achieved only if quality is ensured at the foundational level of the educational process from quality learners, healthy learning environments, quality content, teacher-learning process, assessment and monitoring of outcomes.

In a nutshell, quality education entails setting standards which will enable learning environments which are conducive to quality learning and effective teaching in pursuit of excellence.

The researcher is of the opinion that, in order to achieve quality education, every one involved in the education process should be willing to change and make a paradigm shift towards improvement. Therefore, in order to improve the quality of education, learners should receive quality content that is relevant to Grade R.

2.4.1.2 Quality content

Quality content refers to the planned and taught curriculum and is an integrated programme based on the learning outcomes which should be grade-level appropriate and properly sequenced (Abadzi, 2006:16; UNICEF, 2009:9). In order for learners to benefit from quality content, there should be effective teaching. Moeketsi (2004:7) describes teaching as a process by which learners are supported, guided and influenced in order to reach higher levels of maturity and general functioning within a specific cultural context, as well as, a wider multicultural context.

Quality education is a system of education that, through a programming process, structures quality content which is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, knowledge, values and attitudes (Fourie, 2000:36). According to the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) (SA, 2002:2), programmes prescribed for Grade R involve the three learning areas namely, literacy, numeracy and life skills. The latter straddles along a broad base of knowledge from a variety of topics, such as, gender, health, nutrition, HIV/ AIDS prevention, and peace. Grade R programmes have to be effective and of high-quality. Practitioners have to plan and

organise information or learning content in a systematic way. Without preparation of quality lessons to teach with learning outcomes, assessment standards, assessment forms, practitioner and learner activities, resources, knowledge, values and skills, there can be no quality education (Meier & Marais, 2007:210, SA, 2002:4). Davin (2001:61) postulates that practitioners must have information or learning content to convey to Grade R (Arnold *et al.*, 2006:19). Practitioners are, therefore, responsible for teaching meaningful and developmentally appropriate learning content to Grade R learners. The aim is to assist learners develop the skills they need in life, rather than acquire knowledge only (UNICEF, 2000:9). Teaching is regarded as an art of improving or increasing the knowledge of a learner, thereby ensuring quality.

Fourie (2000:36) asserts that teacher education curricula should encompass the concepts, knowledge, skills, values and attitudes relevant to teachers' professional needs and to system reconstruction which will be able to produce quality learners at the end. Another pre-requisite in the provision of quality content is the quality educator which will be discussed below.

2.4.1.3 Quality educators

Mims *et al.* (2008:1), Zaslow and Martinez-Beck (2005) and Click (2004:193) indicate that individual characteristics of educators, including education level, have been associated with classroom quality and the quality of ECD programmes. However, results from studies conducted on the relationship between educators' qualifications and quality have been mixed.

In a study conducted by Howes (1997), the results indicated that educators with four year degrees, displayed greater sensitivity, were more responsive to children and had children who displayed greater creativity than did educators with less education. These results were supported in a study conducted by Howes, James and Ritchie (2003) where educators with bachelor's degrees, were more responsive to children than those that were less educated. Several studies conducted to address the relationship of educator background and quality (Barnett, 2003; Bowman, Donovan & Burns, 2001) have all come to the conclusion that the presence of BA level educators with specialized

training in ECD, can lead to better outcomes for the children. Whitebook (2003:5) indicates the following regarding results of studies conducted on this subject:

- Educators interacted with children more and children show more cooperation and greater task persistence; and
- Children exhibited greater cognitive test score gains than those cared for by less educated practitioners.

These findings are commonly interpreted as that 'some training is better than none and more child-related education is better than less'.

According to Elliot (2006:34), staff in early childhood centres (ECC) across Australia had a wide range of qualifications and experience. Each State and Territory has its own early childhood staffing requirements, guidelines and/or regulations. There is no nationally shared understanding of appropriate credentials for staff responsible for the development, education and care of children below school age or about the content or focus on courses preparing early childhood practitioners. There are no readily accessible national data on the number of students enrolled in degree level of early childhood education (ECE) courses or in children's services (or equivalent) diploma and certificate courses in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. There are varying pay scales and awards and no nationally consistent career pathways.

The problems with qualifications in ECE are not new or unique to Australia. Concerns about staff shortages, quality, preparation and pay in Australia have been voiced for many years (EPAC, 1996). Similar concerns are common in the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America (Boyd & Schneider, 1997; Grey, 1999; OECD, 2001). In South Africa all training programmes promote the career path as illustrated in the table below. It is unfortunate that in South Africa, additional training has not been linked to salary scales and Community-Based Centres (CBC) pay practitioners what they can afford (Meier & Marais, 2007:74). The situation is different in School-Based Centres (SBC) where practitioners get a stipend from the Department of Education and this is subsidised by the money that is paid in by the parents.

Table 2.1: The career path for ECD educators in South Africa

Qualifications	Exit
Level 5 National Diploma	Access to a degree (level 6)
Level 5 Higher Certificate	Access to diploma or degree
Level 4 National Certificate	Access to level 5
Level 1 Basic Certificate	Access to level 4

Source: SAQA (2006)

Biersteker (2008:4) attributes numerous challenges to quality that are faced by the ECD sector in South Africa to historical neglect, including an under-skilled workforce with low pay and poor conditions of service. She further indicates that if the sector is to grow and be upgraded, it will need to become more attractive as a career option, with incentives to improve qualifications.

White Paper Five ECD (SA, 2001a) attributes the variable quality of ECD services and programmes, among other things, to the following:

- Absence of a mechanism for the professional registration of ECD practitioners/educators and of the requirement that they be registered with the South African Council of Educators (SACE);
- Inequities in the qualifications of ECD practitioners/educators; and
- Absence of an accreditation system for trainers of ECD practitioners/educators.

2.4.1.3 Quality learners

UNICEF (2000:2) defines quality learners as healthy and well stimulated children who are ready to participate and learn, and are supported in learning by their families and communities (SA, 1996:5; SA, 2001a:9; SA, 2003:11). Children must be capable of attending school to learn; hence they must be adequately nourished, stimulated physically and psychologically, and protected from preventable diseases and infections (SA, 2003:12; UNICEF, 2000:2). Children who are not well cared for at home, tend to be regularly absent from school. The first three years of learners at school should ideally

have no hindrances, as they are regarded as critical years for learners where quality teaching and learning is taking place (SA, 2003:7). Evidence has shown that children, who participated in early intervention programmes, perform better in primary school than those who did not benefit from formal early childhood programmes (UNICEF, 2000:2).

The foregoing paragraph highlights the importance of provision of a healthy, stimulating and enabling environment for learners during the critical years of their foundational education. This is a formative stage which can make or break learners' character and life-long development. Thus, schools need to strive for quality learning environment.

2.4.1.5 Quality learning environment

Hayward (2006:32) in his model of quality schools, notes that quality learning environments are determined by quality schools. Thus, quality schools conform to quality learning environments, which are determined by:

- values, which are in the form of vision, mission and values enshrined in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa and schools value systems (SA, 1996:6);
- effective communication strategies with learners, educators, SGB, SMT, parents, Public Service staff and the community;
- leadership opportunities given to learners, educators, SGB, SMT, parents, Public Service staff and the community;
- school improvement plans, which refer to facilities, academic results, personal growth plans and extra-curricular; and
- tools and techniques which entail assessment and evaluation (Odebero, 2006:340; UNICEF, 2000:7).

The school should establish a caring, inclusive, stimulating and safe quality learning environment where learners can take intellectual risks, practise democracy, and work

collaboratively and independently (De Witt, 2009:173; SA, 1996:6, SA, 2002:1; SA, 2003:11; UNICEF, 2000:14).

