

**THE EFFECT OF HOUSEHOLD POVERTY TRAP ON LEARNERS PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN NONGOMA IN THE ZULULAND DISTRICT.**

BY

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DECLARATION

I IWALOYE BUNMI OMONIYI declare that this dissertation entitled THE EFFECT OF HOUSEHOLD POVERTY TRAP ON LEARNERS PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NONGOMA IN THE ZULULAND DISTRICT is my own work, and that all the resources I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references

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Iwaloye B O

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This work is dedicated to Almighty, Omnipotent, and omniscience, Invisible, Unquestionable and Ever Faithful God. You are my pillar, my hope, my fortress and my strength. Thank you God for your support

ABSTRACT

Poverty has and will continue to precipitate enormous suffering for countless of learners living in abject poverty in the rural area of Nongoma. The study examine how poverty trap limit the academic performance of learners in the rural secondary schools of Nongoma. Also, it identifies various policies and programme designed to alleviate the negative effect of poverty on the learning outcome.

The study is underpin by Urie Bronfenbrenner,s ecological theory . The Quantitative and qualitative approach was used with questionnaires and focus group interview. In the study 5 schools was used with 100 learners for questionnaires and 5 educators for focus group interview .The Tesch,s open coding method of data analysis was used to identify Themes and categories whiles SPSS was used to analysis and determines frequency and percentages of data collected through questionnaires

Findings from this study revealed that the majority of the learners in the rural area of Nongoma cannot afford even afford even the basic human needs which are necessary on the learners health, their emotional, physical, moral, social and academic achievements.

This study also established that learner's academics performance affected by financial constraint, poor health due to lack of good food, delinquent behavior, child abuse and prostitution ,the long distance to and from school , stigmatization and stereotyping , school drop –out and absenteeism .

This study recommend rural development policies , policies for even distribution of income to close the achievement gap between the rich and poor , feeding scheme in all schools most especially in the rural schools , and adequate provision of learning aids such as library , laboratory and computer in the rural schools .

The study also recommend that the problem be addressed by the micro system of the school and of the families, the neighborhood mesosystem and exosystem, as well as by by the macro system. Collaborative work is also needed among all the stakeholders to chase away the elephant in the house and look in-depth to the root causes of poverty.

Key words:

- ❖ Poverty trap
- ❖ Academic performance
- ❖ Cognitive
- ❖ Ecological
- ❖ Psychosocial

ABBREVIATION / ACROYNMS

- HIV /AIDS ---Human Immune Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.
- PASS ---Poverty assessment study survey
- MDD ----Millennium Development Goals
- NGO ----Non-Governmental organization
- SES ----Social economic status
- TCPL -----Total Consumption Poverty line
- UN -----United Nation
- UNIADS ----Joint United Nations Programme on HIV & AIDS
- USAIDS ----United States Agency for International Development
- UNICEF ----United Nations International Children Emergency Fund.
- WHO ---World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION AND OVERVIEW TO THE STUDY

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Literature Review
 - 1.2.1 Theoretical Framework
- 1.3 Problem statement
- 1.4 Objectives of the study
- 1.5 Research question
- 1.6 Research Methodology and Design
 - 1.6.1 Research Method
 - 1.6.2 Research Design
 - 1.6.3 Description of participants and procedure
 - 1.6.4 Data Collection instruments
 - 1.6.5 Sampling Procedure
- 1.7 Ethical Consideration
- 1.8 Intended contribution to the body of knowledge
- 1.9 Definition of Terms
- 1.10 Plan of the Study
- 1.11 Conclusion

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF POVERTY TRAP

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 background
- 2.3 Conceptualizing poverty trap
- 2.4 Causes of poverty
- 2.5 Types of poverty
- 2.6 Theoretical Framework
- 2.7 Origin of poverty in South Africa
- 2.8 Origin of poverty and History of poverty
 - 2.8.1 Origin of poverty
 - 2.8.2 History of Poverty
- 2.9 Effect of Household Poverty Trap in learner academic performance
 - 2.9.1 Financial materials resouces constraint
 - 2.9. 2 Truancy and School Drop-out
 - 2.9.3 Low self esteem
 - 2.9.4 Increase in different criminality behavior

- 2.10 Relationship of Household poverty trap on learners academic performance
 - 2.10.1 Growing gap in the achievement of learners from rural and urban
 - 2.10.2 Learning Disability
 - 2.10.3 Stereotyping and stigmatisation
- 2.11 Extent of household poverty trap on learners performance
 - 2.11.1 Malnutrition
 - 2.11.2 lack of nutrition adequate food ,and health issues
 - 2.11.3 The physical environment ,home and school
 - 2.11.4 The circumstances at home and neighbourhood
 - 2.11.5 Adolescent Psychological problems
 - 2.11.6Lack of aspiration and demotivation
- 2.12 Strategies to improve academic performance of learners from poverty household
 - 2.12.1 Appropriate pedagogical practices by the educator
 - 2.12.2 School support programme
 - 2.12.3 Improvement in health services and redistribution of income
- 2.13 Comparism of poverty trap between rural and urban learners
- 2.14 Summary of the chapter

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Delimitation of the study

3.3 Rationale

3.4 Target population and sampling procedure

3.5 Research tools

3.5.1 Research Methodology

3.5.2 Research Paradigm

3.5.3 Research design table

3.6 Benefit of mixed Method

3.7 The choice of Methodology

3.7.1 Focus group interview

3.7.2 Format of Questionnaires

3.7.3 Reliability and Validity of the questionnaires

3.7.4 Validity

3.7.5 Reliability

3.7.6 Questionnaires as an instruments

3.7.7 Characteristics of a good questionnaires

3.7.8 Disadvantage of using questionnaires

3.8 Pilot study

3.9 Data processing

3.10 Ethical consideration

3.10.1 Informed concent

3.10.2 Privacy and confidentiality

3.10.3 Risks and Discomforts

3.10.4 Participation and withdrawal

3.11 Conclusion

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PRESENTATION OF THE DATA, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction.

4.2 Section A.

4.2.1 Focus group interview coding table.

4.2.2 Demographic table of the respondent on focus group interview

4.3 Section B.

4.3.1 Discussion.

4.4 Common issues that emerge from the findings.

4.5 Themes from the focus group interview.

4.5.1 Theme 1: Financial Materials resources constraint

4.5.2 Theme 2: Lack of nutrition , adequate food and health issues

4.5.2.1 Lack of nutrition and adequate food

4.5.2.2 Health challenges caused by a lack of food

4.5.3 Theme 3: The home, school and physical environment.

4.5.3.1 Effect of household chores

4.5.3.2 The effect of child labour.

4.5.3.3 The circumstances at home and neighbourhood factor

4.5.4 Theme 4 : Sexual abuse and harassment

4.5.5 Theme 5: Stigmatization and stereotyping

4.6 SECTION C

4.6.1 General characteristics of the respondents on Questionnaires.

4.7 The findings from the Questionnaires respondent

4.7.1 Relationship between academic performance of rural learners and poverty

4.7.2 Effect of poverty on the academic performance of learners in the rural secondary schools in Nongoma

4.7.3 Strategies to alleviate poverty in the rural community

4.8 Summary

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY , CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Summary

5.1.2 Summary of the findings

5.2 Synthesis of the findings

5.2.1 Financial constraint

5.2.2 stigmatisation and stereotyping

5.2.3 poor nutrition , adequate food and health issues

5.2.4 Sexual abuse and harassment

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Recommendations from this study as derived from;

5.3.2 Recommendation for further study

5.4 Limitation of the study

5.5 Conclusion

List of Tables

- ❖ Table 4.2.1 Focus group interview coding
- ❖ Table 4.2.2 Demographic table of the respondent on focus group interview
- ❖ Table 4.2.3 Showing respondent characteristics from questionnaires
- ❖ Table 4.3 Frequency and percentage distribution table
- ❖ Table 4.4 Frequency , percentage and cumulative percentage of the additional comment
- ❖ Table 4.5 – 4.7 Showing the respond view on relationship between household poverty and academic performance of learners in the rural secondary schools
- ❖ Table 4.8 – 4.11 Views of respondents on effect of poverty trap on academic performance of learners in rural secondary schools
- ❖ Table 4.12 -4.14 indicate respondent view on the strategies to alleviate poverty and assist learners from impoverish household
- ❖ A pie chat showing general characteristics of the respondent on questionnaires

REFERENCES

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION AND OVERVIEW TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

A poverty trap is considered as any reinforcing system that causes poverty to continue (Azariadis and Stachurski, 2005). The researcher has observed differences in individual's living standard and per capita income between nations and societies. Children born into less-privileged and socially excluded homes are more likely to be caught up in a poverty trap because they have little chance of receiving quality education due to the fact that school system available to most poor people is weak (South African Human Rights Commission and United Nations Children's Fund, 2004). The researcher observed here that due to the poor schools attended by the disadvantaged group, there is every reason for them to perform poorly academically and even end up to be a drop out which can eventually lead to poverty in the long run.

A study on School absenteeism and poverty conducted by Zhang (2003) found out that children living in the disadvantaged households with parents or guardians who are unemployed and in receipt of government welfare grants are more likely to miss school than their counterparts whose parents are engaged with one form of occupation or the other. Due to the financial problem faced by some household, the children that belong to that poverty group may find it difficult to be in school all the time because of the stress of working a long distance which can discourage them from attending the school.

Despite the priority being given to education by South African government since 1994, in terms of equality, access and affordability, the Southern and Eastern African Consortium on Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) survey conducted in 2007 revealed that performance differences between poor and rich South African children, especially in reading and numeracy, were much larger than between poor and rich children in other African countries (Van der Berg, 2009). The findings from the SACMEQ survey reveals the ironical scenario of two education systems operating in South Africa: one well-resourced and high-performing, serving mainly the children who comes from the privileged background, and the other a low-performing system, ineffective at translating resources introduction performance, and serving the children who come from poor background (Spaull, 2011) It is clearly implied here that level of inequality and discrimination is very wide between the rich and the poor and it is invariably reflecting in the learners performance in the schools . Moreover the effects of apartheid system on the disadvantage group in the past have not been totally eliminated therefore it is the responsibility of the Government to close this gap between the rich and the poor.

Similarly, the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) sees poverty trap as a critical problem among South African blacks and colored(UNICEF, 2014c). Schools in most disadvantaged groups lack some basic necessities and therefore children from such household are likely to receive low quality education (UNICEF 2011)

Moreover, the bulk of the poor South African children are black or colored, and are trapped in the unadventurously disadvantaged section of the elementary school system, putting them at disadvantaged in breaking the cycle of poverty into which they were born (SAHRC & UNICEF, 2011). This rising effect of poverty could lead to deep harmful consequence and limited opportunities, for such ground the poverty related effects among school children is a concern (McKiernan & Ratcliffe, 2010).

The thrust of this study, therefore, is to investigate the effect of household poverty on school in rural areas in relation to their performance in school. Moore et al. (2009) affirms that the study of household poverty as it affects children learning is important, since most studies links poverty with lower levels of child well-being. Unlike the children who come from the privileged families, disadvantaged children are most likely to drop out of schools for different reasons, perform badly academically, and have behavioral, health or emotional challenges. This study intends to investigate the varieties of learning challenges that are peculiar to school children from families experiencing abject poverty, children who are disadvantaged early in childhood and those who are trapped in a cycle of deficiency and poverty.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

A range of studies (Jarjoura, Triplett, & Brinker, (2002); Zhang, (2003); Van der Berg, (2008); Spaull, (2013) have been conducted which show a significant relationship between poverty, household income and poor academic performance in schools.

When describing the different aspects of the home environment, Douglas highlighted parental attitude as a key aspect which affects pupils' schooling. Firstly, his findings revealed that middle class parents took more interest in their children's progress at school, while the low-income class parents did not. Douglas's studies also found that middle class parents became relatively more interested as their children grew older. The difference in their attitudes toward their children's schooling was measured using the frequency of school visits being made by the parents to find out how their children were getting on with their work. The studies conducted by Douglas also revealed that parents from middle class households not only visited their children schools more, but also interested in seeing the Head of their children schools as well as the class teachers, 'whereas low income parents usually pleased to see the class teacher only. The observation here is that the low income parents feel uncomfortable and lack confident about their children altitude and performance which in turn results in inferiority complex.

In addition Akomolafe M J and Olorunfemi Olabisi, F A (2011). The input of family type on secondary school students, performance. learners performance differ due to the kind of family a learner come from , most especially those learners with poor background and financial deficiency always perform poorly in their learning activity.

According to Sachs et al (2004) , the ravaging spread ,causes and effects of diseases like malaria has been more significant in certain regions of Africa than in others, especially where people lives in poverty. The scholars argue that the spread of diseases in these areas is preventing children from having regular attendance in schools, and this is directly linked to the chronic poverty presence in these areas.

Moreover, household poverty is seen as another pathway to ill-health in school age children, resulting from malnutrition and lack of balanced diet. Malnutrition undermines the physical capacity and capabilities of young people to engage in critical thinking and reasoning required in the academic space. That is why, most of the time, children from poor households cannot engage in debate and literary activities as productively as those from the privileged background.

The relationships that exist between household poverty and learning performances of school age children in low-income communities are obvious. Earlier studies have shown that poverty can re-emerge itself via low educational accomplishment and low-quality education (Ceroni, 2001; Alkire & Santos,

2009). This study, however, is more interested in knowing different parameters through which household poverty contributes low performance in learning of the children who find themselves caught in the web of such households.

1.2.1 Theoretical framework

The study is informed by Bronfenbrenner,s(2008) ecological theory which suggest that a child's surroundings , including their home , school , work ,church ,neighborhood , culture and government ,has an influence on the way the child develops and grow . (Donald et al 2010) this theory examines the learner's development within the context of the system of relationship that forms their environment.

According to this model, the environment is the small, immediate circle or area in which we lives. The ecological model states that child development within an interactive system of nested influences between the child and the environment. Bronfenbrenner,s ecological environment consists of the following five nested structures: Microsystems , mesosystem ,exosystem ,macrosystem and chronosystem .(Donald et al 2010 , Berk 2007) Children's Microsystems include any immediate relationship they interact with such as their immediate family ,schools ,peers and neighbors . How this organization interact with the child has effect on how the child develop mentally and psychologically , the more nurturing and encouraging these relationship and places are the better the child will be able to grow and develop. (Donald et al 2010) . The chronosystem involves the development over time that affects the interactions between these system as well as their influences on the academics and intellectual development of learners.

Basic understanding of this interaction of the system is therefore the key to understand how children develop and what factors lead to their poor performance in their learning activities. While varieties environments and different mechanism exist, the researcher is interested in examine how poverty acts on families or household to influence academic performance of the learners by deeply examine the five environments which include the following: family /home, neighborhood, peers, school, living standard and government.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

While there are studies which project children with perpetual poor academic performance to be those living in poor homes (Pagani, Boulerice, Vitaro, and Tremblay, 1999; Yi, Zhang, Luo, Shi, Mo, Chen, and Rozelle, 2012; Singh & Sarkar, 2014), more inquiry is essential to establish the connection between household poverty and learners' poor performance in rural schools. Despite several strategies and aid initiatives introduced by the South African government, through the Department of Basic Education, to assist learners from the low-income households and communities to access quality education, there

seems to be a wide margin in terms of the performances of learners from the urban schools and those from the schools in rural settlements in national examinations.

This study therefore seeks to contribute to socio-economic view of household poverty and academic performance of high school learners in rural communities. Studying the relationship between the two concepts assisted the researcher to highlight the overlaps between the learners' needs in the classroom and the needs and priorities of the household. The study established to what extent is the social and economic statuses of household affects the learning needs and academic performance of a child.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between household poverty and school performance of children in Nongoma area of Zululand District. The specific objectives set for the study are:

- To explore the effects of household poverty trap in learners performance within secondary schools
- To investigate the extent of household poverty trap in learners performance within rural secondary schools learners.
- To determine the relationship between household poverty and poor performance among the rural secondary school learners
- To explore strategies to be used to improve academic performance in the rural area.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- What are the effects of household poverty trap in learner's performance within secondary schools?
- To what extent is household poverty prevalence in rural secondary schools of Nongoma in Zululand District?
- What are the relationships between household poverty and poor performance among the rural secondary school learners?
- What Strategies to improve learner's academic performance in the rural secondary schools?

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.6.1 research method

Within this study the researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative approach thus adopting a mixed method paradigm. The quantitative approach according to Grinnell and Unrau (2005) is more effective approach in attaining specific and precise understanding of an aspect or of an already well defined problem, on the other hand the qualitative approach seeks to answer questions that provide a more comprehensive study of a few peoples or focus group , thus both these approaches underpin this study and balance was maintained for the use of the two approach for quality research .

1.6.2 Research Design

mixed method (quantitative and qualitative)

Research design is the approach followed to conduct a study. Curwin and Slater (2008) describe a research design as a fundamental map that signify both the processes and approaches for the collection of data and analysis of the data collected .Descriptive research design was adopted for this research. The survey for the study was carried out using both quantitative and qualitative techniques which is otherwise known as 'mixed-method'. The researcher make used of the questionnaire to collect quantitative data from the learners in selected high schools while focus group interview was conducted for a selected number of teachers that teach some subjects that required the use of some tools and materials in which these group of learners failed to have due to their financial challenges in their home. The reason for multiple approaches is to maximize relevant data gathering among the target subjects for the study

1.6.3 Description of participants and procedure

population for the study

The target population for this study was 5 educators and 100 learners in five selected rural secondary schools in Nongoma circuit in Zululand District. Field study was adopted for this study

1.6.4 data collection instrument

Questionnaires was designed to collect data from the learners, while focus group interview was conducted among the selected numbers of educators handling the key subjects, especially the ones which require the learners to posse's essentials tools in the school .

1.6.5 Sampling procedure

Purposive sampling technique was used to select educators who are teaching learners that experiences these challenges as a result of the household disadvantages. Palys (2008) notes purposive sampling technique to be useful when researcher wants to access a particular subject of individuals. Purposive sampling also enables researcher to start data collection with a purpose in mind by including the relevant people and exclude those who do not suit the purpose (Dolores and Tongco, 2007). By using this sampling technique, the researcher was able to collect data only from the educator who are experiencing poor performance from the learners due to the household deprivation. The researcher covered five (5) public high schools in Nongoma area of the Zululand District .In addition, twenty (20) learners was also selected as participants from each of the school, making 100 learners in total

1.6.6 Validity and Reliability

The reliability of the questionnaire was measured using Cronbach's alpha to determine the level of internal consistency of the questions in the instrument. Cronbach's alpha is a method of measuring internal consistency of a set of test or variables in an instrument (Gilem & Gilem, 2003). In addition, the final draft of the instrument was submitted to the research supervisors for editing and necessary suggestions before administration. Validity refers to the credibility or believability of the research, it also show the consistency in the instruments used for the research. Reliability also describe how reliable is the instruments used for the purpose of the study. It helps the researcher to have a quality of the study and a quality result for the research work.

1.6.7 Data Analysis

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modeling data with goals of discovering useful information, suggesting conditions and supporting decision making (Gardner (2009) . Descriptive data analysis of percentage and frequency counts was used to analyze the data collected

The responses elicited from the focus group interview conducted among the teachers was discussed thematically under the discussion of finding

This researcher employed the use of descriptive statistics to analyze the data collected quantitatively. Brink et al (2012) views descriptive statistics as an approach which employs measures such as frequency distributions and percentages through the use of SPSS and measures of relationship.

1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues in research majorly focus on participating groups and entities of a research activity, intellectual ownership and plagiarism. The participating schools and individuals were guaranteed that the data obtained would be treated with utmost confidentiality, and that the results of the findings would be used for research purposes only. Information provided by the respondents would not be disclosed by the researcher. Similarly, to ensure that the participants felt safe, they were not required to give their names, addresses and cell phone numbers on the questionnaire for the study. Findings of the study were reported in such a way that the respondents identity would not be traceable.

I also wish to state further that I have read the University's policy and procedures on research ethics, and its policy and procedures on managing and preventing acts of plagiarism, and I understand clearly the contents therein. In view of the above, I declare that to the best of my knowledge, my research does not fall into any category that requires special ethical obligations other than the ones described above. I hereby promise to abide by the general principles set out in the University's policies and the obligations which the policies imposed on me, and to mitigate any ethical and other risks that might arise.

In particular, I undertake to:

- Respect the dignity, safety and well-being of others; I also respect anonymity and confidentiality;
- Consider and sensitive to different cultures, language, beliefs, perceptions, and customs of persons that participated in or are affected by this research;
- Ensure that the research is relevant to the broad legal and developmental needs of South Africa and to the individual needs of those who may be affected by this study;
- Conduct the research and produce my dissertation on my own, subject to normal supervisory and collegial assistance;
- Acknowledge and attribute to others the ideas, designs and writings that are not original;
- Reference my work accurately according to my chosen referencing guide, I also complied with copyright requirements and seek the necessary permissions, where required;
- Make use of text-matching software throughout the research writing process, as discussed and required by my supervisors, and submitted appropriate reports in this regard with my proposal and thesis when they are in final draft form; and

- Seek ethical clearance from the University of Zululand Research Ethics Committee to allow this study to proceed.
- In the course of this study, all issues emanated was adequately reported to my able supervisor for appropriate actions in terms of relevant University policy.

1.8 INTENDED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

The study enhanced understanding of the reasons why some learners perform poorly in the class and the relationship between the household status and learners' performance in schools. This study lead to the generation of new knowledge about how the condition of household affects the classroom learning and academic outcome of learners, thus enables better understanding of what provision to be made to assist the learners in that category. The study also lead to promotion of better policies from government and stakeholders on education for poverty stricken rural communities and townships in South Africa, in connection with the well-being of schools, learners and teachers in the community. The study also lead to the formulation of better and adequate policy by the Government on how to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor and also generate new policies for regional development.

1.9 .DEFINITION OF TERMS

Poverty trap: This can be define as any reinforcement system that causes poverty to continue (Azariadis and Stachurski, 2005) .It can also be define as level of poverty that generate from one generation to the other without any means of breaking it . Poverty trap is a mechanism which make it very difficult for people to escape poverty

Poverty: Poverty is the inability to afford a defined basket of consumption items which are important to sustain life whether food and non-food

Learner: A learner is a student that is undertaking studies for acquiring certain skill in the four wall of the classroom refers to as school under the supervision of an educator .This only focus on the learners from rural secondary schools

Psychosocial: Entails the physical, cognitive, moral, emotional, and social development, Merriam – Webster (2012) defines psychosocial as a term used to underpin the close relationship between the psychological and social aspects of one's life thus relating social conditions to mental and emotional factors. The psychosocial process is the process whereby a person sense of self emerge as a result of the interaction between his /her social and personal side, meaning that individual development takes place in a social context. Tuckman and Monetti (2011) . The psychosocial, therefore has to do

with a situation in which social and cultural variables are considered relative to the extent to which they influence the development of an individual.

Academic performance: refers to the ability one display in relation to one's achievement at school level. The level of achievement one reaches after official education. Seshamani and Mwamba (2010) define academic achievement as the education attainment over a specific period of time. In this study, academic performance refers to the level of achievement of learners in the formal educational system.

Cognitive development : Indicates the development of a wide variety of thought processes and intellectual abilities , including attention , memory , academic and everyday knowledge , problem solving , imagination , creativity , and the uniquely human capacity to represent the world through language (Santrock , 2009)

1.10 PLAN OF THE STUDY

Chapter one: Introduction. Chapter one will deal with the motivation for the study undertaken, problem statement, and objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study and operational definition of terms.

Chapter two: Literature review. The chapter will review literature on the relevant previous studies that have been conducted in this regard.

Chapter three: Research methodology and design. This chapter discusses the empirical enquiry in line with the responses to the questionnaire and interview that will enable the researcher to test the formulated research questions for the study. The research questions and hypotheses will be fully discussed.

Chapter four: Data collection, analysis, presentation and discussion of results.

Chapter five: Conclusion, recommendations and suggestion for further study. The final chapter discusses the conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further study.

1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter serve as a foundation for the study . The background of the study was discussed and the preliminary literature was also discussed in this chapter. The researcher outlined the objectives for the study and the research questions in chapter one . This chapter lay an appropriate foundation in which the research build upon in the remaining chapter of the study .

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF POVERTY TRAP

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter, the problem under investigation was introduced and highlighted in terms of its nature and scope. The background to this study was also provided, and operational terms and other relevant concepts were defined. Furthermore, the aims and objectives of the study were outlined together with the delimitation of the field and the method of the study.

This study will be investigating about the effect of household poverty trap on the academic performance of the rural secondary school learners in Nongoma in Zululand District. This chapter will be dealing with conceptualizing poverty trap, looking at past and contemporary issues pertaining to effect of poverty on academic performance as well as trends in South Africa and global level .

The researcher believes that If poverty and academic performance has no unique relationship in the rural schools , it could be said that its effects towards the learners from poverty household would be minimal and controllable .

Literature review is the chapter of the study that explores the accumulated and relevant knowledge on the research objectives (Neuman, 2011). It reveals what others have done and then builds on the knowledge as foundation and guide for further study. Creswell and Clarke (2007) consider literature as an important aspect of the research study, because it promotes a clear knowledge of the study to the researcher and the readers on the results of the relevant studies done in the study.

The purpose of this chapter is to explore firstly the theory of socio-constructive learning that underpins this study, discuss the fundamental concepts and components of poverty, causes of poverty, origin of poverty and history of poverty. The chapter also highlights the limitations and criticisms of several related research studies on the study's objectives. The chapter indeed is a broad overview that throws light on home, community and school partnerships and its effects on learners 'academic performance and the implications of the social economic status on the academic performance of learners

Poverty can be a trap limiting educational achievement of most learners whose parents are limited by economic resources to provide better living conditions for. In order to determine how poverty has trapped educational advancement and achievement of poor learners in South Africa and in particular Nongoma area in the Zululand District.

2.2 BACKGROUND

Learners reared by economically disadvantaged parents present a challenge for public educator and administrator . Learners who darken schoolhouse doorways not ready to learn for whatever reasons confront challenges throughout their life time (Rouse , Brooks-Gunn,&McLanahan , 2003). Poverty negatively influenced school readiness , academic achievements and overall school success. Moreover , due to diminished school readiness and poor performance , economically disadvantaged learners often experienced lowered level of school success .Unfortunately , lack of success , poor academic performance begin when learners encountered educators who were socially conditioned to view poor people as morally inferior , in other words a class that remained in poverty by choice and altitude (Amatea & West – Olatunji 2007). Some educator erroneously expressed the view that learners who

grew up in poverty were beyond repair . Educator behaved as if these learners were so damaged by their early experiences, they might be too difficult or too hard to educate (Wilkins,2006) such a misinformed view was certainly unfortunate because some educators failed to provide these needy learners with a successful school experience that might eventually lead them to break the poverty cycle. In view of the obstacles discussed , school failure or poor academic performance was more likely an outcome of learners who were economically disadvantaged (Amatea & West –Olatunji 2007). Poverty had detrimental effects on its youngest victims because they were more likely to be retained and many eventually failed to complete high school . (Lewit et al , 1997; Thomas &Stockton,2003).

2.3 CONCEPTUALISING POVERTY TRAP

The concept of poverty is controversial in absolute definitions. Its different contextualization makes it difficult to provide a single, all encompassed and standardised definition of poverty but in relative terms. Different authors provide different definitions for the concept of poverty. The economics definition of poverty is typically based on income measures , with the absolute poverty line calculated as the food expenditure necessary to meet dietary recommendations, supplemented by a small allowance for non-food goods(Ravallion , 1992) .

Poverty is a dynamic process, with some families cycling in and out of poverty in relatively short time, resulting in intermittent rather than persistent poverty (Narayan & Petersch, 2007). The United States Census Bureau (2008) defines poverty in a statistical manner; by assigning a dollar amount to certain variables , such as family size and structure , it creates a minimum monetary amount necessary to provide adequate basic needs. A family income falling short of this amount is then classified as living in poverty (Bureau of the census , 2008). However ,many poverty researchers use a broader definition suggesting that “ poor” means lacking not only material assets and health but also capabilities , such as social belongings, cultural identity , respect and dignity , information and education.

The World Bank Organization describes poverty “Poverty is hunger. Poverty is lack of shelter. Poverty is being sick and not being able to see a doctor. Poverty is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having job, is fear the future, living one day at a time “

Poverty has many faces, changing from place to place and across time, and has been described in many ways. Most often, poverty is a situation people want to escape. So poverty is a call to action – for the poor and wealthy alike – a call to change the world so that many more may have enough to eat , adequate shelter , access to education and health , protection from violence , and a voice in what happens in their environment and communities which defines the concept of development.

Poverty is generally divided into two types: situational poverty is a sudden decline in resources, usually resulting from loss of job, death of a family member and divorce. . Although, it does not come without psychological impact, it is generally considered relatively temporary. When a family's socioeconomic status has remained below poverty for more than three generation, this is considered generational poverty or poverty trap (Carter, & Brrett , 2006) .

Poverty is often correlated with vulnerability and social exclusion, but they are not the same (Atkinson, 2008). Walker (2006) asserts that chronic poverty brings very few opportunities for people to escape from it. This can disengage learnerren, which explains why the experience of poverty is closely related to social exclusion. An example is that of a family where the parents are not employed. They live in an overcrowded household; both parents lack confidence, and have low levels of literacy and numeracy. The family has few resources across all dimensions of poverty, which makes it very vulnerable to negative changes in their circumstances.



Picture showing some household living in perpetual poverty

Given the above, the poor often lack adequate food, shelter, education, and health, and may experience deprivations that prevent them from leading the kind of life that everyone values. They also face extreme vulnerability to ill health, economic dislocation and natural disasters (Nsingo, 2011). Moreover, they are exposed to ill-treatment by institutions of the state and society, and are powerless to influence key decisions affecting their lives (UNIFEM, 2011). Thus, poor people everywhere continue to suffer from unacceptably low social conditions and the lack of access to services. The poor learnerren are no exception; hence the need to explore the psychosocial effects of poverty on their academic performance.

Poverty can be considered as a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education, and also of information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services. It is also characterized by a lack of participation in decision-making, and in civil, social and cultural life. As a result of an inadequate income and resources, learner may be excluded and marginalized from participating in activities which are considered the norm for other people in society, leading to a negative attitude and a low self-concept, thus negatively affecting their academic performance.

2.4 CAUSES OF POVERTY

The imerscas factsheet number 12 of (2000) state that in the SADC region, most countries experiences an average population growth rate of more three percentage against the background of slow economic growth and continuous dilapidation of the natural resources base. The increase in population further exerts pressure on the meager financial, materials and natural resources of a nation, causing more families to become poorer. For examples in South Africa, and mostly in the rural region, the level of poverty continue to increase at geometric rate due to poor access to quality education. Birds and Shepherd (2003) on their research on chronic poverty in rural area, revealed that, 20% of the poor heads of households had schooling beyond primary. More than 60% had not completed primary school. The study reveals that extent to which lack of education leads to poverty. An uneducated individual's person cannot have access to a gainful employment due to lack of skills required to perform the required task. This individual does menial piece job which pay very little.

According to Birds and Sharped (2003) another causes of poverty can be link to the death of the male head of household. The main causes of the death is HIV & AIDS. This has resulted in many working class parents dying, leaving behind orphans who have no one to fend for. Many poor families according to the study are the child headed households. Children who head families cannot sufficiently fend for their Youngers brothers and sisters. They may end up selling the properties that was left by their parents in order to settle for food and other basics amenities. The remaining children end up living in perpetual poverty lives.

Another reason or causes of poverty is racial discrimination which was so paramount here in South Africa in the past and hinder many individual the opportunity to have access to quality education. Lee and Birkharm's (2002) study concluded that 34% of black and 29% of colored were living in poverty compared to 9% of white population .

Another related and often cited causes of poverty was linked to female headed household according Danzinger and Gottschalk (1995).

2.5 TYPES OF POVERTY

Poverty can be expressed as multifaceted, and multi-dimensional concept that describes the economic, social, political, and environmental well-being of the people (World Bank, 2010). World Bank Development Report (2012) describes poverty as the inability of individuals or family to attain a minimum standard of living, not having enough to eat, a low life expectancy, a higher rate of infant mortality, a low educational standard, enrolment and opportunities, poor drinking water, inadequate health care, unfit housing conditions, and the lack of active participation in the decision-making process. Poverty therefore pronounced deprivation in well-being and as seen, comprises many dimension (Neumann ,2009). It includes low income and the inability to acquire the basic goods and services necessary for survival with dignity.

In addition, poverty also encompasses poor access to clean water and sanitation, inadequate physical security, the lack of a voice, and the insufficient capacity and opportunity to better one's life (Grimm, 2012; Connell, 2010). Furthermore, poverty is also characterized by the failure of individuals, households or entire communities to command sufficient resources to satisfy their basic needs, namely, food, shelter, clothing, health and education; it is a state of deprivation and insecurity (Abebe, 2009). Implicit to the above, poverty therefore indicates the extent to which an individual does without resources. In most cases, poor people lack the capability to function effectively in society; hence they feel marginalized and stigmatized.

The researcher observed that what might be called poverty in developed countries might not be defined thus in developing and underdeveloped countries and most especially in South Africa context. The World Bank Development Report (2012) for example, defines poverty as living on less than 1, 25 USD per day. This definition does not apply to people in South Africa, especially those in the rural areas and in particular the part of the country in which this research was done. The definition of poverty in rural area of Nongoma goes further to look at people without cattle, shelter , three square meals , electricity , because some household are still using firewood to cook in this environment and some other basic needs of life are lacking .

In the urban and towns, people without their own houses, land to build on, stoves, television sets, refrigerators, and those who cannot afford to pay their electricity and water bills and their rent, are regarded as poor. Thus, material wealth can be used to measure the extent of poverty in this context. Given the above, understanding poverty is not an easy task, and reaching a common and universally agreeable definition of poverty is difficult and a controversial one. Poverty remains a global problem

of huge proportions, which needs great attention to reduce it. In this research, poverty is defined as being unable to afford the basic human, financial and material needs. Poverty trap is also a spiraling mechanism which forces people to remain poor.

Poverty can be seen as absolute or as relative, and is associated with a lack of income, or with the failure to attain your capabilities. It can be chronic or temporary, and is sometimes closely related or associated with inequality (Chireshe, 2010; Emwawu & Osujo, 2010). Absolute poverty is the absence of adequate resources, and it hampers learning in developing countries because of poor nutrition and health, the circumstances at home (the lack of books, lighting or a place to do homework, distance of home to the school and incapability to pay for coupon due to long distance of home from school), and the education of the parents (Neuman, 2009). For example, in most rural areas in South Africa where the black people were marginalized during apartheid regime , there is no electricity, and the people cannot afford candles or other sources of lighting. Poverty discourages enrolment and survival to higher grades, and also reduces learning in schools (Robertson, 2011). From the above analysis, it is therefore clear to say that both relative and absolute poverty perspectives are common among the families from a poor background; it can reduce the motivation of the relatively poor, and their ability to gain the full benefit of education.

generation .

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is underpin mainly by Urie Bronfenbrenner,s ecological theory .The rationale for this theory in the study is the application of this theory to the environmental factors that affect leaners upbringing in a community which eventually have an impact in his or her academic performance. The perspectives explore the psychosocial effects of poverty on the academic performance of learners from the economically disadvantaged household which the researcher find appropriate and suitable to illustrate the situation of learners in the rural area of Nongoma in Zululand District. This theory was used by the researcher because it examine the in-depth of learners development and growth in relation to his academic achievement. The theory state that the environment in which learner develop and grow have an impact in his academic outcome . Thus , the theory emphasized that the financial status of the household have an immeasurable effect and impact on the learners academic performance and based on the environment in which the researcher used for this study , the rural area of Nongoma where there is high degree of poverty , the theory was much appropriate for the study .

Various development theories emphasized on the nature and nurture interaction in the development of learnerren. But Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory looks at a learner environment in

terms of its quality and context (Witt, 2012, 2008; Donald, et al., 2010) Bronfenbrenner's theory suggests that a person's surroundings, including his/her home, school, work, church, neighborhood, culture and government, all have an influence on the way one develops (Donald, et al., 2010 ; Woolley & Kaylor, 2006).

This study looks at the learner's development within the context of the system of relationships that forms his or her environment. The ecological perspective can be defined as an interaction between an individual and the environment. The Ecological Systems Theory views the learner's development in terms of the reciprocal influences between the learner and the multiple levels of the surrounding environment (Donald, et al., 2010, Berk, 2007, Berk, 2006, Rathus, 2006, Donald, et al. (2010) indicates that the ecological theory is based on the interdependence between different organisms and their physical environment. The ecological perspective, as discussed by Bronfenbrenner (2005, 2008), provides a framework from which multiple contextual factors affecting the academic performance of learnerren can be viewed. Bronfenbrenner and Ceci (1994,) suggest that individual development is a result of many direct and an indirect influence, which either facilitate and limit the individual's potential.

In the ecological theory the relationships between organisms and their environment are seen holistically; therefore, all parts affect the system as a whole. According to Bray, Gooskens, Khan, Moses and Seekings (2010), the system is greater than the sum of its parts. So, how the learnerren think, feel, behave and develop as persons is inevitably connected and transcend to the social grouping, forces and relationships that make up their environment, for example families, peer groups, the school and other social groupings, the socio-economic forces, and the interpersonal, cultural, political and power relationships. Thus, things that happen in one part of the system can affect the other parts, and invariably, the ecological system as a whole. Changes and conflict in any one layer will flow throughout the other layers (Bray, et al., 2010; Witt, 2012).

Bronfenbrenner highlights that a learner grows within a complex system of relationships, influenced by multiple levels of the surrounding community. Bronfenbrenener (2008) proposed an ecological systems model of the lifelong progressive accommodations individuals make to the changing environments in which they develop. Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner (2008) conceptualized the ecological environment, or the context in which human development occurs, as a set of nested structures. Bronfenbrenner (in Rathus, 2006; Berk 2007; Berk 2006, Donald, et al., 2010) describes an ecological environment as consisting of the following five nested structures, namely; the microsystems, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem.

Bronfenbrenner in his theoretical approach, illustrated the five nested structures of the ecological system which may be used in examining the psychosocial effect of poverty trap on the academic performance of a learner in rural areas of Nongoma circuit in Zululand District of South Africa. Donald et al. (2010) indicates that, things that occur in one part of the system can have an implication on the other parts, and invariably the ecological system at large.

The theory by and large indicates that development is explained in terms of interactions, for example between a learner and his or her environment. (Boyd & Bee, 2006). Having a clear concept of this system reflects the understanding of how a learner grows or develops and what factors are responsible for his or her poor academic performance. Comparing different levels of influence, developmental process and the result from a life course perspective, is challenging from a methodological and resource implication, therefore, limited research using this model exists (Witt, 2012, Bray et al 2010). Shonkoff and Phillips (2000) emphasized it is necessary to understand the variety and interactive social, economic, cultural and community level influence, which alone and in conjunctions affects the process of development, and learner's academic performance.

In the above discussion the development and academic performance of a learner explain in different dimensions, taking into account, the influence of everything surrounding a learner, and also the direct and indirect factors affecting him or her in the learning activities which eventually results in poor academic performance of learners in the rural area of Nongoma in Zululand District of KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa.

According to this model, the environment is the small, immediate circle or area in which we live. The ecological model states that child development within an interactive system of nested influences between the child and the environment. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of environment consists of the following five nested structures: Microsystems, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. (Donald et al 2010, Berk 2007) Children's Microsystems include any immediate relationship or organization they interact with such as their immediate family, schools, peers and neighbors. How these groups or organizations interact with the child has an effect on how the child develops mentally and psychologically. The more nurturing and encouraging these relationships and places are the better the child will be able to grow and develop. (Donald et al 2010). The chronosystem involves the development over time that affects the interactions between these systems as well as their influences on the academics and intellectual development of learners.

Basic understanding of this interaction of the system is therefore the key to understand how children develop and what factors lead to their poor performance in their learning activities. While varieties

environments and different mechanisms exist, the researcher will be interested in examining how poverty acts on household to influence academic performance of the learners by deeply examining the five environments which include the following: family /home, neighborhood, peers, school, living standard and government.

2.7 ORIGIN OF POVERTY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Over the last hundred years, political influences on the South Africa labour market have been characterised by a plethora of legislation that was instrumental in maintaining until the early 1970s, a workforce strictly divided on the basis of race. Though particular economic forces also often highlighted the inappropriateness of a radically constituted labour market. During the early 20th century, the economy seemed to thrive on a divided workforce, but industrialisation and the need for increased skills meant that a segregated labour market would later become a hindrance to economic progress.

Political apartheid became institutionalized after 1948, and eventually operated at three levels. At the macro level, grand apartheid tried to create black nation states and to give this economic content by development of the homelands and the policy of industrialised decentralization. At the intermediate level, apartheid emphasized separation between race groups through influx control, urban settlement patterns, population removals and separation schools. At the micro level, petty apartheid emphasized separation between individuals of different racial groups through separate amenities such as, parks, sport fields, prohibition of interracial marriage and sexual relations. While macro level was the most costly in fiscal terms, meso level apartheid measures probably had a greater detrimental economic impact through their effects on the labour market.

The cost of these measures could be borne with ease as long as the economy was still relatively underdeveloped, inwards looking and expanding rapidly. However these costs grew with time especially after the end of the 1960s economic boom. The government promoted the employment of whites in state controlled enterprises and in the burgeoning bureaucracy, revitalised public relief programmes to ensure short term employment for whites, gave assistance to Afrikaner business, and supported commercial (white) agriculture through a variety of measures.