According to School Health Policy (SA, 2003:11) and UNICEF (2007:14), school infrastructure influences the quality of various elements of the educational process. The size of the class can influence the instructional method of practitioners, for example, classroom arrangement. Learners' learning is influenced by the availability of learning materials, appropriate furniture, clean water and sanitation (UNICEF, 2000:6; Willenberg, 2005:168). Winerip (2004:1) argues that quality education, which is tantamount to quality teaching and learning equals good teachers plus small classes. Thus, when the size of the class is kept low, practitioners are able to give learners individual attention. An inclusive and nondiscriminatory classroom environment that enables and encourages the equal participation of all learners is central to quality education (Meier & Marais, 2007:203, UNICEF, 2000:6). A safe quality learning environment thus refers to (Gauteng Department of Education, 2007:7):

- a place where learners can learn and practitioners can teach in a warm and welcoming environment, free of intimidation and fear;
- a secure and disciplined environment;
- a school and an environment that fosters democratic management and has systems in place that enables practitioners, learners and parents to respond effectively to crises, tragedies and threats of crime or violence (SA, 2005:15); and
- the SMT creating a warm and welcoming environment (indoors and outdoors) that supports children's growth and development (Gordon & Brown, 2004:41).

In order to understand the complex nature of quality education and to develop management strategies for achieving it, it is necessary to review the different conceptions or models of education quality. Cheng and Tam (1997:3) proposed seven models that can be used to illustrate the concepts and to deepen understanding of effectiveness, quality and develop management. There are different models that are used for quality assurance at schools.

2.4.2 MODELS OF QUALITY EDUCATION

In this section, models of quality education, such as, goal specific model, resource-input model, process model, satisfaction model, legitimacy model and absence of problems models will be explored.

2.4.2.1 Goal specific model

According to Cheng and Tam (1997:25) the goal and specific model regards education as achievement of stated goals and conformance to given specification. The model is often used in the assessment of education quality of individual institutions. It is used in checking whether practitioners are given clear goals and specifications to be used in the assessment of quality education in the class. The model can further be used to check whether the school has specific measurable, attainable and time-framed goals. It enables management to assess whether learner achievements and attendance are high and whether goals are meant to minimize drop-out rates. The goals need to focus on personal development of learners.

The model is useful if the goals and specifications used for judging education quality are clear and accepted by all involved constituencies, and whether there are appropriate indicators which one can use to evaluate attainment of prescribed education standards. Cheng and Tam (1997:14) assert that the advantage of this model of education quality is that it enables the site management to focus on key components of education programmes.

2.4.2.2 Resource-input model

The resource-input model focuses on quality resources that sustain the school and make management effective in ensuring quality foundational education. The model necessitates the issue of nutritious food for learners, both at their homes and at school, through the School Nutrition Programme (SNP); parents who are supportive towards learners' school work and activities; resources in terms of qualified staff, better facilities and equipment; proper staff - learner ratio according to circular 28/2005 (SA, 2005:3); appropriate furniture for learners, participation in out-door learning activities, having out-

door equipment that is secured and safe for learners; availability of resources to support learners with learning barriers; and running water which is easily accessible at the site (Cheng & Tam, 1997:14).

The model emphasises that in order to assist learners with problems, more resources are needed. The capacity of acquiring scarce and quality resources represents the potential for an education institution that can promise high education quality, particularly in a great resource competition. Cheng and Tam (1997:8) affirm that the model redresses the limitation of the goal and specification model, linking education quality to the environmental context and resources input. They continue to say that the acquired resources may become wastage if they cannot be used efficiently to enhance quality of process outcomes.

2.4.2.3 Process model

In the process model, education quality is seen as a smooth and healthy internal process and with fruitful learning experiences. The process in education is a transformational process which converts input into performance and output (Cheng & Tam, 1997:14). Bernhardt (2009:1) defines school processes as what learning organizations, and those who work in them, to help learners learn: what they teach, how they teach, and how they assess learners. School processes include programmes, curriculum, instruction and assessment strategies, interventions, and all other classroom practices that educators use to help learners learn.

The most commonly mentioned elements of a learning organisation can be summarised as: coordinated group effort towards commonly shared goals; active commitment to continuous improvement and to the diffusion of best practices throughout the organisation; horizontal networks of information flow, to help bring together expertise as well as links with the external world; and, the ability to understand, analyse, and use the dynamic system within which they are functioning (Keating cited by Silins, Zurins & Mulford, 2002:25).

The process model indicates that an educational site is of high education quality if it has the following;

- its internal functioning is smooth and healthy;
- the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and School Management Teams (SMTs) support practitioners in dealing with Grade R teaching and learning issues;
- there are open communication channels among practitioners and SMT concerning Grade R site;
- the practitioners participate in decision-making concerning Grade R issues;
- the practitioners adapt to the teaching and learning processes of Grade R;
- practitioners use different indicators to assess achievement of quality education and conduct learner assessment continuously; and
- the content of lessons is relevant for the acquisition of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and life skills (Maema, 2006:890).

2.4.2.4 Satisfaction model

According to the satisfaction model, education quality is defined as the satisfaction of strategic stakeholders. This model assumes that the satisfaction of strategic stakeholders of an educational institution is critical to its survival (Cheng & Tam, 1997:16). The indicators of education quality are often satisfaction of strategic stakeholders, such as, learners, practitioners, parents, administrators and the management committee of the education institution. If the influence of parents, learners, practitioners and community members is not strong, the satisfaction of the management committee of the institution is often the most important indicator of education quality (Cheng & Tam, 1997:16). The model emphasises that if the management committee of an institution demands high achievement in academic and in sports activities, the education site can be seen to be of high education quality, only if it can satisfy these demands. The model may not be appropriate if the demands of powerful stakeholders cannot be satisfied (Cheng & Tam, 1997:16).

2.4.2.5 Legitimacy model

According to the legitimacy model, education is regarded as the achievement of an educational institution's legitimacy position or reputation. Due to changes that took place in the education and rapid development, the education environment became more challenging and competitive. Therefore, educational institutions have to compete seriously for resources and overcome internal barriers (Cheng & Tam, 1997:16). On the other hand, they have to face the external challenges and demands for accountability and "value for money" (Cheng & Tam, 1997:7). Cheng and Tam (1997:7) posit that it is hardly possible for educational institutions to continue to survive without ensuring legitimacy in the community. In other words, educational institutions need to win support of the community by building up good public image and show evidence of accountability.

Legitimacy is defined by Steyn, de Klerk and du Plessis (2008:118) as the status extended by the role players in education and educational institution to the school. This is an indication that they are satisfied with the institution, its staff and the way any work is done. It also includes the way that they, as interested parties, are treated. By virtue of this satisfaction, the institution enjoys acceptance in the public mind and can, therefore, claim legitimacy. This legitimacy represents credibility and, therefore, reflects the confidence of the interested parties.

A school or an institution may, for various reasons, suffer from lack of legitimacy. Often a school or an institution loses its legitimacy for political reasons or because of irrelevant or poor quality education. Legitimacy requires effective management as a pre-requisite (Steyn, de Klerk & du Plessis, 2008:118).

In order to gain legitimacy, educational institutions should operate educational programmes which match the ethical and moral norms of the community (Cheng & Tam, 1997:8)). Practitioners need to promote their own image by exhibiting good work and by maintaining a good relationship with their immediate communities. Failure to maintain good reputation could reduce learner population (Cheng & Tam, 1997:8). Some education institutions or sites have to be closed if not enough parents are willing

to send their children to them. Therefore, this model could be useful when the survival and demise of education institutions could be assessed in a changing environment. Educational institutions are of high education quality if they can survive in a competing environment (Cheng & Tam, 1997:8).

2.4.2.6 Absence of problems model

Cheng and Tam (1997:8) maintain that, according to the absence of problems model, education quality means the absence of problems and troubles in the institutions. These authors further assert that borrowing the idea of the ineffectiveness model, it is often easier to recognize problems in an institution than to identify its quality because appropriate indicators and measurement techniques which can provide concrete evidence of quality, are often difficult to obtain (Cameron, 1984). Hence, instead of looking for quality in an education programme, one inspects the educational institution to check whether problems exist or not.

The absence of problem model assumes that if there is absence of problems, troubles, defects, weaknesses, difficulties, and dysfunction in an institution, the institution is of high education quality. Without the above-mentioned problems then, this institution is assumed to be running smooth and fulfilling its educational objectives (Cheng & Tam, 1997:8). Should the above-mentioned problems be identified, the management of a site or an educational institution may set up rigorous quality assurance and monitoring system in order to ensure a deficiency-free environment (Cheng & Tam, 1997:8).

2.4.2.7 Organisational learning model

According to Cheng and Tam (1997:9), the organizational learning model focuses on changing environment which could have an impact on the smooth running of the institution. In ensuring a good organizational climate, the environmental process of monitoring, development of practitioners and continuous planning cannot be ignored.

The elements that comprise of a school's climate are extensive and complex. As a result, researchers have identified the following factors that influence school climate:

- number and quality of interactions between adults and students (Kuperminc, Leadbeater & Blatt, 2001);
- students' and teachers' perception of their school environment, or the school's personality (Johnson, Johnson & Zimmerman, 1996);
- environmental factors (such as, the physical buildings and classrooms, and materials used for instruction);
- academic performance (Johnson & Johnson, 1993);
- feelings of safeness and school size (Freiberg, 1998); and
- feelings of trust and respect for learners and educators (Manning & Saddlemire, 1996).

School climate can play a significant role in providing a healthy and positive school atmosphere. Freiberg (1998:22) notes that, "the interaction of various schools and classroom climate factors, can create a fabric of support that enables all members of the school community to teach and learn at optimum levels". It has been found that a positive school climate can yield positive educational and psychological outcomes for students and school personnel; similarly, a negative climate can prevent optimal learning and development (Freiberg, 1998; Johnson & Johnson, 1993, 1997; Kuperminc, Leadbeater, Emmons & Blatt, 1997; Kuperminc, *et al.*, 2001; Manning & Saddlemire, 1996). Manning and Saddlemire (1996:41) summarises the aspects of school climate as including "trust, respect, mutual obligation, and concern for others' welfare can have powerful effects on educators' and learners' interpersonal relationships, as well as, learners' academic achievement and overall school progress".

For the site to attain its educational goals, it should get support from the community. Sites could be negatively affected by the community/social factors against attainment of educational goals. Therefore, learner achievement could be high as a result of the high status of the community in which they are, or learners can struggle to achieve as a result of the low status of the community in which they are (Cheng & Tam, 1997:9). This model is particularly useful when educational institutions are developing or involved in educational reform, particularly in a changing external environment. This model

emphasizes that education quality may include awareness of community needs and change, internal process monitoring, programme evaluation, environmental analysis, development planning, etc (Cheng & Tam, 1997:9). In attaining all above mentioned educational goals quality assurance is imperative.

2.5 QUALITY ASSURANCE

According to Fourie (2000:153), quality assurance is a prevention based philosophy. Quality assurance is the total system of activities implemented within the quality system which provides assurance and objective evidence to management and the customer (learner) that an adequate level of quality has been achieved. De Bruyn and Van der Westhuizen (2008:318) assert that quality assurance is a prevention-based approach and is about products working reliably in future and about service activities being dependable and consistent. De Bruyn and Van der Westhuizen (2008:318) and Maema (2006:890) further state that quality assurance has to give confidence that future activities will produce the desired end result. It is a means of ensuring that errors are, as far as possible, designed out. Quality assurance in education examines the aims, content, resourcing, levels and projected outcomes of modules, programmes and courses meant for learners.

The purposes of the quality assurance systems, according to Herselman and Hay (2002:240), are reflected in quality assurance mechanisms and procedures. The purposes of quality assurance include the following;

- improvement of teaching and learning;
- steering the resources and planning process of a system;
- public accountability; and
- client information and market transparency.

2.5.1 Reasons for lack of quality in schools

In a research conducted by Herselman and Hay (2002:240), educators/practitioners indicated that the main reasons for neglecting quality at primary schools are as follows:

- the lack of expertise regarding teaching and the management of effective teaching;
- uncovered information that becomes an embarrassment to the policy-makers;
- the large proportion of learners that cannot read the text books they are provided with;
- big classes with no equipment;
- the overloaded curriculum with inappropriate learning needs;
- the fact that only a quarter of the children finish primary school;
- spending more capita on higher education than on primary education;
- limited access to pre-schooling; and
- the concept of quality and how to achieve it are exceptionally complex and difficult.

Quality Grade R service requires the training in key methodological attitudes, skills and knowledge that is quality controlled through rigorous practitioner and research training organisation (RTO) accreditation processes. Regular and systematic monitoring of practitioners through observation and feedback by education officials is imperative. Managers and education authorities need to ensure that practitioners can demonstrate understanding of the expected outcomes or expected levels of performance (ELP), provide more books (the presence of accessible books is highly correlated with improved early literacy assessment results) and educational equipment and utilise registration requirements, to ensure that sites provide safe accommodation and educationally enriching environment for learners. There is a need to professionalise ECD practitioners, that is, through registration with South African Council for Educators (SACE) and encouraging practitioner representation at the Education Labour Relation Council (ELRC) (Herselman & Hay, 2002:241).

The tools for quality assurance will be analysed below.

2.5.2 Tools for quality management

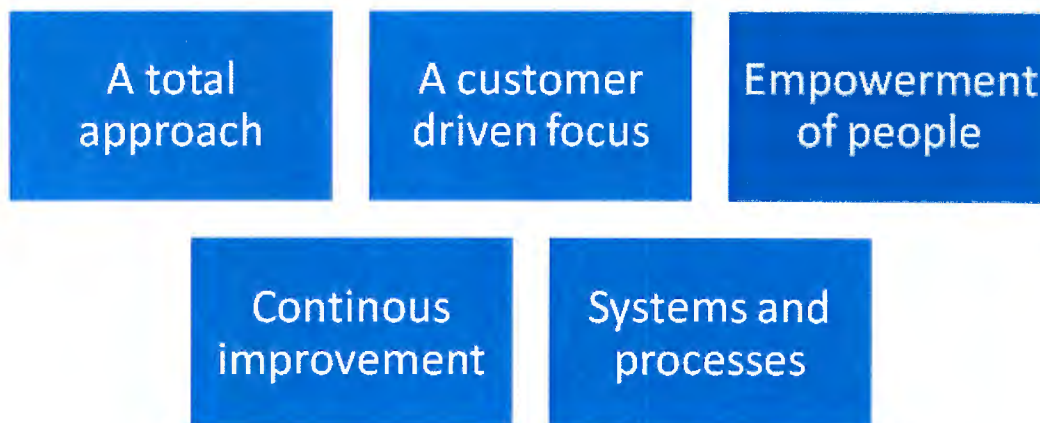
Tools employed to measure quality include Total Quality Management (TQM) and Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS).

2.5.2.1 Total Quality Management

The TQM refers to management principles which were devised in Japan after World War 2, to address the problems of war-devastated Japan, which has made Japan to change from a derogatory term to high praise (Winn & Green, 1998:24). TQM is recognized as an important philosophy and is widely used in the United States industry and applied in the education industry (Steyn, 2000a:174). Quality, according to De Bruyn and Van der Westhuizen (2008:288), is a global phenomenon and emerged mainly for two reasons. Firstly, a need to ensure safety and security consistency in manufactured goods, and secondly, a need to growing differentiated products and services on the basis of quality in an increasingly competitive global market.