One of the first actions of the new government was to overturn the 1946 Fagan Report, which had argued that black urbanization should be viewed as a natural outcome of industrialisation and should be regulated but not prevented. The Sauer Commission witnessed a reversion to the Stallard principle of spatial separation of races, where blacks had to reside in rural areas and only work in urban areas when required by whites (Lipton 1986). Indeed, a striking feature of this period was the energy put into reaffirming and tightening up the influx control, labour bureaus were established

through the 1968 Bantu Regulation Act to control the movement of such labour. Pass law related arrest reached 700 000 in 1968 (Lipton, 1986) which constituted approximately one arrest for every twenty economically Africans .

The Bantu labour Act of 1953 tightenned the exclusion of Africans from the industrial relation system by barring Africans workers from registered Unions and forbidding strikes by Africans employees (Greenberg 1980) . Instead Africans workers were provided with a separate system of works ' and 'liason ' committees , within which management and Africans workers were supposed to negotiate terms of employment (Lipton 1986). The upwards mobility of black workers was halted by series of complementary laws .The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1956 , assured the maintenance of the racial devision of labour and significantly widened the ambit of the civilized labour policy to all sector .

In reaction to employer resistance , a 1959 amendment ton the Act assured that the state could over-rule an industrial council agreement , thus giving the state almost complete control over hiring practice of private employer. White workers were giving preferences in the public sector and in many cases black labour was substituted by white labour (Lipton 1986:24) . In government services , for example Africans employment fell by 12% between 1946 &1951. As an auxiliary to job creation , the 1953 Bantu education Act require that Africans education be largely self funded , thus tying expenditure on Africans education to revenue earned in the form of taxes from Africans (Bronberger , 1982). In the early years of National party rule , expenditure on African education fell in per capital terms , declining from 13% of white levels in 1953 to only 10% in 1961 (SAIRR1961).

The Africans school leavers are at a severe disadvantaged when they entered the labour market . A high degree of discrimination were melted on them in the form of the civilized labour policy which gave preferences to the white workers . The job mobility of Africans workers was curtailed and their bargaining powerb reduced through constraints onn trade union activity. The Africans workers faced a battery of laws that sought to undermine their ability to accumulate human capital , to increase their wages , to gather relevant job experience and to negotiate for better wages and good working condition that can improve their living standard and enable them to break the web of poverty .This really left many Africans in perpetual poverty till today because many of the Africans failed to acces quality education , good work with standard income and this has been existing from one generation to another

2.8 ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF POVERTY

2.8.1 Origin of poverty

Despite the general title, *Poverty* only really covers Western Europe, with a nod to central Europe and Poland, and, though it touches on the contemporary world and looks back at earlier antecedents, its focus is more on the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is there and then that Geremek places the origins of distinctively modern ideas about and approaches to poverty. (Those who aren't interested in that period may find *Poverty* heavy going: it is a solid work of historical scholarship.)

Geremek begins with medieval poverty, looking first at Christian doctrine and ideology, at the difference between exaltation of the spiritual, voluntary poverty of ascetics and the degradation of the genuinely poor. He describes the practice of begging and the operation of charitable institutions: beggars "were an integral part of the social 'division of labour' and participated in organized forms of corporate professional life". And he explores the sociology of medieval poverty, its demographics, geography, and economics.

Attitudes to poverty changed with the broader "disintegration" of medieval society. Starting with the Black Death, the period saw changes in the balance between prices and wages, food crises, and demographic and economic expansion: the sixteenth century was "a turning-point in long-term economic trends". Increasing poverty in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was largely the result of "transformations in the agrarian system and the social structure of the countryside", with the progressive changes driven by movement towards a cash economy superimposed on the ordinary cycle of famine. And there are a growing number of studies of the role of poverty in the origins of capitalism, of variations between "advanced" and "backward" regions, and of its dimensions in particular cities.

Geremek next presents case studies of reforms of charity from Paris, Venice, and Ypres in the 1520s and from Grenoble, Rouen, Lyons, Valladolid, and Norwich later in the century. Though municipalities went their own way, there were common themes.

Local reforms, regardless of the extent of their proven success or permanence, always involved the same measures: taking a census of paupers, expelling as many of them as possible from the city, distinguishing those qualifying for support by various identifying signs, centralizing the administration of hospitals and social aid and providing, mostly through taxes, the resources for their continued activity.

Attempts at a more centralized approach included the imperial edict of 1531 and in England the edicts of Henry VIII and the Poor Law of 1597 to 1601. Geremek also looks at some of the sixteenth

century writers who debated the theology and politics of charity: Luther, Erasmus, Vivés, Frycz, de Soto, and Giginta.

Geremek also connects the response to beggars with the origins of modern prisons: "Before prison became widespread as a method of punishing and re-educating offenders, it was used in modern Europe as an instrument in implementing social policy with regard to beggars". The sixteenth century saw the origins of workhouses in England and moves in Rome to segregate and confine the poor, while the seventeenth brought the General Hospital and "the great imprisonment" in France. A brief chapter at the end of *Poverty* looks at the contemporary world (by which Geremek means the last two hundred years), touching on theorists from Marx to Harrington, the improvement of welfare systems — "the just distribution of goods no longer belonged to the domain of charity; it was henceforth a socio-political issue" — and the poverty of nations

2.8.2. History of poverty

The World Bank announced two goals that would guide its millennium development plan on poverty alleviation worldwide in 2013. The first goal is the eradication of extreme poverty. It was the target by 2030 of reducing below 3% (percent) of the world population living in extreme poverty which is described as those living below poverty line income of 1,25 international dollars in 2005 purchasing power parity (ppp) term .

The international poverty line has subsequently been revised in 2015 to 1,90 PPP- adjusted dollars a day per person in 2011 ppp terms.

The second goal is promoting the growth of per capita real income of the poorest 40 percent of the population in each country. In June 2015, the World Bank established the Commission on Global Poverty to advise it on how to monitor global poverty in light of the Twin Goals .The measurement of extreme poverty has long been a high-profile activity of the World Bank, covering initially developing countries and now extended to the world as a whole. The first section, "From \$1 a Day to Sustainable Development Goal, gives a brief account of the historical background in the World Bank's research. The next section describes the 2015 World Bank estimates that are our point of departure. This sets the scene for the assessment of the future monitoring of global poverty in the sections "Assessment: Household Surveys and Population Data" and "Assessment: Monitoring over time." These contain recommendations as to how the monitoring up to 2030 should be conducted. The introduction of the recommendations sequentially in the course of the analytical sections means, however, that their internal coherence may be obscured. The concluding section, therefore, brings together the recommendations under the three headings: raw materials (data), analysis, and presentation.

Out of the total world population of about 6.8 billion, 925 million people do not have enough to eat; about 98% of the world's undernourished people live in developing countries. Approximately 306 million learnerren live in sub-Sahara Africa (UNICEF, 2008:113). At least 45% of learnerren in most African countries live below the poverty line (World Bank, 2007) This implies that at least 137 million African learnerren of primary school age do not attend school (UNICEF, 2008, 2007).

In addition, almost one billion people in the world today are unable to read a book, or even sign their names. The majority of them are learnerren from poor family background with low standard of living. Many of them cannot afford the minimum school fees or some necessary basic resources to access education (Atkinson, 2008).

Research has shown that millions of the rural learners in most African country do not have access to education, despite concerted efforts to push the cause forward. Okeke, et al. (2012) identified learner labour, poverty, and the lack of sponsorship, a quest for wealth, bereavement, truancy, broken homes, and the engagement of learners as house helps, as the factors, or the clog in the wheel of learner's access to education. According to World Bank Development Report (2012), more than 350 million people, over half of Africa's population, live below the poverty line of one dollar a day. This implies that poverty also includes learner and since the background is very poor, it is very difficult for learnerren in that category to excel in the high school, many of them become drop out of school, many did not achieve any academic success due to psychosocial effect of their economic background.

2.9 EFFECT OF HOUSEHOLD POVERTY TRAP IN LEARNERS PERFORMANCE

Poverty as a universal phenomenon is unique in South Africa and elsewhere on the continent because it seems to affect the most majority of the population of the same country while a very small minority enjoys itself in opulence. And at worst, it seems to determine the quality of education that one gets and how far one can be successful in education. Singh explains the impact of poverty on a learner well when he says: The excellent potentialities of the learner are destroyed prematurely, thus are allowed to develop only partially by the adverse socio-economic conditions. Social disadvantage is a deprivation and handicap, the socially disadvantaged child is a trapped one, doomed to stagnation, wastage and failure. Social disadvantage maims and mutilates the learner, physically as well as mentally, stunts his growth, destroys his talents and deprives him of self-fulfillment (1980). Education has long been identified as the most important if not a single factor for social development and as such is at the center of improvement of the lives of millions of poor South Africans. Three of the four points of national developmental vision to 2014 of South Africans are halving unemployment, halving poverty, and improving employment equity. In seeking to meet these social

and economic aspirations, the government increasingly identified skills developmental as a crucial issue. Skills have thus been seen as both a constraint on socio-competitiveness and the upliftment of those in poverty and those who lack decent work. (Mbeki, 2004 a and b). According to Erasmus and Breier (<http://www.hsrc.ac.za>) the local trends which have been seen to have influenced skills shortages in South Africa are varied. They include an embattled education system, which is still struggling to overcome decades of dysfunction under apartheid. The various amendments of educational policy on our curriculum, popularly known as Outcome Based Education (OBE) from Curriculum 2005, Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and lately the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) wherein some of the practices in the curriculum at school level like the teacher's portfolio have been removed by the Minister of Basic Education Angie Motsekga, is an indication that there are concerns and efforts towards improving the efficacy of the education system for quality education for all South Africans. Despite all these efforts, the problem of poor academic performance in public schools seems not only to continue unabated, but exacerbates yearly. This observation is captured well by the Pretoria News headlines of January 8, 2010: "Dismay in fall of pass rate", and from its sister paper the Sowetan of the same date: "What government spin doctors didn't want you to know: 230 000 FAILED". It is only in 2014 where we have seen the national pass rate at matric increasing beyond 70%. Academically the discussion so far can at best be termed as digression. This is unavoidable if the purpose of this paper is to be fulfilled: to declare academic poor performance of public schools in South Africa a national disaster. National disasters are treated with urgency because of the gross damages they cause on the affected communities which are left helpless. This is where institutions of higher education come into play. The following words by Neville Alexander strengthen the call made by this paper: Every South African citizen who knows that the future of this country depends on the health of the education system has come to realize that at this moment we have no future, this is so because of the fact that the system continues to stagnate and even to regress in crisis mode, in spite of all well-intended interventions by the government and other interested parties (2008). Honestly, it would be unfair to expect universities to solve the problem of poverty. But this paper believes universities can address the poor performance of learners from distorted backgrounds. Their position and power as knowledge producers in societies put them on a pedestal to directly and successfully face this challenge. The findings of the study: "An analysis of compliance levels with National and Provincial Education legislative and policy imperatives in the Dr Ruth Segkomotsi Mompoti District of the North West Province in South Africa" by Mahlomaholo and Hongwane (2009) indicated that the whole District was firmly located within the poorest of the poor category. According to this study, controlling for 12 schools in the District

that did not indicate as to their respective quintile, the remaining 344 schools occurred below quintile 3. Only a total of 9 of these schools in the whole District are in quintile 4 and 5. A massive 328 (or 95%) of them occur in quintile 3, 2, and 1. The two researchers noted that even if it can be argued that quintile 3 does not refer to extreme levels of abject poverty, but the remaining number of schools when subtracting those in quintile 3, is still unacceptably high at 71% (about 247) of the total. The observation was that all the 4 Area Project Offices (APOs) without exception seem to have an over representation of schools in these low socio-economic status category which may also be a factor in terms of compliance with the policy and legislative imperatives in the schools. Poor matric pass rates in South Africa have consistently occurred in the poor and rural provinces over the two decades. The educational downfall of provinces like Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and Limpopo can be attributed to the same highlighted findings of the same study. According to Payne (1996) poverty does not merely stem from a lack of money, but from a deprivation of resources. These resources may include financial, emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, support systems and role models, and knowledge of societal rules. And a study by Phipps and Lethbridge (2007) consistently associated higher incomes with better outcomes for learners. This study also shows that socioeconomic disadvantage and other risk factors that are associated with poverty (e.g. lower parental education and high family stress) have a negative effect on cognitive development and academic achievement. In most instances poverty does influence learner's outlook on life. This observation made social scientists to conclude that what and whom individuals see around them becomes their definition of the norm. The negative impact of poverty on the identity formulation of the child cannot be over-emphasized, hence, in reality, only a few socially disadvantaged children are able to improve their socio-economic status through education. Those who remain in it perform badly. Academic achievement is positively correlated with intelligence, and intelligence is adversely influenced by social disadvantage. With 80% of public schools classified by experts as dysfunctional, the education system is indeed in deep and chronic crisis. Reacting to this crisis, the government has set itself about five goals to achieve by 2014:

- A 20% improvement in key indicators, including improving performance in cross-country tests.

2.9.1 Financial material resources constraints

Financial resources constraint serves as an impediment for a learner to perform to the optimum level academically and this is one of the major effect of poverty on academic performance of learners. The study by UNICEF (2011) indicate that when a learner is financially disadvantaged, he or she will attend a poor school in the rural where the school may lack some basic resources that can enhance teaching and learning, it state that some schools lack adequate resources and materials that

promote academic performance and this will limit effective teaching and learning in the classroom. According to Bronfenbrenner in his study, he opines that there is a need to understand the multiple and interactive social economic, cultural and community level factors which alone influence the process of development and academic attainment of learners. Bergeson, (2006) states that learners from poor households face both practical and material constraints and this will limit their academic success because such learners will not be able to concentrate in the class due to lack of basic needs comparing to the peers. Mwamwenda, (2010) emphasized that if a learner has access to all the resources needed in the classroom, he will feel more confident and more self-assured to perform better in school examination. In addition, Chen, (2009) and Chireshe, (2010) support that financial constraint limits the academic performance of a learner. In his finding, it was indicated that when a learner failed to get basic needs or grew up in a stricken poor environment, the brain does not grow to its fullest potential and thus limits the cognitive and mental alertness that is needed to excel in the classroom. Thus, learners living in poverty experience many challenges to keep up with their peers.

2.9.2 Truancy and school dropout

Poverty limits the chances of educational attainment, and at the same time, educational attainment is one of the prime mechanisms for escaping poverty. Poverty has an astonishing effect on the learners' academic achievements. It is well established that poverty is one of the primary causes of school truancy and dropouts (Cuthrell, et al., 2010). Since the inception of No Learner Left Behind (2001), schools, teachers, and administrators are being held responsible for the scholastic achievement of all learners. The call for an education system to equip learners with necessary knowledge and skills for a meaningful education has created pressure on the teachers to understand their learners; more specifically the learners who are facing academic challenges. Studies suggest that efforts made by teachers can have a profound difference in creating a positive experience in the educational journey of an impoverished student (Pascopella, 2006). Teachers are called upon to be aware of student life; they need to be prepared with the knowledge enabling them to recognize the subtle and often misunderstood manifestations of poverty among learners. Learners that are withdrawn, sullen and seemingly apathetic are not necessarily displaying apathy towards education. Teachers should be armed with patience, understanding and concern for the needs of the diverse learners in their classrooms. Teachers should be in tune with their learners and be adept at recognizing the indicative signs of an at-risk impoverished student. Learners that present to the classroom with soiled clothes or seasonally inappropriate attire should trigger a teacher's concern for a potential problem. Another revealing sign of an at-risk student is certain peer to peer interaction. Because an impoverished student may not be

fully exposed to or lack the impetus for personal hygiene, it is often their peers who become hyper-aware of the differences. Peer to peer interaction in this regard can often manifest itself in bullying and taunting. Teachers, Counselors and administrators should be well prepared to subtly address the needs and deficits of a student whose hygienic circumstance may be unhealthy for themselves and for others. Because these learners may be unacquainted with positive hygienic concerns, the teacher should be able to instruct the student regarding proper cleanliness in a respectful and accommodating manner. For teachers to be fully prepared for the challenges they may face in their classroom populace, they must avail themselves to the resources that contain vital information about the learners in their classroom. Counselors, administrators and seasoned teachers are all appropriate resources for culling information about potential or disadvantaged learners (Gay, 2002).

Additionally to promote the academic success for the economically disadvantaged learners in their classrooms, and in keeping with NCLB(2001), teachers must be aware of best pedagogical practices. Examples of those include maintaining high educational and behavioral standards for all learners as well as recognizing that apathy can mask insecurity for the impoverished student. Teachers should also promote significant relationships by taking interest in each student. Strong familial relationships typify impoverished families (Baker, 1987) and this requisite transfers to the classroom. Through these methodologies, teachers can face poverty with the knowledge and power to help impoverished learners break the cycle of generational poverty, make a difference in lives, and promote the educational success of each and every student.

2.9.3 Low self esteem

In all countries, poverty presents a chronic stress for learners and families, and may interfere with successful adjustment to developmental tasks, including school achievement. Learners raised in low-income families are at risk for academic and social problems as well as poor health and well-being, which can in turn undermine educational achievement. Poverty is a major contributor to the failing educational performance of learners in South Africa and the world at large.. Low socioeconomic status affects physical well-being, brain development, educational performance, self-esteem –efficacy, cognitive and psychological development. .

The purpose of the following study is to explain the impact of poverty trap on developing communication skills, learning, academic performance, and school drop outs. By examining the effect of household poverty on the learners performance in the high school, one can see ways that schools and stakeholder can respond to the challenges presented by regional poverty. This study includes strategies that can be used by school administrators, department of education, teachers and every other stake

holders. The association between poverty and learner's development and academic performance has been well documented, beginning as early as the second year of life and extending through elementary and high school. When these risks occur during preschool years, they can have long-lasting consequences. For example, readiness for school on entry to preparatory school sets the strategies for future success. School readiness is critical to later academic achievement because differences on school entry have long-term consequences. The consequences of early school failure increased likelihood of truancy, drop out, and unhealthy or delinquent behaviors. Between 30 and 40% of learner entering kindergarten in the United States are estimated to not be ready for school

These studies, which align with the findings of most research on the subject, present a new way of looking at how to deal with poverty trap or low socio economics status disparity in education. Rather than solely focusing on the impact of financial constraints on academic achievement, scholars now agree that the psychological impact of low SES needs to be taken into account as well.

According to the World Bank, household leaving below poverty line income is classified as living in poverty, the impact of these numbers creates an immense strain on the public educational system. Teachers are now facing sky-rocketing numbers of learners who are malnourished, have poor hygiene skills, and little to no parental involvement in their learner's development and education. With little to no academic modeling, the vacuum poverty creates leads to the development and suffusion of generational poverty. This work serves to analyze the devastating effects poverty can have on the development of young learners and the challenges it presents to their education and future.

The link between poverty and poor academic achievement has been well established. Low-income learners are vulnerable of leaving school without graduating, resulting in becoming a drop out and unproductive which can increase the social menace in the communities and also increase the level or rate of poverty trap which eventually drag the economy of the country to a recession or depression due to lack of skillful labour in the economy.:

According to the latest statistics provided by the U.S. Census Bureau (2008), almost 20% of learners under the age of 18 live in poverty. Poverty, however, is much more than dispassionate numbers. The multifaceted issues influencing these learners living in poverty manifest themselves physically, psychologically, and socially. Because high numbers of learners fall within these classifications, poverty, and the multitude of complex problems that are inherently linked with it, can have devastating effects on education (Bennett, 2008). In the United States alone almost 13 million learners live in poverty according to the Professional Association of Georgia Teachers (2005). This number translates into one in six learners living below the poverty level, and those numbers are increasing. Research shows those

numbers are even worse for minority levels; studies by Cuthrell, Stapleton, and Ledford (2010) indicate that one in three African American learners live in poverty. The Hispanic population, predicted to soon represent one in four of the American populace is 58% more likely to have households living below the federal poverty level (Martin, 2007).

The psychological effects of poverty are extraordinarily stressful and damaging to developing learners as learners often feel shame and humiliation being raised in poverty. Insecurities develop as they notice their worlds are different from their peers. The negative feelings have damages on a developing learner, damages include low self-esteem, diminished self-efficacy, and educational gaps seen as early as preparatory (Evans, & Schamberg, 2009). Learners from low socioeconomic backgrounds often demonstrate lower or lagging academic performance. Because of the burden of family life and the stresses of making ends meet, often times schooling and homework spin to the periphery of attention for those learners living in poverty Beegle (2003). However, poverty is most prominent in African countries compared to developed country like USA, Canada and other developed country, this above illustration indicate that poverty is a phenomenon issue that every Government must treat with all attention but due to problem of lack of accountability, apathy, fraudulent and selfish behavior of the African leader, this issue has been lingering on for decades in African countries and South African is not exceptional, the economy still characterized with high level of unemployment, unequal distribution of income and uneven geographical development.

2.9.4 Increase in different criminality behaviour

Having defined poverty and its prevalence in the United States, it is important to note the contributing dangers of poverty. Frequently poverty comes partnered with other stressors, such as drug and alcohol abuse, coupled with different criminal behavior. Subsisting under the poverty level creates extraordinary amounts of stress, resentment and anger. These negative feelings can lead to violence and physical abuse.

It is reported Levine, (2009) that learnerren raised in these circumstances are at extraordinarily high risk for mistreatments such as physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. All of these contributing factors increase the likelihood that impoverished learnerren will develop mental health issues. Despite the well-recognized effects, these stressors have on learners, colossal gaps exist between learners needing mental and physical healthcare treatment and those that actually receive it.

Based on data by Burns, Phillips, Wagner, Barth, Kolko, Campbell, & Landsverk (2004), over 50% of learners living in poverty have expected mental health needs, however only 16% actually ever receive the help in which they have been referred. The gap between required help and its actually receipt is

developmentally significant. Left alone, the stressors of abuse, violence and neglect caused by poverty can lead to mental and emotional damage (Burns, et al 2004). It is important to study the effects parental influences can have on a learner living in poverty. Impoverished homes are more likely to be single parent households and of these, 72 % are headed by a female parent (Bureau of the Census, 2008). Within the parameters of generational poverty, mothers are increasingly likely to have little to no prenatal care, low birth rates, poor nutrition, and non-existent aftercare after birth (Wadsworth, Aviv, Rhinehardt, Wolf, Santiago, & Einhorn, 2008). Often times these low parenting skills are born from insufficient income to meet learner care needs; detached priorities, such as spending money on alcohol or drugs can lead to physical and emotional neglect.

Additionally, the psychological stress of unemployment or lack of sufficient income on parents can also lead to austere and abrasive parenting. Parents under the distress of poverty also demonstrate less nurturing, reduced genuine concern for healthy development, and little academic modeling (Magnuson, & Votruba-Drzal, 2009). Often the lack of employment or the efforts to seek employment increases the chances for family upheaval, creating stressful transitions. These stressors often contribute to neglect of the mental, emotional and educational needs of impoverished learnerren (Wadsworth et al., 2008). The effects of neglectful and inadequate parenting due to poverty can breed teenage delinquency, insufficient and incomplete education, and poor health habits. Without proper guidance and education, the cycle of deprivation and abuse breeds itself, creating a vortex generational poverty and resulting in poor academic performance.

2.10 RELATIONSHIP OF HOUSEHOLD POVERTY ON LEARNERS PERFORMANCE

2.10.1 Growing gap in the achievement of learners from rural and urban area

There is an ever-growing gap in the achievement of learner from varying walks of life (Neuman, 2013). Studies show that learner from poor economic background tend to achieve lower proficiency levels on standardized tests (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2002), as well as students living in poverty (Duncan et al , (2013). A myriad of research –based practices have recommended strategies to help close the achievement gap , including parental involvement (Larocque & Darling, 2011) , increased school resources , better nutrition , and reading in the summer (Allington et al , 2010; Basch , 2011 ; Jimenez- Castellanos , 2010) .Studies show a variety of factors that contribute to this achievement gap and what helps close it . This study examine these differences in details through the academic achievement of learners in the rural area compared with learners in the urban area (National center for Education Statistics (NCES) , 2002) as well as students living in poverty (Duncan et

al, 2013) .. Studies show a variety of fact that contribute to this achievement gap and what helps close it . .This research work covers these in detail.

Educational attainment of the Black and coloured in particular in the South Africa depends on the incomes, however, learners belonging to low income categories are less likely to graduate from high school and even less likely to pursue Post-secondary education when compared with their White counterpart who are high income earners (NCES, 2015) . However, the household economic status is a determinant of the learners academic achievements, learners from low socio economic status may unable to finish the secondary school due to the financial status of his background while their counterpart with good financial background will be successful academically because he access to all the necessary resources that will help him or her to achieve his academic goals. According to Statistic South Africa (2008) , more than 50% of South Africa population is living in poverty . Statistic South Africa emphasized that it is unlikely for the country to meet its target to eliminate poverty by 2030 as one of the main goal for South African National Development Programme.

2.10.2 Learning disabilities

Another large contributing factor contributing negatively to educational attainment is learning disabilities.. In 2013, nearly thirty millions are living in poverty and most of them are children .All the learners that are living below the poverty line were identified as having disability (Child / Trends Data-bank, 2014). The National Center for Learning Disabilities (2014) reported that minority learners are over represented in special education programs, and a disproportionate number (Child /Trends Data-bank, 2014)

The Center for Learning Disabilities (2014) identified poverty as a driving force for learning disabilities among the learners from poor backgrounds (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014). However, some professionals argue that minority learners do not have learning disabilities; rather, teachers are insensitive to the needs and cultural norms of minority learner. According to Hughes (2003), “Ineffective teachers tend to use the most common pedagogy in South Africa schools, which assumes that the dominant cultural way of school is universal, or should universal and most appropriate for all .Hughes explained that teachers need to be sympathetic to the needs, motivations and social and cultural preferences of their learner in order to provide engaging and meaningful learning experiences. An educator needs to adjust the lesson to meet the needs of all learners in this categories.

There could be some numbers of things which include, but not limited to, volunteering in the school, attending parent/teacher conferences, communicating with the teacher, helping students on their homework, or encouraging other academic activities. The less –socio economics group from black

and coloured parents in South Africa and most especially in the rural area like Nongoma who do not engaged in these activities can appear from the side of the school to have low parental involvement (Gaetano ,2007). The families of less privilege tend to be not responsive and respect the roles of the schools in these activities; however not all of these activities with are visible by the schools .and teacher, but this can sometimes be seen by the school as indifference (Barbarin , McCandies . Coleman , Hill, 2005) . In comparison, the affluence household will always have contact frequently with the schools in regards to academic or social concern of their children.

2.10.3 Stereotyping and stigmatization

Stereotypes may also play a significant role in the achievement gap that exists between black coloured, and white ethnicity. Stereotype threat is a factor that inhibits an individual or group from performing at their highest ability (Appel & Kronbeger, 2012). The rural schools are perceived as less intelligent due to the set-up of the environment, parental background, lack of adequate in the school environment or general physical outlook of the learners. When these false ideas and biased attitudes are present within the learning environment, whether purposely or not, students may underperform. Appel and Kronberger found that when stereotyping cues were present group from performing at their best ability (Appel & Kronberger , 2012).

2.11 EXTENT OF POVERTY TRAP ON THE LEARNERS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

2.11.1 Malnutrition

Poverty comes with an enormous of hazards and threats that place disadvantaged learnerren at risk. Positive nutritional habits are crucial for young developing minds and bodies. Malnutrition can be a serious detriment to cognition, memory development and language aptitude which can impede adequate performance of learners in the classroom Under-nutrition is at epidemic proportions among the impoverished in the United States; studies estimating that nearly 12 million American learnerren consume diets well below nutritional recommended allowances (Brown, & Pollit, 1996). Because research shows that lack of important nutritional dietary needs can have deleterious effects on the developing brain, and can also lead to learning disabilities and behavior disorders, this problem exposes a storm of potential limitations for impoverished youth. (Croll, Neumark-Sztainer, & Story, 2001).

Although the South Africa spends billions providing public assistance and free public education, much of this money is wasted when a learner presents to the classroom academically weakened by poor nutrition (Brown, & Pollit, 1996). Despite the fact that government assistance is widely available through programs such as free meals free education and other measure, often times these funds are misused or abused. Instead of using government funds designed to help provide for learnerren, often

times the fund are used to purchase things that are not related to learning such as alcohol, drugs , cigarette and clothes . Even well-meaning parents conclude that nutritious healthy food is simply unaffordable, and instead opt for cheap, filling food; observably this has led to an increase in incidences of diabetes and obesity in learnerren living in homes below poverty standards (Fennal,& Brown, 2006). The emotional effects of the deprivation of nutritional food can lead to devastating body image distortions, dysmorphia, and eating disorders; lack of knowledge and apathy about proper nutrition leads to a lifetime of poor eating and health habits which will not allow learners to be more effective in the school and also inhibit proper concentration during learning. All of these are co-contributors to the increasingly high morbidity rate among learnerren and families living in poverty. (Fennal, & Brown, 2006) .

2.11.2 Lack of nutrition,adequate food and health issues.

Good nutrition is fundamental for individual to realize their physical , cognitive and economic potential. It is the basis for individual and family well-being and human capital formation and as such key to he economic and social development of the present generation and and future to come (Rusinga &Moyo,(2012) ;Benson ;Hoddinott et al ,(2012),Sun ,(2012). Malnutrition increase the risk of disability , and thus contribute to the generational transmission of poverty and illness (Ecker & Nene ,2012). The IRIN(2012) report stated that lack of nultrition cause ill health and this contribute to low retention and poor academic performance of learners in the secondary school.

An hungry learner is a victim of low concentration level , poor listening span and problem of retrieving and accesing information than the peers and this will limit such learner from doing excellently well innthe classroom . According to (Bee and Boyd, 2007 ; Ignowski ,2012) lack of nutrition linked to a myriad of health problems , living in poverty independently contribute to psychological problems which limit the learners to present in the schools and thereby missed lesion and school work . When a learner is challenged with all these various obstacles , it is very obvious that , there is limit to his or her academic success in the school and most learners in the rural schools of Nongoma are typical and victims of these challenges . Donald et al ,(2012) also reveal that learners from poor household were stunted if they are under –fed, they are vulnerable to different health risks and safety risks associated with poor nutrition . Many of these health and safety risks cause physical , cognitive , neurological and sensory problems that may cause learning disability and thus resulted in poor academic performance.

2.11.3 The physical environment , home and school.

The effect of household chores play a significant impact in the poor academic performance of secondary school learners from poor household . Rao (2004) indicated that when learners try to choose

between work time and study time , it may lead to family tensions , poor academic performance , poor school attendance and school drop-out. Chinyoka and Ganga (2011) assert that some learners are responsible for most of the household chores , therefore little time is set aside for school and homework , and when the two becomes too much to handle , school work was the least priority therefore they find it difficult to succeed academically due to lack of time and contraction for their learning. It is unreasonable to think that learners can learn when they are physical and mentally tired (O'neil,2012) . Many learners see the school time as rest mostly especially learners from impoverished home .because they always engaged doing in household chores that occupied their time thus affecting their self confidence ,self –esteem , self –concept and academic performance . Ben –Chendo ,et al (2012) stated that learner from poor household who engaged in child labour activities faced hazards such as abuse and rape , which could affect their ,mental and physical development that negatively impacted their proper functioning in the school resulting in poor educational development and performance . UNIFEC (2010) posit that child labour deprived a learner of the basic right of education. In addition Chinyoka (2011) , Kaba and Musonda (2011) , Saito (2011)and Okeke et al , (2012) identified child labour , poverty and lack of sponsorship , a quest for wealth , bereavement , truancy ,broken home and the engagement of learners as househelp as the factors and clog in the wheel of learners success in secondary .By and large , poverty is seen as hindrance of the optimal functioning of learners inn the rural secondary school.

2.11.4 The circumstances at home and neighbourhood factors .

The study established that the home circumstances are often not conducive to learning for the learners in the rural area. Majority of the learners from poverty stricken homes were affected by a lack of electricity, space to do homework, by spending much time on domestic chores, a shortage of resources for learning at home, a noisy neighborhood and unsupportive parents. Bradley, et al (2001) found that being poor can affect almost all aspects of a learner's home-life. Poor people usually found living in informal settlements in order to avoid paying high rent and in some cases because they cannot afford to own property (Haughton et al, 2010, as cited in Cameron, 2012) this reinforces the ideas brought forward by Bronfenbrennen (2008) who asserted that a lack of space, academic support at home and inability to afford rental constrain learners interaction with others, leading to poor academic performance.

According to the ecological theory, if the relationship in the immediate microsystem break down the child will not have the tools to explore other parts of his/her environment. This was supported by Atkinson (2008) who asserts that destructive forces in a learner's development limit their achievement academically.

From above discussion, it may seem that the home has a great influence on a learner's psychological emotional, social and economic situation, thus affecting his or her academic performance. Learners from poor families have in many cases been seen to lack educational goals (Atkinson, 2008). Broken families, single parents' families and child-headed families may have a traumatic effects on children. Usually learners from such backgrounds may have emotional problems which may hinder good academic performance (Chindanya, 2012).

Thus the family background plays a pivotal role in building the character of the learner and in enhancing academic performance.

2.11.5 Adolescent psychological problem

Other risks and dangers often associated with poverty are the high rates of drug and alcohol abuse. Sharma (2008) indicates that impoverished households are predisposed to have at least one type of substance abuse. Alcoholism, the most rampant, is a gateway to increasingly neglectful parenting as well as physical abuse. As a growing learner witnesses this in the home, they are more likely to repeat the behavior (Englund, Egeland, Oliva, & Collins, 2008). Often times, alcohol abuse is observed synonymously with physical, psychological, emotional, and sexual abuse (Englund et al.(2008). Because these types of abuse often times go unobserved or unreported, learners are more likely to be exposed to the abusive behavior until adulthood, precisely, until they escape from it by running away from home Englund et. al.,(2008).

Research has shown that the stress of low socioeconomic status can lead to adolescent psychological problems, the likes of which include anxiety, depression, and behavioral issues (Wadsworth, 2008). Moreover, learners coping with poverty face deep humiliation and embarrassment when their appearance, clothing, and personal hygiene, are not the same as their peers (Beegle, 2003). A side effect of this psychological damage is extreme low self-esteem and self-efficacy. This can lead to frustration, angst and insecurity when it comes to the educational arena, which can then lead to behaviors that are misinterpreted as apathy. Teachers habitually give up on learners because of this misperceived unwillingness to learn. Studies show that education is the most successful solution to breaking the cycle of generational poverty Beegle, (2003); impoverished learners must overcome ostensibly insurmountable odds when already debilitated by their environmental upbringing and unjust social bias. Teachers have a moral and ethical position to celebrate differences, appreciate assets, and value the cultures in which each student lives in order to have equal expectations for all learners to learn.

Brain development is of critical importance to the cognitive, emotional and social growth of learners. In physiologically terms, at birth the brain weighs 25% of what it will at adulthood. From birth till the

age of three, the brain undergoes rapid development and enlargement (DiPietro, 2000). In fact, the weight of the brain will triple during this time; synaptogenesis, or brain cell growth and development, is so profound that the density of the brain's cells is higher than it will be at any other point in its life span and it is 50% denser than the adult brain (DiPietro, 2000). Because the enlargement and evolution of the brain is incredibly vigorous in learning, socio emotional development, language development and motor skills are highly sensitive to both positive and negative environments. Chronic environmental detriments such as poor nutrition, inadequate nurturing, and little healthcare can rapidly destroy critical brain development during the early periods of learner hood development. Because the brain is in critical mass maturation during the early formative years, inadequate supply of emotional and physical requirements can impede emotional development and expression, stunt physical growth, and prohibit the development of higher lever brain capacity.

One of the most profound and dramatic effects, poverty can have on brain function is the physiological impairment to the human capacity for memory development. Research has shown that there is a formidable relationship between memory acquisition and the income achievement gap (Evans, & Schamberg, 2009). Human physiological development has shown negative response to the stressors of the chronic demands of indigence. In studying the physiological effects of an impoverished existence, stressors such as hunger, abuse and neglect are measured in indices termed allosteric loads. More specifically, all static loads are a scientific measure of the wear and tear poverty causes to human health and development. Evans and Schamberg (2009) demonstrate that the duration of learner hood poverty and the subsequent exposure to elevate at static loads is expressly proportional to the diminution of the developing learner's functional memory. Elevated chronic stress during learning caused by poverty is a well-established basis for decreased adult functional memory. While research exists demonstrating the effects of poverty on learning development, the emotional impact of poverty on the developing learner is far from peripheral.

Glasser (1990) theorized the basic emotional needs of learning as love, fun, freedom and survival. Learners who have been reared in a void of these emotions and exposed to stressors divergent from these basic needs will fail to develop a strong sense of trust, self-worth, and belonging. Without these basic needs being met, learning can develop a "flat effect" (Gold, Samuels, & Southall, 2003) in which normal reactions to negative stressors receive little to no response. Gold et al. (2003) explain that prolonged withholding of basic needs like food and love from a learner can create instinctively protective, almost lifeless reactions to stimulus that would, in a normally developing learner, create feelings of chaos, havoc and distress. This self-numbing has also become evident in attitudes towards education as well as impoverished learners who enter the classroom already having strikes against

them. As discussed, they are environmentally, socially, and developmentally behind their typically developing peers. In addition, they are then expected to adapt and perform in a classroom environment that has been modeled around standard middle class socioeconomic standards (Wadsworth, et al., 2008).

2.11.6 Lack of aspiration and demotivation

Results from research (Berzin, 2010) suggest that young impoverished youths lack aspirations and motivation towards education. Furthermore, their realities are based more in survivability and maintenance of the lifestyles to which they have become accustomed instead of pursuing higher education (Berzin, 2010). This cycle of repetition is indicative of all the characteristics of generational poverty. One aspect of generational poverty that is important to note is the repudiating attitude towards change that impoverished families pervade to their learnerren. The cycle of repetition can often be encouraged, if not promoted, through reluctance to accept the success of a learner over the parent. It has been noted (Baker, 1987) that embedded in generational poverty is the deep seeded resentment of any family member who dares challenge the lower socioeconomic lifestyle, and break free from the cycle of repetition. The resentment that is harbored is rooted in generational expectations; expecting more for oneself is considered an insult to the lifestyle provided (Baker, 1987). Unfortunately as Baker (1987) states, the cycle of repetition is a strong influence on impoverished youth, especially given the strong emotional impacts of equivalent socioeconomic surroundings that reaffirm their own situations as normal.

2.12 STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

2.12.1 Appropriate pedagogical practices by the educator

Poverty has an astonishing effect on the classroom. It is well established that poverty is one of the primary causes of school truancy and dropouts (Cuthrell, et al., 2010). Since the inception of No Learner Left Behind (2001), schools, teachers, and administrators are being held responsible for the scholastic achievement of all learners. The call to provide a meaningful education to each and every student has created pressure for teachers to understand their learners; more specifically the at-risk learners that have potential to fail. Studies suggest that efforts made by teachers can have a profound difference in creating a positive experience in the educational journey of an impoverished learners (Pascopella, 2006). Teachers are called upon to be aware of student life; they need to be prepared with the knowledge enabling them to recognize the subtle and often misunderstood manifestations

of poverty among learners. Learners that are withdrawn, sullen and seemingly apathetic are not necessarily displaying apathy towards education. Teachers should be armed with patience, understanding and concern for the needs of the diverse learners in their classrooms.

Teachers should be in tune with their learners and be adept at recognizing the indicative signs of an at-risk impoverished student. Learners that present to the classroom with soiled clothes or seasonally inappropriate attire should trigger a teacher's concern for a potential problem. Another revealing sign of an at-risk student is certain peer to peer interaction. Because an impoverished student may not be fully exposed to or lack the impetus for personal hygiene, it is often their peers who become hyper-aware of the differences. Peer to peer interaction in this regard can often manifest itself in bullying or taunting. Teachers, counselors and administrators should be well prepared to subtly address the needs and deficits of a student whose hygienic circumstance may be unhealthy for themselves and for others. Because these learners may be unacquainted with positive hygienic concerns, the teacher should be able to instruct the student regarding proper cleanliness in a respectful and accommodating manner. For teachers to be fully prepared for the challenges they may face in their classroom populace, they must avail themselves to the resources that contain vital information about the learners in their classroom. Counselors, administrators and seasoned teachers are all appropriate resources for culling information about potential at-risk learners (Gay, 2002).

Additionally, to promote the academic success for the economically disadvantaged learners in their classrooms, and in keeping with NCLB (2001), teachers must be aware of best pedagogical practices. Examples of those include maintaining high educational and behavioral standards for all learners as well as recognizing that apathy can mask insecurity for the impoverished student. Teachers should also promote significant relationships by taking interest in each student. Strong familial relationships typify impoverished families (Baker, 1987) and this requisite transfers to the classroom. Through these methodologies, teachers can face poverty with the knowledge and

power to help impoverished learners break the cycle of generational poverty, make a difference in lives, and promote the educational success of each and every student.

2.12.2 School Support Systems

If poverty affects learners, most in their youngest years, then it is logical to follow that student lives outside of school during the preschool and elementary years account for nearly almost all of the achievement gap between high and low-SES homes (Alexander et al., 2007). The achievement gap is the narrowest when learners enter Kindergarten. Therefore, states should require that the Depart-

ment of Education, districts and circuits do more to promote early learner hood education in conjunction with other local agencies. This could be done in a variety of ways by distributing books to young learners in the rural areas by the religious bodies, NGO and other stakeholders. Schools can also offer free meal for learners from poor homes or lower economics background. Preschool program for full-day kindergarten high school learners can be effective at closing the achievement gap. However after learners enter first grade, additional resources need to be made available to low SES families to continue closing the gap (Alexander et al., 2007). It is of the utmost importance that schools to reach out and make families feel welcoming of this help. When learners have a supportive home environment, a good working relationship with the school, and have access to necessary help, learners' achievement soars for all learners regardless of their family's socioeconomic status (Milne & Plourde, 2006). Once learners enter preparatory, the schools should work tirelessly to create a partnership with parents and continue to make progress in closing the achievement gap. In order for this to happen, schools need to put less focus on standardized tests and more emphasis on the whole learner. This can only be done if states stop spending money on standardized tests and improve school funding for resources such as reducing class sizes and increasing support staff such as psychologists, social workers, and nurses. Standardized high stakes tests should be administered on learners as tests that measure their specific growths. The tests could be used to diagnose gaps in student learning and knowledge, which would be more efficient in helping learners make progress in meeting academic standards. Teams of teachers and school support staff would work together to analyze the data from their learners and work to build curriculum that could best close learning gaps with their learners. The utilization of support staff would also help the school identify non-academic areas in which learners need assistance. Year-round schooling in urban areas would eliminate the summer learning loss that occurs for poor learners. It would also decrease the amount of exposure to negative environmental factors during the summer months.