It is a body of theory, tools and applications that focus on quality for the customer. Specific features of TQM are summarized below.

Figure 2.2 Summary of specific features of the TQM



The total approach is a totally integrated effort, which involves every element of the whole organization and draws on the minds and talents of all people at all levels and in all activities (De Bruyn, 2003:15; De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:288; Fourie, 2000:52; Mogonediwa, 2008:39).

A customer-driven focus addresses customer-supplier relationships, particularly on meeting the various needs, expectations and requirements of customers. The customer judges whether the quality of services and products is in accordance with his/her own expectations. Ngware, Wamukuru and Odebero (2006: 339) and Svensson and Klefsjö, (2006:301) reiterate the same notion, when referring to judgment by the client, while noting that the service providers have to make sure that everyone in the organization is passionately committed to achieving results. For the above reasons, it is in the best interest of any organization, to build effective customer relationships in order to improve on quality. The integrated quality management system, according to the South African Department of Education, aims at fulfilling the need of the customer, such as, the parent and his/her child which is the learner (SA, 2003:3).

With regard to empowerment of people, the TQM paradigm implies the delegation of functions to the people who are closest to the customer. It provides a model for empowerment, where people that are closest to the customer, are mandated to make decisions on how best to improve quality (De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:291; Ngware, *et al.*, 2006: 340; SA, 2003:23; Svensson & Klefsjö, 2006:301). The human element is crucial in that the talent, expertise and skills of every member of the organization, are optimally utilized to bring about improvement. Personal growth and school improvement plans serve this purpose in South African schools, with regard to empowerment of employees in the public service.

With regard to continuous improvement, TQM is also a commitment to excellence with the focus on continual and incremental improvement (De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:291). This is achieved by using multi-functional teams, customer feedback, worker empowerment and data-based methods, to build quality into the process. When assessing and supporting practitioners' performance, school management teams need to continually work towards the development of the practitioner in totality and not inspect the end product (Maema, 2006:891). This is in line with Ngware, *et al.* (2006: 340) who maintain that quality is not a mere passing of examinations or certification, but the development of independent, analytical, creative potential of the individual, including critical imagination, spiritual and ethical values. It implies standard agreed criteria for

assessment. Ngware, *et al.* (2006: 340) and Svensson and Klefsjö (2006:301), further posit that the major determinants of quality education includes curriculum content, relevant instructional material and equipment, physical facilities, conducive learning environments, the quality of teaching force assessment and monitoring achievements.

With regard to systems and processes, TQM is conducive to quality improvement in organizations and, it can be regarded as a long-term change process that can contribute to organizational growth and renewal (De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:291). Thus, TQM represents a quality-management process which is concerned with people, systems and culture, and which harnesses leadership, systems thinking and employee empowerment to continuously improve the organization's capacity to meet current and future customer needs. The optimization of systems and processes is aimed at improved quality, greater effectiveness and change of the organizational culture (De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:289; Ngware *et al.*, 2006: 340; Steyn, 2000b:174; Svensson & Klefsjö, 2006:301).

TQM strives to ensure that the organization meets set objectives and goals. It operates within all the divisions, departments and levels of the organization. In the case of school or an ECD site, it would mean that the manager/s organise a strategy and operation that will develop a culture of optimal participation. Teams must work on continuous improvements that respond to learners' needs. Learner satisfaction is the cornerstone of TQM (Steyn, 2000b:174).

Steyn (2000b:175) summarises the focus of the TQM as an achieving quality hence it is defined as a philosophy and a set of guiding principles that intend to meet and exceed the needs and expectations of various external and internal customers. The second focus is on the acceptance and pursuit of continuous improvement as the useful standard or goal of attaining quality.

Total in TQM is described by De Bruyn and Van der Westhuizen (2008:288) and Ngware *et al.* (2006:341) as a process that recognizes that everyone in the organization contributes in some form or another to the end product or service to the customer (learner). This means that every function and every level in the organization is involved

in the process namely: managers, SMT members, practitioner, the parents and SGB members. It affects all who work in the school as well as all activities undertaken in the name of the school (De Bruyn, 2003:9).

According to De Bruyn (2003:9) and De Bruyn and Van der Westhuizen (2008:288), the word total, suggests close interactions and give-and-take interrelationships of an organization with both its micro and macro environments. The quest for quality is everybody's concern and can come from any of the parties in the environment: customers, partners, suppliers, stakeholders, non-stakeholders, etc.

De Bruyn and Van der Westhuizen (2008:288) assert that in every day language, quality describes a level or standard of satisfaction with a product or process, e.g. quality education. Quality defines essential features or characteristics of something. The definition most commonly accepted in the business world is the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs (Thurlow *et al.*, 2003).

Thurlow *et al.* (2003:16) defines quality as an essential and distinguishing attribute of something. A quality is an attribute or a property. Attributes are ascribable by a subject, whereas properties are possessible. Some philosophers assert that quality cannot be defined. In contemporary philosophy, the idea of qualities and especially how to distinguish certain kinds of qualities from one another, remain controversial. De Bruyn and Van der Westhuizen (2008:288) describe quality as "doing the right thing right".

Despite the importance of quality, it seems to be an enigmatic concept (Steyn, 2000a:9). Jura, Goetsch and Davis (in Steyn 2000a:9) defined quality as continuously meeting and exceeding the needs of customers. Quality means those features of products and services which continuously meet or exceed customer needs and thereby provide satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is a vital goal and is considered as the absolute of an organisation's effectiveness (Fourie, 2000:83; Thurlow *et al.*, 2003).

On the other hand, Juran (in Steyn 2000a:9) describes quality as freedom from deficiencies, which can be interpreted as freedom from errors that require rework, customer dissatisfaction, and customer claims (Fourie, 2000:83).

The following table provides an overview of these meanings of quality:

Table 2.2: The overview of the meanings of quality

List of meanings	Interpretation
Product and service features that meet customer needs Higher quality enables institutions (including departments and learning programmes) to • Increase customer satisfaction • Make "products" saleable • Meet competitions • The major effect is on sales (learner enrolment)	Freedom from deficiencies Higher quality enables institutions (including departments and learning programmes) to • Reduce error rates • Reduce rework • Reduce inspection • Improve delivery performance • The major effect is on costs

Thurlow *et al.*, (2003:45)

De Bruyn and Van der Westhuizen (2008:289) assert that quality will not be achieved by accident or by management dictate. They emphasize that it requires cultural change that transforms management behaviour and attitudes in general *vis-à-vis* quality. The whole process should be managed by managers who are fully dedicated and committed to the task, so that TQM can facilitate practices that will promote both quality and sound management.

2.5.2.2 Quality Management (QM)

Fourie (2000:151) and Thurlow *et al.* (2003:35) define quality management as all activities that determine the quality policy and objectives and implement them by means of quality planning, quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement within the quality system.

Quality management focuses firstly, on achieving quality and can be defined as a philosophy and a set of guiding principles that intend to meet and exceed the needs and expectations of various external and internal customers through an integrated system of tools, techniques and training (Steyn, 2000a:8; Thurlow, *et al.*, 2003).

According to Williams (1994:5) and Schargel as referred to by Steyn (2000a:10), the second focus is on the acceptance and pursuit of continuous improvement as the only useful standard and attaining quality of all processes, resulting in high-quality products and service and reducing wastage and rework.

Quality management enables organisations to become effective and focused. It assists educational institutions to cope with poor quality and systematically bring about change. Quality management in education provides a structured and systematic delivery which has, *inter alia*, led to an increase in learner performance, self-esteem, motivation and self-confidence, a decrease in learner drop-out, enhance staff morale, less conflict between staff members and a decrease in costs due to less need to redo tasks (Thurlow *et al.*, 2003). Steyn (2000a:8) asserts that institutions that do not shift to the quality paradigm will be unable to cope with the demands placed on them. Increasingly, quality makes the difference between success and failure in education.

2.5.2.3 Integrated Quality Management Systems

Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS) was established in 2003 (SA, 2003) for the purpose of aligning the different quality management programmes, which include Developmental Appraisal (DA), Performance Measurement Systems (PMS) and the Whole School Evaluation (WSE). The main objective is to ensure quality public education for all and constantly improve the quality of learning and teaching. It is also aimed at the individual evaluation and development of educators through drawing up personal growth plans, and the evaluation, development and overall institutional effectiveness of schools. The department has the responsibility of providing facilities and resources to support learning and teaching, by empowering, motivating and training practitioners. Quality management seeks to monitor and support these processes (De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:323; Mogonediwa, 2008:49). The philosophy

underpinning the IQMS is based upon the "fundamental belief" that the purposes of the new measures are to do the following:

- to determine competence;
- to assess strengths and areas of and for development;
- to provide support and opportunities for development to assure continued growth; and
- to promote accountability, to monitor an institution's overall effectiveness (SA, 2003:3; Rampa, 2006:73; Weber, 2005:64).

The main purposes of the alignment process are to enable the different IQMS programmes to inform and strengthen one another; to define the relationship among the different programmes of an IQMS; to avoid unnecessary duplication in order to optimise the use of Human Resources; to assure that there is ongoing support and improvement and to advocate accountability (Rampa, 2006:74, SA, 2000:16).

The IQMS document (SA, 2003:10) established the need to assure quality education by setting twelve standards which are used to evaluate the performance of educators/practitioners, SMT members; deputy principals and principals according to a number of criteria for each post level. The first seven performance standards pertaining to educators/practitioners will be discussed below:

- **Creation of a positive learning environment-** The practitioners are expected to create a positive learning environment and enable the learners to participate actively and to achieve success in the learning process. The practitioner will be evaluated on whether the environment is stimulating and learners participate actively; on whether learners participate actively and are encouraged to exchange ideas with confidence and to be creative; learners are motivated and self-discipline and whether the practitioners used inclusive strategies and promote respect for individuality and diversity (SA, 2003:11).

- **Knowledge of curriculum and learning programmes-** Practitioners are expected to demonstrate adequate knowledge of Learning Areas and use this knowledge effectively to create meaningful experiences for learners even though this is done informally in Grade R. Practitioners are expected to use knowledge to diagnose learners' strengths and weaknesses in order to develop teaching strategies. They will be evaluated on whether they are using learner-centered techniques that provide for acquisition of basic skills and knowledge that promote critical thinking and problem solving and on whether practitioners can provide excellent balance between clarity of goals of learning programme and expression of learner needs, interests and background (SA, 2003:13).
- **Lesson planning, preparation and presentation** - According to IQMS (SA, 2003:14), practitioners are expected to demonstrate competence in planning preparation, presentation and management of learning programmes. During the evaluation period, HODs need to monitor whether lesson planning is profusely clear, logical, sequential and developmental. HODs need to evaluate whether there are outstanding records keeping planning and learner progress and if portfolios are well kept and also if the lesson planning involve learners in such a way that it fully supports their needs and the development of their skills and knowledge (SA, 2003:15).
- **Learner assessment/achievement** - According to IQMS (SA, 2003:14), practitioners are expected to demonstrate competence in monitoring and assessing Grade R learner progress and achievement. They are evaluated on whether the assessment is used in order to promote quality teaching and learning. School managers need to evaluate whether the feedback is insightful, regular, consistent, timeous, and built in to lesson designed; whether different assessment techniques are used to cater for learners from diverse backgrounds, with multiple intelligences and learning styles and whether records are easily accessed and provide insights into individual learners' progress (SA, 2003:17).

- **Professional development in field of work/career and participation in professional bodies-** Practitioners are expected to engage themselves in professional development activities which are demonstrated in their willingness to acquire new knowledge and additional skills as some practitioners are unqualified. Practitioners need to be motivated to participate in activities which foster professional growth and try new teaching methods or approaches and evaluate their success. They must be encouraged to work collectively with their colleagues (SA, 2003:119).
- **Human relations and contribution to school development -** The IQMS (SA, 2003:20) indicates that practitioners are expected to engage themselves in appropriate interpersonal relationships with learners, parents and staff and contribute to the development of the school. Practitioners are expected to create and maintain sound human relations with colleagues and learners. They are expected to add value to the institution by providing exemplary service in terms of learner needs as learners came from different background (SA, 2003:21).
- **Extra-curricular and co-curricular participation -** Practitioners are expected to participate in extra-curricular activities in such a way that it supplements the learning process and leads to the holistic development of learners. They also play a leading role using activities for the holistic development of learners and encourage learners participation (SA, 2003:21).

Performance standards for managers will be discussed below.

In terms of the policy, there are standards that are applicable to Heads of Department (HODs) (standards 1-11) and those that are applicable to deputy principals and principals (standards 1-12), as indicated in Table 2.4 below:

Table 2.3: Performance standards for managers at schools

Performance Standards	Head of Department	Principal and Deputy Principal
Creation of a positive learning environment.	Competence in creating a positive learning environment and maintaining effective discipline	Competence in creating a positive learning environment and maintaining effective discipline
Knowledge of curriculum and learning programmes.	The educator is prepared and knowledgeable of the content and demonstrates appropriate preparation for teaching	The educator is prepared and knowledgeable of the content and demonstrates appropriate preparation for teaching
Lesson planning, preparation and presentation	Competence in planning, preparation, presentation and management of learning programme	Competence in planning, preparation, presentation and management of learning programme
Learner assessment/achievement.	Competence in monitoring and assessing learner progress and achievement.	Competence in monitoring and assessing learner progress and achievement.
Professional development in field of work/career and participation in professional bodies.	The educator engages in professional development activities consistent with his/her own goals and objectives and that of the school.	The educator engages in professional development activities consistent with his/her own goals and objectives and that of the school.
Human relations and contribution to school development.	Educators engage in appropriate interpersonal relationships with learners,	Educators engage in appropriate interpersonal relationships with

	parents and staff and contribute to the development of the school.	learners, parents and staff and contribute to the development of the school.
Extra-curricular and co-curricular participation.	The educator participates in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities in such a way, that it supplements the learning process and leads to the holistic development of the learners.	The educator participates in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities in such a way, that it supplements the learning process and leads to the holistic development of the learners.
Administration	Administers resources and records in an effective and efficient manner in order to ensure the smooth functioning of the institution.	Administers resources and records in an effective and efficient manner in order to ensure the smooth functioning of the institution.
Personnel	Manager develops personnel under his/her supervisor in such a way, that the vision and mission of the institution are accomplished.	Manager develops personnel under his/her supervisor in such a way, that the vision and mission of the institution are accomplished.
Decision making and accountability	Establishes procedures that ensure democratic decision-making and accountability within the institution.	Establishes procedures that ensure democratic decision-making and accountability within the institution.
Leadership communication and serving the governing		Provides an environment that creates and fosters

body.		commitment and confidence among colleagues, learners, the governing body and the community and communicates and interacts effectively with all stakeholders in order to ensure that all relevant information is both accessible and understood.
Strategic Planning, Financial planning and education management development		The educator displays competence in planning and education management development

Rampa (2006:70) and SA (2000:10)

- **Development Appraisal System (DAS)**

The purpose of developmental appraisal is to appraise educators/practitioners in a transparent manner with a view to determining areas of strength and weakness, and to draw up programmes for individual development that will enhance professional competences and growth to improve quality of teaching and learning (SA, 2003:3). According to the Employment of Educators Act, 76 of 1998 (SA, 1998), DAS is a process which seeks to develop the skills and career prospects of the individual educators/practitioners as well as quality of education at school level and seeks to improve the quality of teaching and effective management. It is based on the fundamental principles of life-long learning and development (Rampa, 2006:61; SA, 1998:3C-47; Weber, 2005:64).