Summer reading programs that can help learners gain access to educational materials to narrow the achievement gap should be put in place. Offering quality field trips to high school learners may also be beneficial. Middle-and upper-class learners are exposed to educational experiences outside of the home that low-income families may not be able to afford. Taking low-income learners to museums, concerts, businesses would allow them to get ideas and opportunities for future employment, inspire autonomous learning and interest in topics not typically taught in a traditional school often, these families lack knowledge for how to break free of the poverty cycle that holds them prisoner. If education is power, the schools can educate parents on how to help their kids rise above adversity and look to a brighter future.

2.12.3 Improvement in health service and redistribution of income

A great deal of research shows that poverty has severe and lasting effects when it occurs in the first few years of life. For this reason, the government needs to find ways to reduce the number of learners living in poverty. This could be done in a variety of ways. The poverty situation could be improved by making viable changes to health care. Only the poorest of families qualify for health care assistance, and the cost of practical coverage is outrageously expensive. Our government needs to find a way to redistribute spending to help provide better healthcare to low income families. Government-assisted health care needs to start with low income pregnant women to help reduce health problems during pregnancy. It should continue through high school, as long as the student attends school. This would be a positive investment, as good health contributes to student learning. Starting life with quality health care will help reduce a multitude of childhood illnesses that lead to learning difficulties down the road and will relieve one of the financial burdens to poor families. By providing basic and affordable health services, all learners can start school on a more level playing field and increase the number of days they are present at school during the year. Changes also need to be made to the current welfare system. Rather than a system that perpetuates poverty, the welfare system should offer support for finding work and food benefits should encourage healthy eating. I do not have an easy answer for how to accomplish this, but perhaps welfare programs could include staff or volunteers that help recipients write letters and resumes, find affordable childcare for working parents, and providing public transit to get to work. While some methods of reducing poverty are immediate, others would happen over generations. One such way this might occur would be to require low income housing in more affluent, suburban areas. This is a controversial topic, but the effects and benefits to poor children would be significant. The neighborhoods where children live dictate norms for social behavior and have a tremendous effect on student achievement. Poverty traps parents in bad neighborhoods that affect their children beyond home and school (Berliner, 2006). There would be several benefits to providing opportunities for families to move out of the inner city. New housing would reduce the number of children being exposed to hazardous material such as lead. Affluent role models in the schools and in the community would set an example for positive social behaviors. Learners attending schools in affluent communities would receive better advice from guidance counselors, teaching staff, and be exposed to stronger educational opportunities.

2.13 COMPARISM OF POVERTY TRAP BETWEEN RURAL AND URBAN AREA

Socioeconomic status, middle socioeconomic status and low socioeconomic to clarify the three fields a family or an individual may fall into. At the point when putting a family or individual into one of

these classifications, any or the majority of the three variables i.e., income, education, and occupation can be investigated and evaluated. The researcher use this comparison to investigate the social economic status of people around Nongoma area in which this study is conducted compared to other area such as Ulundi, Richard Bay or Durban in which socio economic status of a household is much better and comfortable and directly or indirectly influence the academic performance of learners in these area.

The obligation of training a child always lies in the hand of the parents. This is harmonious with the regular attestation sociologist that education can be an instrument of social change which is being taught from home is important in this talk about. It is not strange to envision that parental socio economic foundation can affect the academic achievement of learners in school. At all influence the advancement environment of youngsters would perhaps influence their training or attitude to it. Parental status is one of such variables.

Socio economic status of parents do not only affect the academic performance, but also makes it possible for children from low background to compete well their counterparts from high socio economic background under the same academic environment (Rothestein, 2004). Education is a tool of development. It widens minds, recognizes good and bad, makes us to segregate well from terrible and uses out environment to the best of our capacity for the improvement of a person and in addition the group (Sabzwari, 2004).

Rich source of literature is available which highlights the impact of socio economic status on academic performance like Suleman et al., (2012) who found that children with strong socioeconomic status show better academic performance in comparison to those with poor socioeconomic status, they showed poor and unsatisfactory academic performance. Saifi (2011) investigated the effect of socioeconomic status on student's performance. Results revealed that parental education and occupation and facilities at home affect the student's achievement. Eamon (2005) revealed that learners whose parental socioeconomic status is low do not show effective performance in school. Findings also showed that the academic achievement of learners is negatively correlated with the low parental socioeconomic status level as it prevents the individual in gaining access to sources and resources of learning. The study reveal that learners from Nongoma rural community lack of some facilities and resources due to their household status and therefore have negative influence in their academic outcome.

2.14 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter presented the relevant literature on the poverty trap on educational achievement of learners. Poverty plays a significant role in academic achievements of learners from poor homes. In South Africa where most learners in the rural areas are classified as poor learners from economically disadvantaged families. The chapter also explained the ecological perspectives as theoretical framework to explore the impacts of learners' backgrounds on their academic achievements. It is hoped that the strategies mentioned by the chapter will attempt to assist learners from poor homes to improve in academic performances.

The following chapter (Three) will give a detailed descriptive analysis of the methodology used during the data collection process. It will also outline the choice of design and sampling methods the researcher followed when collecting the data.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The chapter outlines the research methodology that the researcher will employ in order to obtain data from respondents with regard to the research questions about the effect of household poverty trap on the academic performance of rural secondary school learners in Nongoma in the Zululand District. The researcher will make use of questionnaires and focus group interview to gather data in a real life setting. The research design, delimitation of the field survey, the acquisition of permission from the Department of Education to conduct research, the selection of respondents (size of the sample and sampling procedures), the research instruments, namely the questionnaires and focus group interview, the administration of the questionnaires and interview schedule, processing of

data , as well as ethical considerations are discussed in this chapter . An outline of the coding format of the transcript data and an explanation of Tesch's data analysis is also given.

The subjects of this research, namely 5 educators, 100 learners, 5 schools in the rural area of Nongoma who were purposively sampled. It is important for this researcher to adhere to ethical standards and refrain from infringing on the right of the participants throughout the investigation of the research problem.

3.2. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY.

According to Dusick (2011) delimitation are those characteristics selected by the researcher to define the boundaries of the study. The study only looked at the influence of poverty trap on the learners academic performance in the rural secondary school of Nongoma in the Zululand District .The study did not capture the urban schools or schools within the main town of Nongoma but rather captured the schools in the interior or suburb where learners are performing poorly within circuit because learners in the urban schools were not affected by poverty. Thus, this create an achievement gap in the educational setting of economically disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged learners.

According to (Barton , 2003;Crooks, 1993; Leach&Williams,2007;Ross, Smith , Slavin,&Madden ,1997). The gap is hefty and unrelenting.

The study was also confined to four dependent variables which are : learners educational performance , learners socio- economic background and learners household income and learners environment/growth / residence .

The data instrument were Questionnaires and Focus group interview. The respondents were sampled educator and learners from grade 10 to grade 12 from both commercial and science stream. The learners in grade 10 to 12 were involved in the study because they have more knowledge and experience of their household income as compared to learners in lower grade.

3.3 RATIONALE

In the previous chapter, the perspective of the educators, learners and other stakeholders needs on the effects of household poverty on the academic performance of learners in the rural high schools of Nongoma in Zululand District, how the needs are met, the nature and quality of approach on how to alleviate poverty have been explored comprehensively. The main focus of this study is to investigate the effect of household poverty on the academic performance of learners in the rural schools of Nongoma in Zululand District. To fulfil this a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative was explored as indicated in the previous chapter. Several research studies on poverty trap and socio economic

status of less privileged household were surveyed, as well as theoretical framework of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory was adopted for this study. The theory advocate for the psychosocial effects of poverty on learner academic performance and how such learners can be assisted to achieve better performance in the school and also emphasised on the disparity performance of learners from urban area with good financial background that have access to every needs and resources that enhance learning compared to the learners in the rural area with many disadvantages.

This chapter therefore presents systematic steps involved in the research study. Detailed description of the sample and sampling techniques applied as well as the pilot attempt for this study were accounted for. Methods and suitability of data collection are explained, data collection methods are described, ethical considerations and limitations are explained. The research design, the approaches and techniques used to collect, analyse and interpret data are presented. The main objectives of the study are to investigate the research questions for this study:

- What are the effects of household poverty trap in learner's performance within secondary schools?
 - To what extent is household poverty prevalence in secondary schools in Zululand District?
 - What are the relationships between household poverty and poor performance among secondary school learners?
- What Strategies to improve learner's academic performance in the rural secondary schools?

3.4 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The target population for this study were educators and high school learners in selected high school in Nongoma CMC in Zululand District. Field study was adopted for this study

Questionnaires was designed to collect data from the learners, while focus group interview was conducted among the selected numbers of teachers handling the key subjects, especially the ones which require the learners to posse's essentials tools in the school

These sampled schools were described as subsets of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study (DeVos et al, 2011)

This study preferred to employ both the purposive and convenience sampling strategy as recommended by (Welman, Kruger & Mitchel, 2005) as it allowed the researcher to consider participants who happened to be accessible and who represented the targeted population and have relevant information to achieve the objectives of the study, however simple random sampling was also used with regard to the collection of quantitative data.

This study was conducted in Zululand District of KwaZulu-Natal while it was narrow down to rural schools in Nongoma Circuit.

The target population for this study was 5 educators and 100 learners in 5 selected high school in Nongoma CMC in Zululand District. Field study will be adopted for this study

Purposive sampling technique was used to select educators who are teaching learners that experiences these challenges as a result of the household disadvantages. Palys (2008) notes purposive sampling technique to be useful when researcher wants to access a particular subject of individuals. Purposive sampling also enables researcher to start data collection with a purpose in mind by including the relevant people and exclude those who do not suit the purpose (Dolores and Tongco, 2007).By using this sampling technique, the researcher will be able to collect data only from the learners who are experiencing poor performance due to the household deprivation. The research covered five (5) public high schools in Nongoma area of the Zululand District .In addition, twenty (5) teachers will also be selected as participants from each of the school, making 100 learners and 5 educators in total.

3.5 RESEARCH TOOLS

3.5.1 Research methodology and design

It is significant to understand methodology for assessment of value and quality of this research study. Methodology is the model employed to carry out a particular research study, it guides the content, process, and structure of research study. Research methodology therefore, is the systematic process employed in investigating and generating research data and findings. Research design gives a framework for the collection and analysis of data for the study (Bryman, 2008). Objectives, rationale and type of data to collect determine the type of research study.

Different types of research designs exist; these are longitudinal design, case study design, cross sectional or survey, comparative designs and quasi-experiments (Robson, 2002). The researcher investigate the research questions through descriptive and analytical framework. Questionnaires and focus group interviews were used for data collection; empirical findings were generated from the participants

Within this study the researcher will employ both quantitative and qualitative approach thus adopting a mixed method paradigm.

The quantitative approach according to Grinnell and Unrau (2005) is more effective approach in attaining specific and precise understanding of an aspect or part of an already well defined problems.

The qualitative approach seeks to answer questions that provide a more comprehensive study of few peoples or focus group , thus both these approaches will suffice for this study and balance will be maintain for the use of the two approach for quality research .

3.5.2 Research paradigm

This study will adopt a mixed method paradigm which will be anchored towards post modernism which closes the gap between positivism and constructivism (Creswell, 2014). This implies that post positivism is a pragmatic combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The approach uses both methods in combination, thus provides a better understanding of the research problem and questions than either method by itself. It is an advanced method or procedure which also allows for extensive data collection and analysis. Furthermore, it consists of merging, integrating, linking or embedding the two “strands” of research-quantitative and qualitative, thus the researcher sought to adopt this approach as it is most suitable for this study. The quantitative approach is effective in attaining specific and precise understanding of an aspect of the research problem while qualitative approach is simultaneously seeking to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the problem. The research paradigm for this study explores worldviews and understanding of how the study should be done (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). The focus of this study is on the effect of household poverty on the academic performance of high school learners in the rural area of Nongoma in the Zululand District; therefore, it is an interpretive paradigm. Lavery, (2013) agrees that interpretive paradigm encourages ontological perspectives of individual realities that can be manipulated and constructed base on their point of views about poverty trap and its effects. There exists, multiple views that are realistic within the interpretive paradigm. The main objective of research study is to explore concepts which dictate human behaviour with social settings (Bertram & Christiansen, 2014).

3.5.3 Research design

<p style="text-align: center;">RESEARCH DESIGN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Qualitative and Quantitative in nature</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Data collection strategies(Method)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Questionnaires and focus group interview</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Validity and Reliability</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Data collection participants</p> <p style="text-align: center;">100 learners from 5 sample schools (20 learners from e 5 educators for focus group from the five schools (1 each from each sample school)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Triangulation in participant selection</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Pilot Testing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Each of the instrument tested in a separate high school school (not used in main study)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Transcription</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Research and participant involved ethical consideration</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Data analysis</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Descriptive and thematic data analysis.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tesch’s Qualitative Data analysis Tool (Tesch’s, 1990 in Devos ,et al, 2012</p>

According to Kumar (2014), a research design is a plan through which you decide and communicate to others your decisions regarding what study design you propose to use, how you will collect information from respondents, how you will select your respondents, how the information you will collect

is to be analyzed and how you will communicate your findings. Every project demands a detailed research design that is carefully mapped out to explore the research problem (Bless & Smith, 2000).

The researcher has specifically chosen the triangulation mixed method design, which is a one phase design using both quantitative and qualitative methods within the same time frame and with equal weight to understand the research problem. This design is concurrent but entails separate collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in order to get findings (DeVos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont, 2011). This act enabled the researcher to have deep insight into the effect of household poverty trap and its relationship to the academic performance of learners in the rural schools.

The researcher specifically, selected this design on the basis that the use of both methods - quantitative and qualitative in same combination provided a better knowledge of the research problem and questions, rather than using only each of the methods (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Adopting the mixed methods also enabled the researcher to obtain a deeper understanding of the concept "poverty" and its effects, causes, nature, relationship with the academic performance and urgent needs to reduce or alleviate this problem in our society for a better learning outcome in all the rural schools and develop ways of helping these learners that are already trap in this situation. Summer (2006) elaborates the justifications for qualitative over quantitative as being able to investigate aspects of social life that are not noticeable in quantitative design. Summer (2006) further supports that qualitative research explores participants' interpretations and promote comprehensive information in relatively close settings. Berg (2001) reinforces the claims of summer, (2006) that qualitative research provides answers to questions, with close links to social setting and the individuals in these settings thus make collection of information to be non-quantifiable facts about the actual people and observe them during the research. This allows researchers to share in the understanding and perceptions of others as they divulge information. Creswell (2007) supports that quantitative research design is an approach to explore and understand individuals' meaning or understanding to social or human problems through set of assumptions.

3.6 BENEFITS OF MIXED METHODOLOGY

Using mixed methodology allows researchers to rely on more than one data source (Creswell, 2009). The benefits of using a quantitative approach are described by Creswell (2009) as research that provides a numeric description of "trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population" (p. 12). On the other hand, Merriam (2009) explained that qualitative inquiry uses richly descriptive words to convey, "How people make sense of their world and the experiences they

have in the world" (p. 13). The qualitative analysis afforded teachers the opportunity to have a voice, which is scarce in the current literature (Alder, 2002).

Quantitative methods brought objective data to the study, which minimizes the shortcomings and biases or "subjectivities" qualitative methods may have on the study. Nevertheless, qualitative data allowed the researcher to interpret the data in an inductive manner building on concepts that quantitative data did not yield (Merriam, 2009). Using mixed methods was a practical means for gathering data to answer the research questions thoroughly. This collaborative approach offered me the freedom to use all methods possible to seek multiple perspective

The instruments used for data collection in this study were questionnaires and focus group interviews. Only closed-ended questions were used to design the questionnaire which addressed the first research objective, establishing the learner's perspective regards their understanding on the impact of poverty on academic achievement *visa – sa- vis* when comparing learners from the rural area with low socio economic status to an affluence learners in the urban area. The closed-ended questions were useful to elicit factual information. The second objective, which investigates the relationship of household poverty and academic performance coupled with how these categories of learners could be helped were addressed through focus group interviews where the respondents (educators) provided opportunities to express themselves freely thus providing a greater variety and depth of information.

3.7 THE CHOICE OF METHODOLOGY

Cohen and Manion (1994) elaborate methods as the varied approaches that can be employed in educational research studies to construct data, which are applied as data inference and interpretation. This claim is supported by Kothari (2004) that the process of construction commences with the identification of research problem, closely followed by the design to use. Creswell (2009) on a similar approach relates the method of data collection to include boundary setting for the study, construction of interview guide for collection of information through interviews, as well as systematic record of information for the study. Data design for this study started with administration of questionnaires and focus groups interview with both learners and educators. The researcher decided to use these methods because they provided deep, comprehensive empirical information on the research problem.

3.7.1 Focus group interviews

For this study, data was constructed through a qualitative and focus group interviewing process. Babie (2004) declares that qualitative interview as a conversation between researcher and the participants in which the interviewer determines general direction for the conversation and maintains tracks of information provided by the respondent. The main objective of conducting an interview, according to Seidman (2006), is to generate context of people's behavior from their responses of supplied information. Related to this, Le Grange (2000) arrives at three major types of interviews, namely structured

interviews, unstructured interviews and semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviewing process for this study was arrived at based on the flexibility of its nature that accommodates both closed and open-ended questions, which enables interviewers to investigate further information on research questions. This method of interview also aids good interactions with the respondents by making them feel comfortable and free to express their views.

Berg (2007) confirms use of pre-set questions known as interview guide to implement information collection for the problem. Berg (2007) corroborates that the method has systematic order but the interviewees are allowed to digress while the interviewer can also probe deeper to get further information. Data from interview will be captured properly and accurately, this, Jamshed (2014) recommends for recording of the whole interview process. Recording of the interview, according to Jamshed (2014), enables the researcher to grab correctly the content of the interview and also the verbal prompts, thereby equipping the interviewer to infer a verbatim transcript of the interview.

The interviews took place in the natural school environment of the teachers, where they were relaxed and comfortably responded. Consultation was done with the sampled schools' principals for authorization to engaged teachers that teaches subjects which require learners to possess some relevant materials for acquiring adequate knowledge and buttress their easy understanding. Interviews were done on the booked days after two or three visits to the schools. This was to adhere strictly to the agreement not to disrupt school activities. As such, the interviews presented an opportunity to obtain in-depth data about the teachers in relation to their deep understanding of problem associated to the poor performance, absenteeism and learners drop out in most of the rural schools Interview guides were made available to the twenty educators for the focus group before the scheduled dates for the interview to prepare them for the interviews and to make them comfortable in their responses during the interviews sessions. The researcher pre informed them that the interviews would be semi-structured in nature, which would allow introduction of additional questions on the research problem.

3.7.2 Format Of Questionnaires

Singh (2007) maintains that questionnaire is almost always self-administered, allowing respondents to fill them out themselves. All the researcher has to do is to arrange for their delivery and collection. In affirmation, Pickard (2007) indicates that questionnaires are instruments completed by respondents themselves; they are relatively easy to use, inexpensive and are often the most plausible option for measuring unobservable constructs such as attitudes, values and preferences, intentions and personalities. They have a highly structured format, often used where the aim is to generate quantitative data from a large sample to test research questions and/or hypotheses. To corroborate this view, Nardi (2006) mentions that questionnaires are efficient tools for surveying large samples of respondents in a shorter period of time than interviews or other research methods, with less expense. As

mentioned earlier, the questionnaire was used among the learners in the high school .The questionnaires were distributed in April 2018 and were administered on learners from high schools of selected schools.

Study.

3.7.3 Reliability and validity of the Questionnaires

Pathon 2012 states that validity and reliability are factors which any qualitative researcher should be concerned about when designing a study, analyzing the result and judging the quality of the study.

The validity and reliability of this study hinged on its truth value, its transferability, and the consistency of the study. In this study, the researcher aimed for credibility and confidence in the truth of the data, and at presenting findings that are convincing and believable. As a result, the study employed triangulation, a pilot test study, respondent validation and thick descriptions.

3.7.4 Validity

The term validity indicate whether the item measures or gives description of what it is supposed to measure (Bell, 2012) . Validity also refers to the trustworthiness of the inferences drawn from the data. It is the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation or other sort of account (Cresswell, 2010). It is concerned with measuring what one think he or she wants to measure, possibly some content, construct or predictions.

In this study, strategies were applied to contract validity threats. Information that was obtained from the learners through questionnaires and that of educators through focus group interview were cross checked and verified, using different sources of information (Concad and Serlin , 2012) .

The strategy helped to eliminate the problem which according to Maxwell (2006) , is the main researcher saw or heard.

3.7.5 Reliability

Reliability in research refers to the degree to which procedure give results of the same kind under constant condition on all occasion Bell, (2012).

Extent to which results of research study are consistently accurate using accurate representations of the total population for study is the Reliability (Joppe, 2000). If the results can be sustained several times using the same methodology and the instruments it is considered reliable. Reliability is therefore concerned with the consistent measurement in this research study. This, Ritchie and Lewis (2003) insist are two levels by which qualitative research is reliable. First, was the design of robust research

that carried out internal checks on data quality and interpretation? Secondly, reliability of the research, by providing questionnaires were correctly administered, retrieved from the right participants and focus group interviews were properly recorded and transcribed into themes. Detailed information on the systematic procedures for instruments administrations was made explanatory enough.

Validity of the instruments is the significant strength of mixed methods research to determine the accurate findings of the research study by the researcher, the participants, readers of the study (Miller, 2000). Jupp (2006) relatively believes that validity is associated with the notions of truth and the philosophical viewpoint that there is some reality which can be studied, described and explained. Creswell and Miller (2000) maintain that validity of qualitative research can be ensured through triangulation, member checking, prolonged engagement in the field, thick description and so on. Kelly (2006) explains triangulation as involving constructing data in as many different ways or methods from as many diverse sources as possible.

Creswell and Miller (2000) share similar sentiments and believe that triangulation is a validity procedure in which researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study. Gray (2004) adds that triangulation may also involve different sources, methods, combination of methods such as interviews, observations, questionnaires, documents and so on. In this particular research, triangulation was ensured through document analysis (PSNT, 2010), observations and interview

3.7 6 The questionnaire as an instrument.

Distribution of questionnaires in the schools during the school time was done after establishing that „a self-administered questionnaire can be completed in the schools at the learners’ convenient times and locations (Fink, 2003). In addition, this was done after seeking permission from the appropriate authorities.

Questionnaires have been used in quantitative information behavior studies, mostly in surveys. Several researchers (Snyman and Heyns,2004; Heinström, 2005 ; Patitungkho and Deshpande 2005; Perreault, 2007, Williams and Coles 2007; Nazim,2008; Nwokedi and Adah,2009) used questionnaires to study the influence of personality on information-seeking behavior, information-searching behavior on the internet and information seeking behavioral studies about learners who used the questionnaires.

As indicated earlier, the study being reported collected data from multiple sources (the effect of household poverty trap on the academic performance of learners in the high schools of Zululand Dis-

trict in Nongoma area),using different data collection techniques. In research, this is called triangulation, and therefore, the next section gives an account of the triangulation procedure and how it was employed in this .

3.7.7 Characteristics of a good questionnaire

Salant and Dillman (1994) indicate that researchers should bear in mind the following factors when designing questionnaires:

- A well-designed questionnaire takes time to put together, but it is fruitful at the end, as it will give the desired data. - People are willing to respond to questionnaires.

- Good questionnaires make the task of responding easier, since they tend to minimize the burden on the respondent.

Singh (2007) explains that often questionnaires have three basic types of questions:

- Open-ended questions that do not have pre-coded options.

- Dichotomous questions that have two possible answers, such as yes/no; true/false or agree/disagree.

- Multiple response questions that may have many probable answers.

The research study developed a questionnaire that mainly contained multiple response questions with probable answers. In addition, the questionnaire contained a few dichotomous questions and only one open-ended question at the end. The questionnaire is highly structured mainly because it intends to yield quantitative data.

3.7.8 Disadvantages of using questionnaire

There are disadvantages associated with questionnaires, which have been outlined in the literature. For instance, Bennett (2003), Bryman (2001) and Gray (2004) explain that some of the disadvantages of questionnaires are that:

- Questionnaires are associated with low response rates;

- It is impossible to probe respondents, as personal contact is lost because they fill them in on their own; and with questionnaires there is no allowance for respondents to ask questions where there is lack of clarity and there is a greater risk of missing data, as some respondents may not fill in all the questions.

Bearing the above arguments from the scholars in mind, the researcher decided to:

- Ensure that the questions were as clear and unambiguous as possible and ran a pilot study; Outline the title and purpose of the study on the front page to provide information about this study as a way

of encouraging more prospective learners to participate in the study; and distribute the questionnaires in the selected participating secondary schools so that the prospective learners had an extended time to fill them in.

3.8 PILOT STUDY

As explained, research instruments such as the human instrument (researcher), questionnaire, and schedules for interviews and focus group discussions were used to collect data. A pilot study was conducted in a neutral environment which is not part of the school sampled for the research to test the reliability and validity of the instrument and necessary correction was made after before administered the instruments.

Gorman and Clayton (2005) mention that pilot study involves taking the draft research plan and applying it in a neutral location that will not be used in the actual fieldwork or collection of preliminary data in the actual location from which data are to be collected. Either way, the pilot study allowed the researcher to test several variables and to identify any initial problems before preparing the broad plan that will direct the entire research project. The idea was not to get data *per se*, but to learn about the research process, interview schedule and the researcher as the instrument. The variables being tested include data collection methods, the time frames of the investigation, and the researcher as the instrument. Pickard (2007) discusses the researcher as the instrument in ethnography research. The research being reported used a survey research method and not ethnography. However, this study interpreted the researcher's ability to interview people, control group dynamics in focus groups and observe participants and generate factual data from questionnaires.

Gorman and Clayton (2005) continue arguing that a pilot study could also be used to test the language and the content of the questions, as well as the length and approach of the interviews and focus groups. Moreover, a pilot study could test observation techniques such as the non-verbal responses of those being interviewed. Furthermore, a human instrument might test the dress code, behavior and appropriate manner of presentation, as well as how one relates to others, including matters of establishing rapport. Revisions were made accordingly from the pilot study so that the actual study was of better quality. For the pilot study, the researcher used some learners in an education programmed organized by the department. The questionnaire was tested to provide information about the sample of the participants while some educators for focus group were interviewed in the pilot study.

3.9 DATA PROCESSING

Analysis of data collected involves the process of transforming and modelling the data with purpose of identifying useful information that will suggest conclusions and support decision making (Creswell, 2014). Data retrieved through the questionnaires will be quantitatively analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, simple percentages, tables and statistical representations, explaining the findings of the study. Statistical analysis would be done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The demographic data of the respondents would be analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentage.

Qualitative data analyses will involve verbatim transcripts the focus group interviews. The collected data will be analyzed inductively to identify themes and patterns. The researcher will code the focus group data, providing a better understanding and indicating clear conceptual relationships between the data collected, this also assist in the counting of key words. The researcher used systematic and efficient coding and complex analyses of the qualitative data that will be collected. Each theme will generate conclusions based on the findings (Maree & Pietersen, 2010).

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study centred on the effect of household poverty on secondary school learner's performance in Nongoma area in Zululand District. Similar research work has been carried out in other Universities and there have been several published articles on poverty and its effects on academic performance. University's Policy and Procedures on Research Ethics and its Policy Procedures on Managing and Preventing Acts of Plagiarism have been read and fully understood by the researcher. These have been discussed with my Supervisors and ethical issues that arise from carrying out this research will be dealt with accordingly.

Berg (2007) asserts that social science researchers have an ethical implication to their study population and society at large. The reason for this according to Berg (2007) is that social scientists delve into the social lives of other human beings. As the subjects of my research were human, ethical considerations therefore became important. In respect of my study, the main ethical issues addressed were

informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, risks and discomforts, and the rights of participants to withdraw from the study. Before the interviews, the researcher assured the respondents of confidentiality and that the data collected would be used for research purposes only and where the respondents remained anonymous. The respondents were also given a form (Appendix A) to sign and fill in to ensure confidentiality, and opportunities were granted for respondents to withdraw if they wished to do so. The interviews were tape-recorded, transcribed and coded. The coded data were then used to generate themes for analysis.

The following procedures were earlier taken into consideration with regards to the current study:

- A letter seeking for permission to conduct research was forwarded to the Head of Department for KwaZulu- Natal Department of Basic Education, which was granted.
- A letter was also forwarded to the directors of the districts under which the study falls, requesting permission to conduct research in schools within the specified districts.
- A letter was made available to principals of the targeted school seeking permission to conduct research study with Foundation education & Training phase and General Education and Training within the sampled schools.

3.10.1 Informed consent

On ethical as well as methodological grounds, McCauley (2006) argues that encouraging individuals to participate in research requires that, clear and accurate information about the research is made available to them. McCauley (2006) adds that the researcher therefore needs to follow a balanced approach, presenting adequate and relevant information accurately so as to prepare respondents fully for their potential roles in the research. In other words, to carry out this study at the selected research sites, written permission was granted.

In addition, permission was granted by the school principals to conduct research at the school sites. Ethical clearance was also obtained from the University of Zululand.

At the research sites, informed consent forms were given to each participant prior to the administration of questionnaires and interviews. Participants were invited to clarify any concerns and to ask questions if they were unsure about anything. The researcher explained to all the participants that participation in the research was voluntary and, if they felt uncomfortable, they could withdraw at any time. The participants were also informed about the content of the interviews.

3.10.2 Privacy and confidentiality

McCauley (2006) observes that, as part of obtaining informed consent, it should be made clear to participants how their responses will be treated. Participants should not have to share personal information with a researcher unless they and the researcher are certain that their data will be kept from falling into the wrong hands. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) also believe that research sites and participants should not be identifiable in print. In adhering to the ethics of privacy and confidentiality in the report, Teachers were referred to as Educator 1, 2,3,4,5. The researcher assured all the participants:

- Of the privacy and confidentiality of their identities and responses;
 - That the researcher would be the only one who would have access to the data obtained from them;
- and
- That all transcripts of the data would be stored with the university, which would be protected.

3.10.3 Risks and discomforts

On the first day of the visit to the schools, copy of interview questions and questionnaire were given to the teachers and learners in order to familiarize themselves with the questions, and to avoid a situation that could have placed the teachers in an awkward or uncomfortable position during the interviews. The researcher guaranteed participants that no one would be put in a situation where they might be harmed as a result of their participation, either physically or psychologically.

3.10.4 Participation and withdrawal

According to McCauley (2006), voluntary participation and withdrawal means that an individual participates in research out of his or her own free will and therefore a good researcher has the responsibility of informing participants that the research is voluntary and that participants can withdraw at any time. At the research site, before and during the interview process, the researcher constantly reminded the participants that the research was only for academic purposes, and that their participation was voluntary. Therefore, they could choose to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences from their peers or superiors.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter submitted a comprehensive overview of the research design and methodology that were used for investigating the effect of household poverty on the academic performance of learners in secondary schools of the rural area in Nongoma in Zululand District in KwaZulu –Natal province, in South Africa.. The discussion revealed how data were constructed using an interpretive research paradigm to answer the research questions that guided the research study. The sampling procedure was distinguished as well as rationale for the sampling strategy that was used. Data construction instruments and processes were all explained, issues of validity and reliability were also highlighted. The data analysis processes, ethical issues and limitations were clarified. In the following chapter, the researcher will present the research findings from the data collected, linking these to the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, AND INTERPRETATION OF EMPIRICAL DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 3, the focus was on research design. This chapter focuses on analysis, presentation, and interpretation of the empirical data that will be elicited from the respondents by means of the items that were part of the questionnaires.

The first step that the researcher took was to give each response an identification number. The second step is the scoring of the questionnaires. Each response to an item is assigned a number of points, for example: Agree , Strongly Agree , Disagree and Strongly Disagree

The responses provided in the questionnaire were answers to the research questions stated in chapter one. The research questions are as follow: “To explore the effects of household poverty trap in learner’s performance within secondary schools

To investigate the extent of household poverty trap in learners performance within secondary schools learners.

To determine the relationship between household poverty and poor performance among secondary school children

To recommend ways through which learners from the less-privileged households can be assisted to achieve good academic performance.

In addition to the summary of data which is presented in statistical form in frequency distribution tables, a brief interpretation is also provided to contextualize the responses into the objectives of the study which are as follow: “What are the effects of household poverty trap in learner’s performance within secondary schools?

To what extent is household poverty prevalence in secondary schools in Zululand District?

What are the relationships between household poverty and poor academic performance among secondary school learners? What are the strategies through which learners from the less-privileged households can be assisted to achieve good academic performance?” The retrieved questionnaires were counted before commencing the analysis. This is supported by Kumar (2014) as a means of validating the generalizability of the findings and representativeness of the sample in the study. The statements from the questionnaire were used as captions for the statistical data presented in each frequency distribution table. Creswell (2014) suggests that in social science related research, the numerical data should be accompanied by a brief narration to unpack the significance, effects or implications

of symbols in the context of the critical research questions of the study. Thus, a brief interpretation is provided for numerical data presented in each frequency distribution table.

The sample used for focus group are 5 (five) educators from five different schools which was choose purposefully and in the case of questionnaires , 100 learners were selected from five different schools , 20 learners per each school which comprises of learners from both science and commercial stream.

Frequency distribution tables were used in the data presentation. Frequency and percentage indicate the responses that were received. Background information on the responds was given before analyzing the effect of household poverty trap on learner’s performance in secondary school in Nongoma area of Zululand District.

In order to make sense of the collected data, the researcher applied Tesch’s open code method of data. Analysis to identify the themes and categories. The data analysis, presentation and discussion were in the form of detailed descriptions, using descriptive data analysis of percentage and frequency count.

The responses elicited from the focus group interview conducted among the teachers were discussed thematically under the discussion of finding. The data codes and significant ideas were singled out systematically, and arranged in themes and categories for a thematic discussion, as indicated in the table respectively. The discussion was done in line with the research questions, themes and sub themes derived from the study. The themes and sub themes were evaluated and measured against Urie – Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory.

.2 SECTION A

TABLE 4.2.1 focus group interview coding

CODE	EXPLANATION
FGIE1	FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW EDUCATOR 1
FGIE2	FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW EDUCATOR 2
FGIE3	FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW EDUCATOR 3
FGIE4	FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW EDUCATOR 4
FGIE5	FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW EDUCATOR 5

FGIE1-5 . Means focus group interview for educators 1-5

The social characteristics examined include the following variables, namely. Qualification of the educators, years of teaching experience, grade taught, subject stream of the learners that participated in the study, and grade of the learners.

The participants in the study are learners from grade 10- 12 and also from both commercial and science stream. Those from commercial stream were 38 and those from science stream were 62. The educators that participated in the focus group interview were 5, these are educators that teach subjects that require learners to possess some basic necessity which learners from economically challenge home were unable to access and they are regarded as FGIE1, FGIE2, FGIE3, FGIE4 and FGIE5

TABLE 4.2.2 Demographic table of the respondent on focus group interview

Code	Qualification	Subject Taught	Grade
FGIE1	BEd Hons (Commerce)	Accounting & Business studies	10-12
FGIE2	BEd Hons (Mathematics (FET))	Mathematics	Grade 10 &11
FGIE3	BEd English (FET)	English (FAL)	Grade 10-12
FGIE4	BEd Physical sciences	Physical sciences	Grade 10-12
FGIE5	BEd in Life Science)	Life sciences	Grade 10-12

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

4.3 : SECTION B

The effect of household poverty trap on learner’s performance in secondary schools in nongoma in the zululand district.

This section analyses the primary data collected by means of the focus group interview and questionnaires of the respondents in relation to the research questions.

This section attempts to unpack the following critical questions and suggestions from the data produced

- What are the effects of household poverty trap in learner's performance within secondary schools?
 - To what extent is household poverty prevalence in secondary schools in Zululand District?
 - What are the relationships between household poverty and poor performance among secondary school learners?
 - What are the ways through which learners from the less-privileged households can be assisted to achieve good academic performance?

4.3.1 DISCUSSION

Different issues emerged from the responses of the educators in the focus group interview which is recorded verbatim thus;

Question 1; How can you explain poverty, poverty trap in relation to learners performance in the secondary schools?

***FGIE1** Poverty is a condition where a person lacks basic necessities of life such as housing, food, elm among others, learners who come from such homes, are not able to perform to their potential academically*

The response from the respondent suggested that a learners that black basic resources that can aid teaching and learning in the classroom may find it difficult to perform very well in his or her study

***FGIE2** Learners from poor background are seldom absent from school because they have to fend for food while others are learning, hmmm lack of resources and motivation to learn due to poverty and poverty trap” The researcher also agree with the respondent because absenteeism is common among learners from poor home and this was also confirm by the study of school absenteeism conducted by Zhang (2003) .*

***FGIE2** States that absenteeism is common to learners from impoverish and this will disengage them from performing well in the examination*

***FGIE3** Poverty trap is a cycle that keeps the poor locked or trapped in poverty. This means that it will affect learner's performance in schools. The finding from the study also agree with SAHRL and UNICEF (2011) that state poverty disadvantage learners from rural schools and putting them at a situation where it might be difficult for them to break the cycle of poverty into which they were born and this will disengage*

the learner from focusing and concentrating on their study and the aftermath effect of it is poor academic performance .

FGIE4 *A poverty is a type of mechanism which make it very difficult for poor people to escape and therefore limit their performance and education attainment*

FGIE5 *A poverty trap is a mechanism which make it very difficult for learners to achieve academically due to financial challenges .*

The finding from the educators in their response towards poverty indicate that poverty will hinder learners to perform to their potentialities due to financial constraint that is associated with poverty .This is in accordance with the finding of Bergeson (2006) who state that poor learners can be challenged with both practical and material constraints concerning their active participation in their social life and education therefore the researcher agree that poverty is a limitation toward learners academic attainment.

Question 2: What do you think it is responsible for the poor performance of learners that come from disadvantage home?

FGIE4 *what is responsible for the poor performance is that learners from disadvantage home are faced with overwhelming challenges daily and their brains have adopted to suboptimal condition in ways that underpin good school performance.*

FGIE1 *Many of them are faced with many work at home and finding it difficult to even do their homework*

FGIE2 *Poverty change everything about a person , a learner from poor household find it difficult to think positively thereby affect all the classroom concentration*

FGIE3 *Learners that come from disadvantage group hem, hem, hem poverty home are affected , some go to school hungry and they cannot utilize their ability of their brain , so poverty prevent an individual from reaching a minimum performance in school.*

FGIE5 *Hmmmmm I agree with the last speaker submission, poverty limit learner's academic performance.*

The view of the respondent regards the factor responsible for the poor performance of learners from from less priviledge home pointed at financial capability. Some of the educators in the interview highlighted that hunger is one of the major challenges that a learners from poor home face that disenable them from achieving academically . It was pointed out that many of the learners come to school empty stomach and this will lead to lack of concentration . Pollit and Brown (2006) ,Miller and Korenman (2004 , indicated that underfeeding in childhood hinder mental development solely producing permanent , structural damage to the brain .Ecker & Nene ,(2012) also asserted malnutrition is the major obstacle to human well –being therefore a learner that is not sound mentally will definitely produce poor academic result .

Question 3: There is high level of drop out of learners in the high school, what do you think is the main cause of this?

FGIE1 *Some learners drop out of school because they do not have the money to buy some basic things for themselves.*

FGIE2 *Many household are child -headed due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic hence such children end up prioritizing fending for siblings than attending schools thus lack of role model is a main cause.*

FGIE3 *Poor households often force their children to drop out of school, so they can support the family by generating income. This increase the gap between the skills needs of the economy and the supply of those skills.*

FGIE4 *It is stress / depression caused by poverty trap. Being in poverty can cause a low self-esteem on the learners. The learners may even feel discomforts in the classroom, a learners might be forced to drop out to hustle for the family.*

FGIE5. *The main reason of this is depression which is caused by poverty trap, living in poverty can cause learners to have a low mood and over reaction to activity and they may feel some sort of discomfort in the school environment*

The finding from the respondent affirmed that due to poor financial background of learners in the rural community, the outcome of their educational performance is always poor compared to their peer in the urban school .This was informed by the response of FGIE3 that states that :

Poor households often force their children to drop out of school, so they can support the family by generating income. This increase the gap between the skills needs of the economy and the supply of those skills

It is stress / depression caused by poverty trap. Being in poverty can cause a low self-esteem on the learners. The learners may even feel discomforts in the classroom, a learners might be forced to drop out to hustle for the family

Poverty limits the chance of educational attainment, it has an astonishing impact on the learners academic achievement Cuthrell , et al (,2010) affirmed that poverty is responsible for school dropout, and truancy.