- **Performance Measurement System (PMS)**

The first Performance Measurement System (PMS)'s purpose is to improve the quality of teaching and effective management, although, other managements are not implementing this system in order to develop and measure performance of their sites. Therefore, it may look like other managements could hardly use the process to measure performance of the practitioners against the set standards. This could lead to poor quality foundation and ineffective management. The second PMS's purpose is to evaluate individual practitioners for salary progression, grade progression, affirmation of appointments and rewards and incentives (SA, 2003:3).

All practitioners should be encourage to attend cluster meetings as part of their professional renewal and development. Staff appraisal instruments and procedures should be developed and implemented on a regular basis.

- **Whole School Evaluation (WSE)**

The policy on WSE is a notice in terms of Section 3(4) (1) of the National Education Policy Act, 1996 Act no. 27 of 1996. This policy is aimed at developing the overall quality of education and overall effectiveness of schools. This document is currently being used as a guideline for evaluating the management in ensuring quality education. It seeks to ensure that all learners are given an equal opportunity to make the best use of their capabilities. As a process, whole-school evaluation is meant to be supportive and developmental rather than punitive and judgmental (De Bruyn, 2003:153; Rampa, 2006:66). The policy also contains a built-in mechanism for reporting findings and providing feedback to the school and to various stakeholders: the national and provincial education departments, parents and society generally, on the level of performance achieved by schools (Herselman & Hay, 2002:241; SA, 2001b:7; SA, 2003:4; Smith & Ngoma-Maema, 2003:354).

The WSE in the Department of Education (SA, 2000:5) and Van der Westhuizen (2008:324) is perceived as the cornerstone of the quality assurance system in schools. It enables a school and officials from the Districts Office to provide an account of the school's current performance as it is introduced to schools, and show to what extent it

meets national goals and needs of the public and communities. This policy implies the needs for all schools offering Grade R sites to look continually for ways of improving, and the commitment of Government to provide development programmes designed to support their efforts. This policy sets out a national model for school evaluation aimed at improving and assuring the quality of education.

The National Policy on WSE is based on the following principles:

- It is stated that the core function of schools is to improve the educational achievements of all learners. It is designed to enable those in SMTs and support services to identify to what extent the school is adding value to learners' prior knowledge, understanding and skills (De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:325; SA, 2000:11).
- All stakeholders of a school community have responsibility for the quality of their own performance. This policy intends to enable the contribution made by staff, learners, and the involved stakeholders to improve their own and the school's performance, to be properly recognized (Herselman & Hay, 2002:241).
- All evaluation activities must be characterized by openness/transparency, teamwork and collaboration. The criteria to be used in evaluating sites, therefore, must therefore, be made public (De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:325; SA, 2000:11).
- Good quality WSE must be standardized and consistent. The guidelines, criteria and instruments must ensure consistency over periods of time and across settings (De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:325; Herselman & Hay, 2002:241; SA, 2000:11).
- The evaluation of qualitative and quantitative data is essential when deciding how well a school is performing. Therefore, WSE is concerned with the range of inputs, processes and outcomes (De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:325; Herselman & Hay, 2002:241; SA, 2000:11).

- Staff development and training are critical to school improvement. A measure used by WSE in judging a school's performance is the amount and quality of in-service training undertaken by staff and its impact on learning and standards of achievement (De Bruyn & Van der Westhuizen, 2008:325; Herselman & Hay, 2002:241; SA, 2000:11).
- To seek to understand why schools are where they are and use the particular circumstances of the school as the main starting point of the evaluation. The policy recognises that schools in disadvantaged areas, for example, must not be disadvantaged in terms of the WSE particularly farms and rural schools. It is also important to mention the aims of the policy which inform the WSE (De Bruyn, 2003:156; Herselman & Hay, 2002:241; SA, 2000:11; SA, 2001:10).

The aims of the policy as identified are as follows.

- external moderation of sites;
- evaluation of sites' effectiveness and development;
- increase the level of accountability;
- strengthen the support given to sites by district officials;
- providing feedback to all stakeholders;
- identify aspects of excellence within the system; and
- identify the aspects of effective sites (Rampa, 2006:66; SA, 2001a:10).

The nine focus areas of WSE are basic functionality; leadership, management and communication; governance and relationships with all stakeholders involved with the Grade R site; quality of teaching and learning in the Grade R site and development of Grade R practitioners; curriculum provision and resources; learner achievement; site safety, security and discipline; site infrastructure; and parents and the community (SA, 2001a:13; Smith & Ngoma-Maema, 2003:356).

However, this is not the only document of importance that can be used for quality management. The researcher will also discuss other documents which are influential in theory in education today namely Total Quality Management (TQM). The school

management should emphasise teamwork and collaboration which are essential components in the provision of quality education (Ngware *et al.*, 2006:347). Good leadership should embrace the principles of TQM which bring about continuous improvement and which guide learners and educators/practitioners in working toward the achievement of the organisational objective.

2.6 MANAGEMENT

The concepts of management in ECD will be discussed below.

2.6.1 Education management in ECD

Meier and Marais (2007:3) define management as the process of working with and through individuals and groups and other resources, to fulfill organizational goals. The concept management in ECD refers to the management tasks of the Head Of Department (HOD) for Foundation Phase and the principal or the manager of a site, as they are all managers with varying managerial responsibilities and skills, namely strategic, tactical and operational respectively (SA, 1998:2; Ndamase, 2004:32). Bush (2007:392), Meyer (2002:35), Robbins and De Cenzo in Mogonediwa (2008:8) describe management as the process of getting things done, effectively and efficiently, through and with other people. They further explain it as a process, which entails certain primary activities that managers should perform, namely planning, organizing, leading and controlling.

Marks and Louis (1999:70) and Coetsee (2002:6) posit that management is about managing and influencing people in the organisation, to attain specific goals through deployment and utilization of a variety of essential resources in support of organizational objectives and making team members to succeed (Mogonediwa, 2008:8).

Bennett, Crawford and Cartwright (2004:65) and Van der Westhuizen (2008:293) indicate that management consists of regulative actions to be executed by persons with authority in a specific field or area of regulation. These regulative actions enable organisational members to carry out duties aimed at the realisation of predetermined goals. Thus regulative actions are executed with respect to the operational tasks

affecting specific fields or areas in an organisation. Thus managers direct the work of others with the purpose of achieving the set goals. According to Coetsee (2002:6) and Kettunen (2008:323), managerial tasks include strategic planning (an essential management activity to ensure high quality), organising, leading and monitoring and evaluation of subordinates' working activities and plans (Marks & Louis, 1999:70). This is to ensure that the team members succeed.

To address all the above-mentioned activities, effective management of ECD sites is extremely important.

2.6.1.1 Management tasks

For effective management of ECD sites, managers should execute the following four fundamental management tasks, namely: planning, organizing; monitoring/leading and controlling (Bennett *et al.*, 2004:64; Meier & Marais, 2007:5; Ndamase, 2004:24; Van der Westhuizen, 2008:165; Meyer, 2002:35).

Management tasks are summarized in the diagram below.