The study established that the financial cost of schooling are often, making it difficult for poor learners to have access to quality education and this lead to a popular saying that “If education is costly, try illiterate “learners from impoverish home always lack the basic learning tools due to financial problem, starting from uniform, writing materials and other, Some parent even force their learner to drop schooling in other to support the family. The literature confirm and illuminate these findings .A study

by UNICEF (2011) established that many schools in the rural area lack learning resources such as text books , library , laboratory and computers that can enhance their academic performance .

This is in line with the finding of Bergeson (2006) that affirmed that poor learners face both practical and materials constraint concerning their effective participation in their education carrier. The majority of the educator that were interviewed in the focus group, FGIE5, FGIE3, FGIE4 AND FGIE1 confirmed this in their response.

QUESTION 4 : Based on your experience as an educator, in which group of learner's does absenteeism persist most?

***FGIE1** Learners in the senior and FET Phase but precisely learners with poor background*

***FGIE2** Grade 8 to 10 because they are not sure of their academic progression.*

***FGIE3** Absenteeism persist most on the less disadvantaged home, learners are forced to do piece jobs so they can meet the basic needs of their family.*

***FGIE4** The poor learners, they miss out on school more often, giving reason that they didn't have enough money for transport or they don't have transport at all, they work long distance to school.*

***FGIE5** The poor learners from economically disadvantage home, they seem to miss out on school a lot, giving reasons that they didn't have enough money for transport or that they were too depressed or hungry to come to school.*

The response from FGIE3, FGIE4 and FGIE5 correspond with the study on school absenteeism and poverty conducted by Zhang (2003) . Poverty is more prevalent among the learners from poor economic background due to the circumstances beyond their capability. Cuthrel , et al (2010) also asserted that truancy and school dropout is common among the learners from poor household therefore the respond elicited from the interview is more positive and relevant to this study therefore the researcher can state that poverty impacted negatively on the academic performance of learners in the rural secondary school due to their absenteeism .

QUESTION 5 : Did you agree to the assumption that there is disparity between learners in urban areas and learners in the rural community when it comes to learners performance?

***FGIE1** Yes I agree, learners in the cities are very much exposed to good libraries and internet café than their counterparts in the rural areas.*

***FGIE2** Yes, learners in the urban areas have libraries to research with computers, they have lights for study at night compare to learners in the rural community*

***FGIE3** Yes, learners in urban area often feel comfortable in learning environment than learners in the rural area, they see learners in the rural as inferior to them.*

FGIE4 *there is disparity because learners in the urban seems to have everything they need and they seem be happier and more knowledgeable in their school work.*

FGIE5 *There is wide gap because in most cases learner's inn urban areas seem happier and more knowledgeable when it comes to school work.*

From the respondent of the educators in the focus group in question five, it was established that there is an over growing gap in the achievements gap of learners from varying walks of life (Neuma , 2013) learners from rural and disadvantaged home tend to achieve very low in their academic achievement because they are likely to receive low quality education UNICEF(2011) .SACMEQ survey also reveals that there are two scenario of two educational system operating in South Africa. One educational system that is well resourced and high performing , serving mainly the learners from affluence home , and the other a low performing system , serving learners that come from poor economic background (Spaul , 2011)

QUESTION 6: How can you explain the effect of household poverty on the learner's performance?

FGIE1 *Once a household is poor, the negative effect on the learner's performance is obvious. This learners has high risk of performing poorly.*

FGIE2 *Nutrition affects learner's concentration since food is scarce in poor family's homes, poverty also entails lack of resources for learners for example calculator.*

FGIE3 *It reduces the performance of learners in school, learners are often faced with many challenges at home and the pressure from school often make them fail.*

FGIE4 *Household poverty cause the children from impoverish homes to be discouraged and give up on their school work which leads to poor performance and end up in criminality behavior.*

FGIE5 *I agree with the last speaker.*

The educators interviewed state that poor nutrition causes different learning stability due to many effects that accompany it. I agree to this assertion because if a learner is not well fed he or she will failed to develop properly and this was also emphasized by Mwangi ,2010 when he state that health problems and poor nutrition deficits are ways in which poverty affects learners . Donald et al 2010 also purported that learners raised in poverty tend to miss school more often due to illness and other kind of related poverty syndrome that limit their academic success . The above is in conjunction with the response of FGIE2 when he said nutrition affects learner's concentration since there is always food scarcity in a poverty household therefore an hungry learners will not be able to concentrate in class therefore lead to poor academic performance and sometime failed to write examination due to absenteeism. It destroy the excellent potentiality of the learners, it also lead to deprivation and handicap stagnation and waste of future. Poverty maims and mutilate the learners physically, mentally, and also

destroy their potential. Poverty limit the availability of skills , and decent work due to lack of education (Mbeki , 2004).Poverty also affects the physical wellbeing , brain development , educational performance , self –esteem , cognitive and psychological development . Evans and Schamberg ,(2009) affirmed that the negative effect of poverty have damages on developing , which includes , low self-esteem and diminished self-efficacy .The finding also agree with Levine ,(2009) in his report that learners raised in poverty are at high risk of delinquency behavior , such as drug addiction , early pregnancy , victims of various diseases like HIV/AIDS ,and criminal behavior which will hinder them from achieving good performance academically.

QUESTION 7: What extent is the household poverty prevalence in secondary schools especially in the rural secondary schools ?

***FGIE1** The prevalence rate of poverty in the rural areas is high, to the extent that learners from such homes perform poorly.*

***FGIE2** Despite government grants, teenagers are the most affected by poverty especially males.*

***FGIE3** Household poverty occur most in secondary schools where learners might lose their self-esteem because their classmates are mocking them..FGIE3 state that poverty make learners to develop low self–esteem , this is in accordance with the study of of Bennett (2008) that emphasized that poverty make learners to be physically , psychological and social unfit due to the poor financial background of their household and it create high level of inferiority complex in them and reshape their future .When this is happening in the life of a learner , the outcome will be very bad in relation to his or her academic performance because he or she will not be able to concentrate in the classroom.*

***FGIE4** Poverty trap is high in secondary schools because of the mockery among the learners.*

***FGIE5** It is an extent that learners are getting involved in prostitution in order to earn a living.*

FGIE4 and FGIE5 also stated in their response that poverty make learners to engage in prostitution which can lead to early pregnancy and also when a learner come from poverty home, he or she can encounter mockery among the peer .This is in agreement with the Evans and Schamberg , (2009) that asserted that psychological effect of poverty are stressful and damaging to learners development. It make them insecure and translated to low self –esteem , diminished self- efficacy and create a wide gap among the peer in term of learning achievement. Levine , (2009) also said that learners raised in poverty have tendency of high risk for maltreatment , physical and sexual abuse , emotional trauma , and develop mental health issues which limit them from doing well academically.

QUESTION 8: How do you think learners in this categories can be assisted to overcome all these challenges to achieve good academic performance ?

FGIE1 Learners from poor and rural areas need to be assisted with financial assistance, they can also be given remedial lesson frequently.

FGIE2 Social assistance can be arranged at school level where critical resources should be made available.

FGIE3: The government must provide basic income security, human resources development, health care, creation of economic opportunities and social inclusion initiatives.

FGIE4 Given free education and food scheme programme in the school mostly in the rural schools, the community should donate for their needs.

FGIE5 They can be put through free education

The educator suggested that learners from poor household need an assistance to improve their educational performance. Government need to generate more employment opportunity for as many people, increase the income subsidy such as grants to provide better life for the household trap with poverty by and large improve the education performance of learners from such home. An educational policy that will give equal opportunity to all learners should be introduced by the government to close wide achievement gap between the learners. Policies, law, and community based monitoring system should be put in place to eliminate child labour and sexual abuse of learners that limit them from focusing on their study. Poverty is a societal problem that must be eliminated in our society because it has an adverse effect on economy growth and development since education is a function of growth.

QUESTION 9: What are the challenges facing as an educator in teaching learners that fall in this group?

FGIE1 Strangulation due to emotional problems, some develop bipolar.

FGIE2 Learners perform poorly in class and I spend a lot of time asking them to wake up and stop sleeping in the class, many seem to have given up on their future.

FGIE3 It is very difficult to handle learners from this group, many sleep in the class because they are hungry or they have walked a long distance from home to school.

FGIE4 Learners lack motivation so they are disruptive during lesson, they do not submit homework in time.

FGIE5 Educator will have huge task of making sure that no learners are left behind because of poverty.

The educators interviewed indicated that they all struggled with these categories of learners from the poverty-stricken home. FGIE1 states that most of the learners from poverty home have emotional problems that make them develop bipolar that hinder learning and resulted in poor performance. FGIE2 and FGIE3 also confirmed that they come to class with empty stomach and always sleeping during lesson. FGIE4 admits that these learners lack motivation and are disruptive during class, they do not

submit their homework and classwork. The findings from these educators correlates with study of O'neil, Rogers and Maslow study that learners from poor background will to self –actualize as proposed by Rogers and Maslow thus affecting their self –esteem , self –concepts , and their academic performance as recorded by O'neil ,(2011). Chinyoka and Ganga, (2011) also asserted that learners are physically exhausted and mentally tired after working a long distance to school. Conclusively, Ben –Chendo, et al (2012) concluded that learners were overburdened by domestics chores and informal labour therefore left them with no time for their studies thus, resulting in poor academic performance.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

FGIE1: Poverty is an injustice on everyone in any community, we all have to ensure that there is justice for all by fighting poverty in our own small ways, this fight start from with the individual ensuring he or she sends children to school.

FGIE3: Government does not see poverty reduction as a priority and do not putting all effort to reduce poverty, because they don't understand the wider effects of it. They have wasted many resources on other attempt. Good government will break the poverty trap. This will bring about employment which will stimulate the GDP. The standard of living will improve, pass rate will improve and by and large improve the productivity.

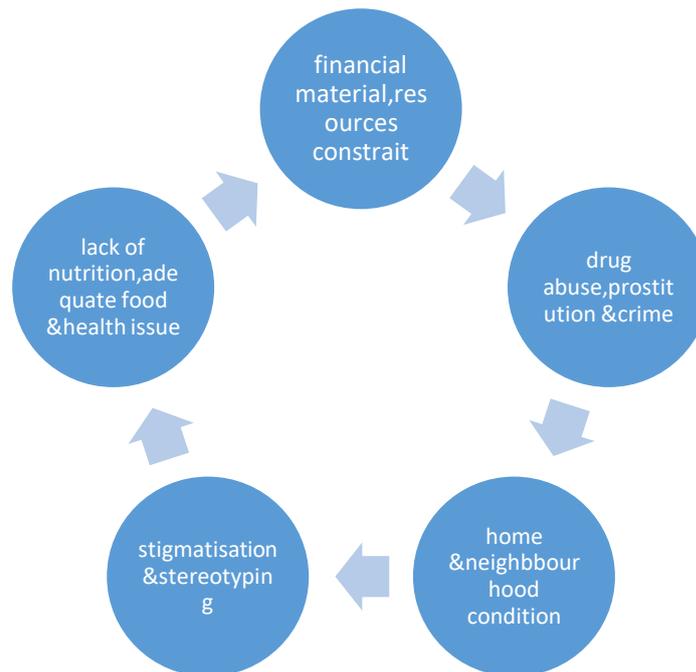
FGIE4: Poverty trap is a serious situation, therefore serious measures should be taken by the government.

FGIE5 : Poverty trap is really terrible because it put learners who are living with it under a lots of emotional problems because they believe they cannot succeed in life therefore there is need for government intervention to alleviate poverty in our societies.

4.4 COMMON ISSUES THAT EMERGE FROM THE FINDINGS

- Psychological distress, pre-marital sex, prostitution and drugs.
- Malnutrition and health problems
- Financial resource constraints leading to lack of basic learning resources and other challenges.
- How self-esteem and inferiority composed.
- Poor social emotional moral personality cognitive and psychological adjustment
- Delinquent behavior
- Stereotyping and stigmatization.

4.5 THEMES FROM THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW



4.5.1 theme 1 financial material resources constraint

The study established that the financial costs of schooling are often high despite the free education by the government. Some parents find it difficult to provide some basic resources that can help the learner to excel and participate fully in the class activities. Some of the response from the focus group discussions disclosed that high financial costs included not only basic resources but other indirect costs, such as the cost of food, transport, pocket money and school uniforms.

The literature confirms and illuminates these findings. A study by UNICEF (2011) established that many schools lack textbooks and the supplies that enhance academic performance. Based on the above arguments it can be agreed that without good textbooks and other basic learning resources many educators cannot improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school which will hinder the learners to have a clear understanding of the concept. Studies indicate the positive effect of more resources that often appear to be bigger than those of additional educator (Evan 2004). In international, non-governmental organization has been very instrumental in building libraries and classroom block in rural areas, in an effort to improve the situation in the schools for all learners but due to financial constraints they are unable to assist every school.

The finding in this study also revealed that in the five schools studied because of financial and resource challenges only one school had a school library, which however not effectively used by the learners due to long distance they need to walk after school and many of them cannot afford

transport cost. This was noted to be a serious constraint and drawback in the education of the learners.

In concurrence with the ecological perspective, Bronfenbrennen contends that a child develops within a compelled system relationships affected by multiple levels of the surrounding community. He (2006, 2008) asserts that there is a need to understand the multiple and interactive social economic, cultural and community level factors, which alone and in combination influence the process of development and the academic performance of learners.

Findings from the focus group interview also revealed that poor household have few materials and resources and that the learners growing up with few resources tend not to do very well academically, thus affecting their socially, emotionally, cognitive and physical functioning. This is in line with the finding of Bergeson, (2006) who asserted that poor learners face both practical and material constraints in their social participation in education.

The findings also indicated that some learners were observed to withdraw from school especially if their needs for supplies like school fees, shoes and uniforms were not met by their parents. They were also seen to have a low esteem, looked down upon themselves and shunned school as a result. Numerous studies lining self-concept and academic achievement have been carried out in Africa. Mwamwenda (2010) concluded that a learner who felt more confident and more self-assured would perform better in school examination. In addition to financial constraint keeping the uniform clean added an extra weekly financial burden on the family's meager income. Measured against Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (as cited in Santrock) 2009 , it can be argued that the deprivation of psychological needs like food, shelter, clothes, water and other basic needs among learners will pose a threat to their holistic development. This corroborates the findings made by Chen (2009) and Chireshe, et al (2010) who posit that when a learner does not get basic needs the brain does not grow to its fullest potential at the expected time and therefore will lag behind intellectually. Thus learners living in poverty experience a lot of pressure to keep up with their peers. They describe problems like keeping up appearances (such as having presentable and clean clothes and uniforms, shoes school bags pocket money and instances of shame associated with poverty). This was observed to negatively affect their academic performance and dropout levels.

It is evident from the findings of this study that learners in rural schools who formed part of the study are psychologically and materially not supported by their parents. It should be noted that unless the basic needs of learners are satisfying everything else falls back (Maslow as cited in O'neil, 2011) Maslow continue to say that learners who usually come to school without basic necessities develop behavioral, socio-emotional, moral and cognitive problems. All their human capacities such

as intelligence, memory and creating are put to work in trying to satisfy their psychological and physiological needs. (Maslow, in Kenrick, 2010)

Measured against Rogers – centered theory, deprived learners will inevitably develop a low self-esteem, conditional positive regard, insecurity and an inferiority complex, will be withdrawn and will end up being isolated by their peers. Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological Theory also embraces the belief that when one part of the body (no matter how small and seemingly irrelevant) hurts, it will disrupt the whole body, until healing is brought to the injured part. (Bee & Boyd, 2007)

From all the above analysis from the finding it is clear that poverty produces high significant educational disadvantages for learners in the rural areas.

4.5 .2 theme 2 lack of nutrition , adequate food and health issues

4.5.2.1 Lack of nutrition and adequate food .

Some of the educators who participated in the focus group interviews stressed that lack of nutritious food triggers an array of problems, many of which problems can become chronic. Some of the educators highlighted that some learners came to school without having any breakfast and this disengaged them from classroom activities as an adage said "a hungry man is an angry man".

Research findings by Pollit and Brown (2006), and Millan and Korenhamn (2004) indicated that under-feeding in childhood was thought to hinder mental development solely by producing permanent structural damage to the brain. Malnutrition remains one of the major obstacles to human well-being and economic prosperity in developing countries (Ecker & Nene 2012 Stevens et al, 2012). The most report from Save the Children stated that adults who were malnourished as children earn 20% less in academic performance on average than those who were not (Save the Children, 2012). Based on this argument, under-nutrition tends to limit the long term intellectual development of the learners. Poverty and poor nutrition do not have to be that severe to negatively affect the learners development (Pollit and Brown, 2006, Stevens et al 2012; Nabarro, et al 2012).

The Food Agriculture Organization, FAO and World Health Organization WHO research also demonstrated that even the slightest form of food insecurity can affect a young learners development and learning potential (Chilton, et al , 2007 ;Ignowski 2012). In support of the above argument, a study carried out in Kenya on adolescents who did not regularly eat breakfast or suffer from poor nutrition revealed that they generally become lethargic and stopped interacting, thus their learning potential was severely lowered (of the UNESCO 2011; United Nations,2012).

Measured against Maslow's theory of Motivation Tay and Diener (2011) reported that a good way to obscure the higher motivations and to get a lopsided view of human capacities and human nature is to make the organization extremely and chronically hungry and thirsty". This implies that a child from a poor household will have problems in self-actualization because of hunger. Hunger is a deficit of a basic needs for food, and Maslow gave it great prominence in the motivation of the learner.

Santrock (2009) and O'neil (2011) indicated that a higher motivation can only be attained when the basic needs have been fulfilled. It can be argued that the lack of physiological needs demonstrates the learner's innate needs to excel in school work, and hinder their overall development. This, to a larger extent, was noted to affect the academic performance of the learners in this study. Good nutrition is fundamental for individuals to realize their physical, cognitive and economic potential. It is the basis for individual and family well-being and human capital formation and as such key to the economic and social development of the current generation and even more so, of future generations. (Rusinga & Moyo, 2012; Benson; Hoddinott et al 2012; Sun, 2012). Malnutrition lowers the learner's performance in the schools, increase the risk of disability, mobility and mortality and thus contribute to the inter- generational transmission of poverty and illness (Ecker & Nene 2012: Ecker & Breisniger 2012; Nabarro, 2012)

The educator interviewed asserted that about 92% of their learners from poor household come to school with empty stomachs and failed to concentrate as a result of hunger. Instead of paying attention to the educator the hungry learner will be pondering about what to do as to get the basic needs. The IRIM (2012) report stated that malnutrition and poor health were great contributors of low retention and poor performance in secondary school. The research participants indicated that food insecurity and malnutrition have a direct effect on a learner's performance and achievement in school. The observation was in the rural and urban schools. An argument that be easier to substantiate is the fact that a hungry learners is more likely to have low concentration level, poor listening span and problems retrieving and accessing information than his or her peers who receive enough to eat. This may have impact on a learner's ability to perform in class. Therefore eating breakfast, lunch and dinner on a regular basis leads to a positive effects on a child's learning achievements, to the educators interviewed. Good nutrition and food security are therefore positively associated with improvement at school, as demonstrated in all schools studied.

Maslow believed that the higher-levels needs can only be achieved if the lower order needs have been satisfied first, thus a hungry person is not likely to be motivated to consider safety and affection until his or her hunger is satisfied. Rathus (2006) mentioned that "all the needs in the hierarchy are innate to humans, but those higher in the hierarchy are weaker. They only direct action when all

earlier needs have been satisfied.” The implication is that only when a person has enough to eat, and his or her physical safety is assured can he or she be motivated by a need to belong or a need for esteem.

This study can conclude that the lack of nutrition is inextricably linked to a myriad of health problems. Assessing the learners’ nutrition and health status of learners living in poverty independently contribute to psychological problems (Bee & Boyd, 2007; Ignowski 2012). Despite high-level commitments in the context of the millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other initiatives, most developing countries are likely to fail in achieving their nutrition- related goals, although there are large differences in nutritional achievements across countries (Stevens , et al 2012).

4.5.2.2 health challenges caused by a lack of food.

The results from the interviews with the educators in the focus group established that there is a higher incidence of conditions such as asthma, respiratory infections, headaches stomach pains, stress related ailments, tuberculosis, poor vision, marasmus, rickets, kwashiorkor, coughs, diarrhea, ear infections and hearing losses among learners from poverty stricken households who are malnourished. This researcher observed that a myriad of these diseases affects the ability of the learners to benefit from education and function intellectually, socially and economically later on in their lives, thus it can cripple a society for a generation or more.

It was also observed in this study that learners from poor household were stunted, namely had a low height for their age. The results from the educator interviewed revealed that learners experience stunted growth if they are under-fed. This confirms findings by Ignowski (2012) Donald et al (2012) who indicated that children living in poverty are much more prone to the health risks and safety risks associated with malnutrition, disease, infection and injury than learners who are not poor. Many of these health and safety risks cause physical, cognitive neurological and sensory problems that are likely to cause disability and learning difficulties (Donald et al 2010). Thus the learners’ level of attention and their ability to do complex intellectual work increase with the development of the sense organs as well as the brain. Poverty related disease are determined to the academic performance of learners. Learners tend to miss lessons because of poverty related illness, some fail to concentrate in class thus affecting their academic performance. Poverty related disease are determined to the academic performance of learners. Learners tend to miss lesson because of poverty-related illness.