Figure 2.3: Summary of management tasks



Planning - According to Bennett *et al.* (2004:64), Meier and Marais (2007:5) and Meyer (2002:102), planning is regarded as the first step in the management process and it involves determining a mission, aim and outcomes. Management includes other sub-functions, such as, problem solving, decision and policy making. It deals with strategies, approaches, methods, resources and anticipation of problems that might occur (Van der Westhuizen, 2008:165).

Planning is regarded as a blue print of business growth and a road map of development and is, therefore, a process for accomplishing purpose. It helps in deciding objectives, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. It is vital in the setting of goals on the basis of objectives and keeping the resources in view (SA, 2008:16). Bennett *et al.* (2004:64) and Van der Westhuizen (2008:165) regard planning as the management task which is concerned with deliberately reflecting on the objectives of the organization, the resources, as well as the activities involved, and drawing up the most suitable plan for effectively achieving these objectives.

Van der Westhuizen (2002:137) suitably says that: "Planning is the work a manager does to master the future." He further posits that through careful planning, set objectives are realized. Planning is an integrated management task and each of these various tasks has a planning element. Van der Westhuizen (2002:138) emphasise that planning is a way to anticipate and offset change. Therefore, through planning, the educational leader is forced to look ahead and see what can and will happen, from the point of view of existing information. It is the framework within which it must operate. Preparation of a comprehensive plan will not guarantee success. Meier and Marais (2007:6) assert that planning provides an environment conducive to working towards achieving goals, but lack of a sound plan will almost certainly ensure failure (Gauteng Department of Education, 2008a; SA, 2008:16). Marx in Van der Westhuizen (2002:137) indicates that planning is possibly the management task which receives least attention. He asserts that planning usually fails because educational leaders and managers do not carry out the planning task with sufficient enthusiasm. Educational leaders often fall back on the defensive mechanism of being satisfied with existing conditions.

These definitions indicate that a plan should be a realistic view of the expectations.

Depending upon the activities, a plan can be long, intermediate or short range. The school management should take into consideration the short-term and long-term planning of their activities which satisfy the needs of the community. Pretorius (2004:55) provides the following guidelines for managers for the effective planning of their activities:

- plan in writing, according to procedures as indicated by the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) for Grade R-9 Policy;
- plan ahead: Year plan, term/weekly and a daily plan should be done well in advance;
- pay attention to all aspects in cooperation with the mission and vision of the programme (Van der Westhuizen, 2008:130); and
- plans should be realistic, specific, acceptable, measurable and capable of being carried out (SA, 2002).

As some of the activities have to be delegated, delegation should be carefully and thoroughly planned according to the level of responsibility and availability of staff. Delegation without control is unthinkable, and therefore, reporting back is also planned as a follow-up of delegating (Meier & Marais, 2007:6, Van der Westhuizen, 2002:140).

The school management, according to Bush (2007:395), and Mogonediwa (2008:42) has to identify all the main issues which need to be addressed, review past planned performance and decide on budgetary requirements, focus on matters of strategic importance, identify shortcomings and gaps in the concept (Mogonediwa, 2008:42). All learners in ECD are entitled to well-planned and well-organised learning programmes where they will be able to gain knowledge, skills and values as mentioned in the National Curriculum Statement (SA, 2002:3). These activities need thorough organization to be effective.

Organising - Organising is regarded as the second function of managers in the management process (Bennett *al et.*, 2004:64; Meier & Marais, 2007:9; Meyer, 2002:102). Organising is a process by which the manager brings order and discipline out of chaos in the organisation, removes conflicts between people over work or

responsibility, and establishes an environment suitable for teamwork (Koontz & O'Donnell in Van der Westhuizen, 2002:162). Meier and Marais (2007:6) emphasise that organizing endeavours to introduce order, and this ordered planning must be done by people. This means that the educational manager must organise his or her tasks, create an organizational structure, delegate, coordinate activities, identify communication channels, establish relationship and determine rules and regulations (Bennett *et al.*, 2004:64; Meyer, 2002:36).

Organizing is that management task which is performed to initiate planning, and to establish connections with the various parts so that goals may be realized and attained effectively (Allen in Van der Westhuizen, 2002:162). Marais (2004:59) explains that organization is the implementation of the manager's planning in the form of task division. He further emphasises that the manager needs to organize all aspects involved, for example, people, resources, time and due dates. It is, therefore, imperative that managers execute this aspect effectively for the attainment of the goals and the achievement of the planned outcomes.

Meier and Marais (2007:7) assert that, if the managers lack organizational skills, this can lead to poor performance and eventually in ineffectiveness in the execution of daily activities. Managers should monitor, at specified times agreed on by the stakeholders, as part of organizing. Effective organisation will enable managers to determine how practitioners and resources should be deployed to accomplish the planned outcomes (SA, 2002:1; Van der Westhuizen, 2002:162).

ECD sites must have the basic resources to operate effectively. The ideal is achieved when every school has enough classrooms and ablution facilities that are accessible to learners (De Witt, 2009:303; SA, 1996:13; SA, 2003; SA, 2000:6). In a well organised site, an environment in which all learners are able to learn would be created. Thus, one where practitioners are welcoming and appreciative of learner's efforts, ensuring their safety and sense of security, and provide learning opportunities which enable learners to interact effectively with their world (Arnold *et al.*, 2006:19).

Therefore, in organising, managers should ensure that all tasks planned are grouped according to needs, priority and responsibility, to bring order and avoid chaos. This entails tasks division. Organising works harmoniously when skills and experiences of the team members are considered hence, job descriptions (SA, 1998: C-64; Van der Westhuizen, 2008:166). According to Meier and Marais (2007:106) and Arnold *et al.* (2006:20) the practitioner's role is firstly to be a resource for the children in her class. This could alleviate the problem of learners that drop-out within the first two years because practitioners are available at all times. A sound understanding of management is essential in order to lead and execute effective control (Marais, 2004:60).

Leading - One of the most important characteristics required of a manager is to be a leader (Marais, 2004:60; Van der Westhuizen, 2002:162). Meier and Marais (2007:7) regard leading as the third task which directs people (staff and learners) and motivates them so that their actions are aligned to the formulated set outcomes of the institution. Mogonediwa (2008:9) defines leadership as a process of encouraging and influencing people so that they co-operate willingly and strive to accomplish organisational set goals that have been mutually agreed upon. Aubrey (2008:41) asserts that leadership is about motivating, coaching, mentoring, staff support and development. Leadership is about keeping abreast the staff with the policy amendments and changes in education. According to Ngware *et al.* (2006:347), leadership is the process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically towards objectives. They further state that the whole process involves developing a vision for the organization that will encourage employees to work with passion.

The leadership challenge in South Africa education is to develop leadership potential (Meier & Marais, 2007:7). Leadership means: having a holistic (comprehensive) perspective; bringing core values to life; encouraging a vision; seeing problems as learning challenges; understanding the needs and contributions of co-workers, learners, parents and the community; performing a leadership role through flexible responses; working with balance, rhythm and work flow; acknowledging creative complexity and

controversy; finding the path of integrity and modeling the way (Bennett *et al.*, 2004:179; Meier & Marais, 2007:8).

Meier and Marais (2007:8) indicate that the concepts of leadership and management are just the opposite sides of the same coin. This means that they are distinguishable but are often used interchangeably and can therefore, not be separated. Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right things.

A sound understanding of leadership is essential in order to execute control.

Controlling - Allen in Van der Westhuizen (2002:216) explains control as “the work a manager does to assess and regulate work that is in progress and or completed. The control is the manager’s means of checking up.” From this, it can be deduced that control is subsequent to the educational leader’s other tasks. Therefore, by controlling, the planning and the execution of the plan are linked and brought together. According to Kruger (2004:45) and Meier and Marais (2007:9), control means all the methods used to measure the quality of activities. The controlling function ensures that the site is on the right path to achieving its planned goals. De Witt in Van der Westhuizen (2002:216) describes control as the umbrella term which includes all management activities and has, as its aim, to determine whether the activity of the organization still coincides with its set goals. This means that the educational leader ensures, by means of control, that all inputs are being used in optimum fashion, to achieve the set objectives and that planning, organizing and guiding are correctly implemented (Meier & Marais, 2007:10).

Managers are accountable to learners, parents, the SGB, the Department of Education and other role players to ensure the following:

- standards and quality criteria for all teaching and learning activities are set and met;
- performance and achievements are assessed and measured against standards and principles; and
- preventive and corrective actions, procedures and measures are implemented when deviations from standards or plans occur (Van der Westhuizen, 2008:166).

While Van der Westhuizen (2008:166) emphasise that control may be regarded as the last step in management, it, however, is not, because monitoring of work in progress is as vital as when it is completed (Meier & Marais, 2007:11). This monitoring is done using quality assurance techniques that determine the activities' alignment and congruence with goals. Control also measures the quality of the activity planned and implemented. It is important that activities are monitored.

Monitoring – One of the key roles of the manager is monitoring and evaluation of the ECD site's progress and performance. The distinct difference between evaluation and monitoring will be explored below.

Evaluation on the one hand is an attempt to assess systematically and objectively the relevance, performance and success of an activity. Evaluation is undertaken selectively to answer specific questions to guide managers in decision making, and to provide information on what works (or have worked), what does (or did) not work and why. It aims to determine relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, which makes it possible to incorporate lessons learnt into the decision-making process. Information obtained from evaluation conducted can definitely be important in the selection and design of future projects (Fourie, 2000:77; Mogonediwa, 2008:44; SA, 2000:28).

Monitoring, on the other hand, is a continuing function carried out throughout the year (SA, 2003: 9). It aims to provide regular feedback and early indications of progress or lack thereof in the achievement of intended results. Monitoring tracks the actual compliance and performance of educators against criteria. It also looks at the efficiency with which the activity is carried out (Fourie, 2000:76; SA, 2000:28). According to the Gauteng Department of Education (2008a:14), monitoring is another step which is very crucial to utilize in effective management. Monitoring is an ongoing check of whether goals are on track (Gauteng Department of Education, 2008a:14), whether relevant stakeholders are involved, checking on both practitioners and other manager's self-development and influence on provision of quality education. Managers are expected to monitor and support the practitioner in sustaining changes (Bush, 2007:401; SA, 2003: x).

Van der Waldt (2004:310) asserts that it is of critical importance to monitor the performance of educators/practitioners in institutions and this monitoring can follow the implementation of the action plans, taking into consideration the contextual factors that may hamper accomplishment of goals and objectives and can lead to suggestions for alternatives.

With regard to Grade R, managers need to monitor classroom practice by observing and providing advice and feedback that is both constructive and supportive to practitioners. Managers are expected to evaluate the implementation of curriculum change and transformation initiatives in the site, monitor their impact, manage and monitor the development of a timetable that ensures effective use of time and support the goals of the curriculum (SA, 2008:7; Wellhousen & Crowther, 2004:12).

The management is a balanced process which can only be effective if all the above-mentioned tasks are applied consistently. The effectiveness in management, therefore, comes to the fore.

2.6.2 Effectiveness in management

This section provides a definition and a brief discussion of effectiveness as used in management of ECD.

Gewertz (2003:7) states that effectiveness refers to undertaking the right activities by doing right things and striving to reach the set objectives while at the same time serving the right market in an appropriate manner, thus acting in the best interests of the community as a whole. This includes encouraging practitioners to be committed, allowing them to produce outcomes, explaining what and why things could be done in a certain way, sharing information and facilitating networks (Mogonediwa, 2008:10).

In the Oxford Mini School Dictionary (2002:206) and Soames (2002:261), the word 'effective' means producing the effect that is wanted or intended result. For the purpose of this study, effective management is regarded as the ability to meet the set goals.

Meyer (2002:18) asserts that effectiveness is controversial. Effectiveness has shades of meanings which differ according to organizations and the people that use them. The

shades of meaning of effectiveness are best understood as contested moves in a set of language games that give them their meaning and power. In this respect, the shades of meaning only function within a whole set of complex, interwoven fusions of theory and practice, fact and value, descriptions and evaluations, framed in the contexts that give such words, concepts and conceptual networks meaning, purpose and applicability. It therefore, becomes imperative to mention that effective schools will vary according to visions their leaders and stakeholders have (Van der Westhuizen, 2008:117). Effective school managers need to have capabilities of producing desired results, and make use of what is available to achieve school effectiveness. Therefore, effective managers capitalize on their staff, resources and the learners' abilities to achieve the required outcomes (SA, 2005:12).

Marzano (2003:106) emphasizes that effective management of the school in general is as important as managing a process for planning and teaching that promote responsiveness, effective and creative approach which is in line with national policy on curriculum (Gauteng Department of Education, 2000b:2). Managers should deploy practitioners for effective teaching and learning, based on sound pedagogical and human resource principles and for effective classroom management (Gauteng Department of Education, 2008b:7).

Nel (2007:16) posits that in an effective classroom, the practitioner should be able to assist learners to reach full potential and acquire and apply knowledge through investigation and problem solving, to make informed choices and decisions. The practitioner can be effective in performing his or her duties if s/he can be afforded the following:

- opportunities through ongoing in-service-training programmes to build his/her self-confidence and motivation, to assist in life-long learning;
- opportunities to develop his/her personal and social skills; and
- conducive environment that will allow for the implementation and promotion of high quality standards in Grade R provision and the ability to establish

relationships with the community by promoting parent and community involvement.

Arnold *et al.* (2006:25) affirm that practitioners are the single most important factor in creating effective classrooms. Practitioners can either be most crucial assets or major barriers to effective learning. Practitioners can be assertive when they effectively implement teaching and management of their classroom, while they can be barriers when they are unable to effectively render the service. Practitioners should develop classrooms where learners are involved in worthwhile activities that support their learning. They should establish an effective classroom management system within a healthy learning and teaching environment (Everton, Emmer & Worsham, 2000: xi). From the very beginning of the school year, a good start will ensure that learners acquire appropriate behaviour, attitudes and work habits that will affect their progress for the rest of the year (Everton *et al.*, 2000:55).

According to Arnold *et al.* (2006:25), class size plays a major role for effective learning and teaching to take place. Circular 28 of 2005 (SA, 2005:6) states clearly that in Grade R learners should not be more than 35 in a classroom. This calls for management and monitoring of the process of admission accordingly.

The inability of practitioners to effectively manage classroom behavior often contributes to the low achievement of at-risk learners and their excessive referrals for special education (Oliver & Reschly, 2007:1). The current pattern of practitioner distribution, which reveals a disproportionate assignment of less qualified and less experienced practitioners to classrooms with economically disadvantaged learners, can contribute to ineffective management (Clotfelter, Ladd & Vigdor, 2005:379; Oliver & Reschly, 2007:1).

The above discussions indicate that, if there is ineffective management, teaching and learning could be compromised. Therefore, effectively managed Grade R sites could lead to the provision of quality foundational education. The effectiveness goes hand in hand with quality assurance.

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter explored literature on the management of quality foundational education and its importance in early childhood development. The chapter further elaborated on how critical it is for stakeholders to ensure quality education in ECD sites. The necessity to provide quality learners in a quality learning environment, where learners can learn freely was highlighted.

The next chapter focuses on the research methodology and design.