Health problems and nutrition deficits are way which poverty affects learners cognitive and school-related outcomes (Mwangi, 2010) Shonkoff & Phillips 2000). To worsen the plight of the learners,

the research observed that to buy medicine or pay medical bills for their children therefore they need to follow long queues at the Government hospital. The teacher observed that some learner's school attendance was erratic because of various illness thus negatively affecting their academic performance. An educator emphasized in the interview that a healthy learner is a productive learner. Many learners, however are failing to maintain a healthy state due to, amongst others, a poor diet. Health is fast becoming a luxury which only those who can afford to pay the Doctors the medical bills and for the medicine can get.

Donald, et al (2010) purported that learners raised in poverty tend to miss school more often because of the illness. The learners are twice as likely to have impaired vision and hearing and to suffer from iron deficiency, anemia and lead in the blood, which may impair the functioning of the brain.

The study observed that those learners were usually stigmatized, labelled and look down upon. Also they develop inferior complex as a result. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory suggests that development of the learners is explained in terms of relationships for example between a learner and his or her environment (Boyd & Bee, 2006). Understanding the interactions of these systems is therefore important in understanding how learners develop, and which factor lead to their poor academic performance. Genetically determined child characteristics such as sex, temperament and health risks, such as chronic medical problems and under- nutrition are examined in assessing the relationship between poverty and learners psychosocial development (Bray et al, 2010; Witt 2012).

4.5.3 theme 3 the home, school and physical environment

4.5.3.1 effect of household chores

The study ascertained that the learners are losing out on education because they are needed at home to support their households by means of their work. The researcher and the respondent observed that situation was more unbearable in child-headed households where there was no parents on who the burden may be shifted. Rao (2004) indicated that when learners try to choose between work time and study time it may lead to family tensions, poor performance, poor lesson attendance and drop-out. The educators interview also emphasized the effects of the household chores on the learners, saying that there was little time for school and homework because of the amount of work around the house.

Bronfenbrenner (2008) urges the educator to establish and maintain family-school dyadic relationship in order to enhance the learners learning. Without education the learners are denied the opportunity to develop their full potential; hence they will fail to self –actualize as proposed by Rogers and

Maslow thus affecting their self-esteem, self-concepts and academic performance (O'neil, 2011). The long hours learners must work impair their intellectual development. It is unreasonable to think that learners can learn when they are physically exhausted and mentally tired. This study establish that for many learners, the hours spend at school becomes a time of rest, not to learn for most children that come from impoverish household.

Some learners are responsible for most of the household chores, little time is set aside for school and homework. When the two becomes too much to handle, Chinyoka and Ganga (2011) observed, school was the least priority. The time the learners spend doing household chores disadvantage them and affects their performance. Going to the library, attending group discussions and actual reading or study time is greatly reduced as a result. This study also indicated that when the learners in this categories have time to read they are so tired that their concentration span is affected and also their retention , attention motor reproduction skills, motivation and academic performance.

4.5.3.2 the effect of child labour

This study also established that monetary constraints and the need for food, shelter and clothing drive learners into the trap of premature paid labour. The rural learners are seen working in the fields, gardens and sometimes herding cattle for food and they are paid very little , unpaid learners labour was noted among families , where learners engaged in domestic work, cared for siblings, sick parents and relatives in order to save on the family income. Togunde & Arille (2008, as cited in Ben-Chendo, et al 2012) stated that learners from poor households who engaged in child labour activities faced hazards such as abuse and rape, which could affect their social, mental and physical development which negatively affect their educational development and performance.

The researcher noted that the parents of the learners in this situation could not supervise their learners' homework, thus exacerbating their academic pursuits. This breakdown in the learner's ecosystem leaves the learners with no tools to explore other parts of the environment (Beric 2007). Without proper adult supervision or love the learners who engage in child labour may look for attention in inappropriate places, thus affecting their self-discipline (Donald, et al, 2010).

UNIFEC (2010) posits that child labour deprive a learner of the basic right of education. In concurrence, ILO (2002) as cited UNESCO, (2010) posit that child labour has been seen all over the world as a major obstacle impeding the development of the learners to many aspects of development including education. In the light of the above, poverty is seen as a hindrance to the optimal functioning of secondary school learners in Nongoma and its environment. It may be concluded that child labour

are the objects of extreme exploitation in terms of toiling for long hours for minimal pay, thus negatively affecting their academic performance. In line with the findings of this research Chitiga and Chinyoka (2011) Kaba and Musonda (2011), Saito (2011) and Okeke , et al (2012) identified child labour, poverty and the lack of sponsorship, a quest for wealth, bereavement, truancy, broken homes and the engagement of learners as house helps, as the factors and the clogs in the wheel of children success in secondary school.

In the light of the above, poverty is seen as an hindrance of the optimal functioning of learners in the rural communities to develop their full potential and to play productive and equal role in their society and county at large.

4.5.3.3 the circumstances at home and neighbourhood factors .

The study established that the home circumstances are often not conducive to learning for the learners in the rural area. Majority of the learners from poverty stricken homes were affected by a lack of electricity, space to do homework, by spending much time on domestic chores, a shortage of resources for learning at home, a noisy neighborhood and unsupportive parents. Bradley, et al (2001) found that being poor can affect almost all aspects of a learner's home-life. Poor people usually found living in informal settlements in order to avoid paying high rent and in some cases because they cannot afford to own property (Houghton et al, 2010, as cited in Cameron, 2012) this reinforces the ideas brought forward by Bronfenbrennen (2008) who asserted that a lack of space, academic support at home and inability to afford rental constrain learners interaction with others, leading to poor academic performance.

According to the ecological theory, if the relationship in the immediate microsystem break down the child will not have the tools to explore other parts of his/her environment. This was supported by Atkinson (2008) who asserts that destructive forces in a learner's development limit their achievement academically.

From above discussion, it may seem that the home has a great influence on a learner's psychological emotional, social and economic situation, thus affecting his or her academic performance. Learners from poor families have in many cases been seen to lack educational goals (Atkinson, 2008). Broken families, single parents' families and child-headed families may have a traumatic effects on children. Usually learners from such backgrounds may have emotional problems which may hinder good academic performance (Chindanya, 2012).

Thus the family background plays a pivotal role in building the character of the learner and in enhancing academic performance.

4.5.4 theme 4 social abuse and harrasment .

It is observed from the study that learner who live in poverty are more at risk of sexually transmitted disease (STD) and HIV infection because of their promiscuity rate and need for money and other luxuries.. The study established that the abused learners are affected in many ways, such as a low self-esteem and a desire for unconditional acceptance. It was also observed that many of the children who experience some form of abuse carry with them the negative and permanent consequences which affect their academic performance.

The researcher established that sexual-abused children felt angry, dirty and betrayed by adults who are meant to protect them. They also felt rejected since no one believed when they tried to speak out. They developed fear since the abuse may have threatened them and they fear the abuse may continue. They become depressed and started avoiding other people. They would also experience isolation, have few contacts with friends, and engage in few social activities. A low self-concept develops as a result, which may negatively affect their academic performance. Some learners feel that they are worthless and they began to act out behaviors that confirm their worthlessness. This concurred with a research by Chinyoka and Ganga (2011) who found that learners who developed a negative self-concept experience some form of distress causing them to perform poorly at school.

The implication of the observation is that female learners affected by poverty are often high vulnerable to HIV infection. Their risk for infection arises from early onset of sexual activity, commercial sex, and sexual abuse, all of which are precipitated by economic needs, peer pressure and drug abuse. The researcher found out that learners from poor backgrounds tend to do little to protect themselves from HIV infection. The pressure for surviving, by means of meeting their basic needs, tends to outweigh their future-orientation require to avoid infection.

However all the five educators interviewed in the five school revealed that when learners involved themselves in sexual activities, their curiosity from school work become very low, they become disrespectful in the school and their level of truancy increased which resulted in poor academic performance or total drop-out of school.

4.5.5 theme 5 stigmatization and stereotyping .

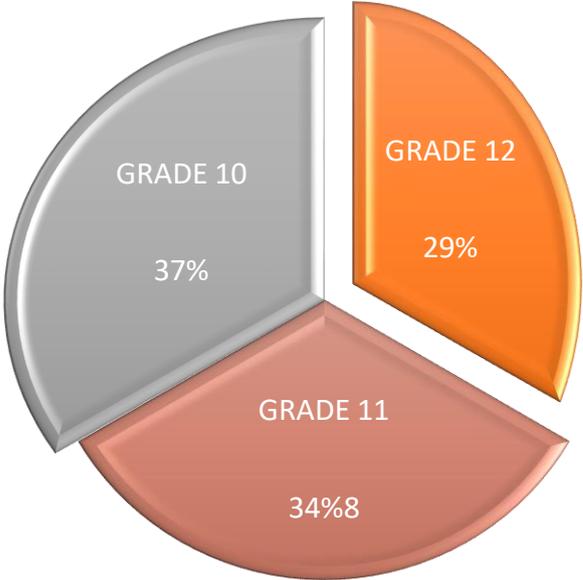
The educators interviewed in the five schools indicated that learners from a poor poverty home lack self-motivation and that they are lazy. Some even blamed poverty for their poor academic performance. They were over burdened by household chores. Most of them are shunned by their outside appearances; hence they rarely take part in classroom and other school activities that can build up their academic carrier. Four of the educators emphasized that learners from poor homes always come to school looked weary and tired in class, always came to school late, did not participate in class and have negative attitude towards their school work. The researcher observed that some of the sentiments raised by the educators showed that learners from poverty home were looked down upon and that some educator had negative attitude towards them. Also some learners from poor home have concluded from their mind that it is very difficult to escape this poverty and they did not do anything to strive and break this circle of poverty which is limiting their academic success.

Based on the above findings, it would be reasonable to conclude that learners from poor homes and sometimes their own enemies as they look down on themselves. This was observed to have impact negative on their academic performance. The stereotype becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy where ultimately in tests and examinations, the learners from poor home do not perform as well as their peers that comes from affluence home. Chabaya, et al (2009) remarked that the school, internationally and sometimes out of ignorance or omission, marginalizes learners from poor homes and their performances. Snowman and Biehler (2011) asserted that one crucial Rogerian assumptions is that positive regards or loving warmth is a fundamental human need. An individual self-actualizing tendency can be thrown out of orders when positive regards is withdrawn. Hayes (2008) views positive regards as love, attention and respect that comes from significant others and those in authority. According to Rogers (In O'neil, 2011) individuals naturally value positive regards. Positive self-regards is self-esteem and positive self-image that show the value which the individual attached to him or herself. The finding from the study established that high levels of academic failure were recorded in the rural schools because of their diminished self-confidence, due to stereotyping and labelling. An alternative explanation for the underperformance of learners in the rural schools emanates from research that blames public schoolings for this phenomenon. The self-esteem suffers when there is a big differences between one's idea and self-image does not matter with the true self (Schults, 2009).

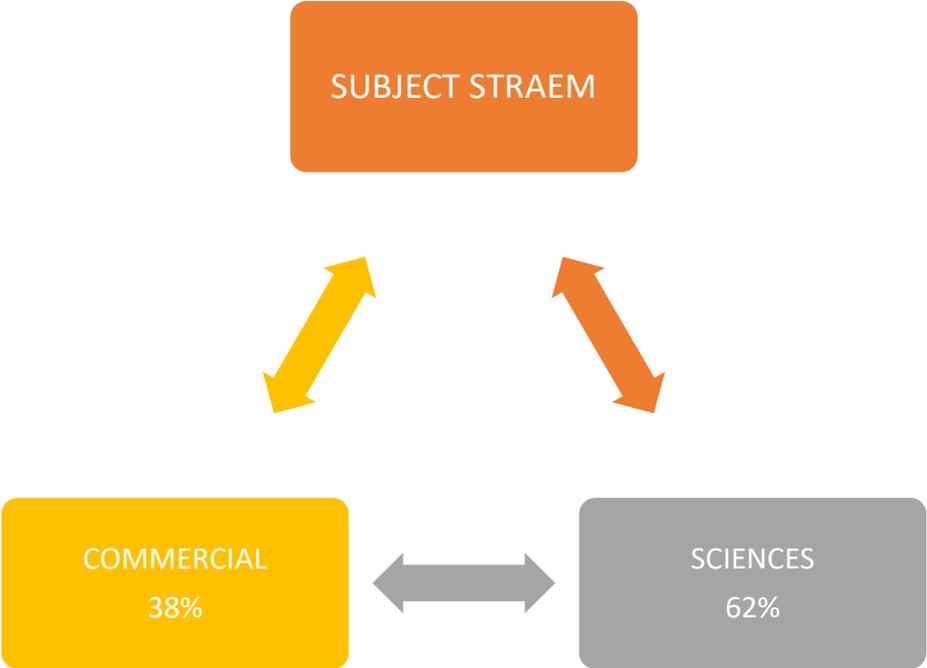
Poverty may affect the emotional well-being and sense of identity of some learners from poverty household, with them feeling stereotyped by others and stigmatized. Strong and supportive relationship with the family and friends act as a buffer for the learners against the impact of poverty, while those learners without such relationships appear the most depressed and pessimistic (Bronfenbrennen, 2008)

4.6 SECTION C

4.6.1 general characteristics of the respondents on questionnaires



Pie chart showing the percentage of each grade participants



Percentage of the subject stream of the participant.

Table 4.2.3

Respondents' Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Grade of Learner		
Grade 10	37	37.0
Grade 11	34	34.0
Grade 12	29	29.0
Subject Stream		
Science	62	62.0
Commercial	38	38.0

Showing the respondents characteristics from questionnaires

Table 4.3

Effects of Household Poverty Trap on Learners Performance in Secondary Schools in the Zululand Districts	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
Poverty trap has been discovered as one of the main causes of learners' poor performance in the secondary school of Zululand district	25.0	55.0	16.0	4.0
The learner can excel academically no matter the kind of household he or she comes from	9.0	23.0	41.0	27.0
The relationship between the child's environment and his growth will determine his academic outcome	26.0	39.0	28.0	7.0
Poverty trap increases the level of absenteeism in our secondary schools and eventually contribute to mass failure in the matric results	35.0	42.0	16.0	7.0

Poverty trap leads or contributes to low self-esteem of the learners or lack of confidence which resulted in failure or total drop out of the school	45.0	32.0	19.0	4.0
Poverty trap creates a wide range of differences between the children of the less privileged and the learner that are born with silver spoon	41.0	42.0	10.0	7.0
The understanding of poverty trap and its effects allow me to have a clear understanding of learners' better performance in urban areas compared to learners' performance in the rural environment	34.0	49.0	13.0	4.0
Government policies or strategies for both rural and region development through new economic policy can improve the performance of learners in the rural areas	44.0	43.0	10.0	3.0
Bridging the gap of social economic imbalances can alleviate poverty and improve learners performance in secondary schools	38.0	49.0	12.0	1.0
The crime rate can also decrease immensely if there is equal distribution of income because it can motivate learners and buttress their academic performance	54.0	33.0	10.0	3.0

Frequency and percentage distribution table for questionnaires

Table 4.4 ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	47	47.0	47.0	47.0

<p>1. The government can easily alleviate poverty if they make it their priority. 2. The government can also intervene in schools to help children that suffer from poverty</p>	1	1.0	1.0	48.0
<p>1. Education must be taken seriously. 2. We ask for free education in colleges and universities because some of us cannot afford to pay the required fees. 3. Sanitary pads should be free in all schools because some girls cannot afford it due to poverty.</p>	1	1.0	1.0	49.0
<p>Everyone who can should help in tackling poverty so that the upbringing of young people is healthy and positive</p>	1	1.0	1.0	50.0
<p>Failure of students is not caused by poverty but caused by learners' laziness. The government provided all resources to schools</p>	1	1.0	1.0	51.0
<p>Government should intervene in poverty alleviation</p>	2	2.0	2.0	53.0

Government should put more effort on helping children	1	1.0	1.0	54.0
I think all learners living in poverty should work hard so they can be provided with scholarships and learner-ships so they can come out of the poverty trap	1	1.0	1.0	55.0
I think there should be free education. The government should give out school buses to send children to school who stay far away for free.	1	1.0	1.0	56.0
If poverty trap can be tackled through food donations etc, then poor learners can get equal learning therefore boosting the pass rate in South Africa. Poor learners must also be well-fed.	1	1.0	1.0	57.0
If the government can deliver services for communities equally, there can be a great change	1	1.0	1.0	58.0
If the school can improve or the place around the learner, many things can change about the learner and become better than before	1	1.0	1.0	59.0

Learners in cities perform better than the ones in rural areas because of poverty	1	1.0	1.0	60.0
Learners in rural areas should be given a proper orientation on education	1	1.0	1.0	61.0
Learners under poverty should be helped by the government	1	1.0	1.0	62.0
No matter how poor you are, y can come to school	1	1.0	1.0	63.0
People need to support each other	1	1.0	1.0	64.0
Poverty can be reduced with great commitment. There is a way out with education, training and employment	1	1.0	1.0	65.0
Poverty can result in poor performance of learners in schools, increasing the rate of dropping out from school, thereby increasing crime rate. The issue of poverty should be given immense attention.	1	1.0	1.0	66.0
Poverty discourages learners from achieving their dreams. The government should reach out to those who need help.	1	1.0	1.0	67.0

Poverty has made children suffer in their academics.				
Government should reduce the gap of social economic issues	1	1.0	1.0	68.0
Poverty has the most negative effect on our daily lives and it has reduced the rate of skilled labour in our country. Therefore, the government's intervention is needed. The amount of social grant must be increased, especially the amount given to orphans.	1	1.0	1.0	69.0
Poverty is a serious issue and it needs to be addressed before it affects the future	1	1.0	1.0	70.0
Poverty is increasing in rural areas rather than decreasing	1	1.0	1.0	71.0
Poverty is the main cause of failure in schools. If poverty crisis is tackled, a better performance in school development can be sustained	1	1.0	1.0	72.0
Poverty is the main cause of poor performances. I think the government should do something about poverty because it's killing the country	1	1.0	1.0	73.0

Poverty is the major cause of poor performance. I believe the government can improve subsidies to different schools and improve service delivery in our communities	1	1.0	1.0	74.0
Poverty should be fought against	1	1.0	1.0	75.0
Poverty trap affects children's performance in school	1	1.0	1.0	76.0
Poverty trap affects learner's performance in school	1	1.0	1.0	77.0
Poverty trap can affect a person's life negatively because what reaches the brain first will rule it. Government should provide food across all schools in South Africa.	1	1.0	1.0	78.0
Poverty trap can affect children in schools and make them isolate themselves. Government should endeavour to reduce inequality	1	1.0	1.0	79.0

Poverty trap can create a huge problem for education in Africa. Learners under poverty trap should be assisted in order for them to have equal opportunities as the rest of the other learners in the world	1	1.0	1.0	80.0
Poverty trap can discourage learners and affect their academic performance. I think free food could be served to learners affected by poverty	1	1.0	1.0	81.0
Poverty trap can increase daily for some learners. As a nation we need to stand firmly together and look after one another	1	1.0	1.0	82.0
Poverty trap does not lead to dropping out of school because school is about the mind and the book, and learners must work hard to achieve good results	1	1.0	1.0	83.0
Poverty trap has increased the crime rate in the country	1	1.0	1.0	84.0

<p>Poverty trap is the cause of learners' failure in rural secondary school. If government could provide transport and equal distribution of income, then the level of poverty could decrease and this means all learners will be equal in school</p>	1	1.0	1.0	85.0
<p>Poverty trap shouldn't make student less active but more courageous to work hard and get high marks so that they can get a high paying job to change the situation they are living in</p>	1	1.0	1.0	86.0
<p>Students are not motivated if income is redistributed equally because they will not find a reason to strain themselves to live a normal life like everyone else. Let them dream big and work hard</p>	1	1.0	1.0	87.0
<p>The background of a learner can have a negative or positive impact in the school performance of a learner, giving learners more reasons to study hard, if they are from poor background</p>	1	1.0	1.0	88.0

<p>The child's future and general performance is determined by its living condition. Poverty has bad impacts on secondary schools. Learners should be helped to get 3 square meal a day to stay healthy.</p>	1	1.0	1.0	89.0
<p>The government can put in public transport to help the learners coming from rural areas to go to school so they can improve in the future</p>	1	1.0	1.0	90.0
<p>The government can work or improve on the issue of poverty trap bit by bit. They can allow public schools to have breakfast, lunch and take aways after school. It's a start</p>	1	1.0	1.0	91.0
<p>The government could distribute equally to secondary schools so that everyone has the same resources in school regardless the poverty state in the school. Career expos will encourage children regardless their poverty state.</p>	1	1.0	1.0	92.0
<p>The government must help alleviate poverty in order to improve the economy of Zululand district</p>	1	1.0	1.0	93.0

<p>The government must help in fighting against poverty trap so that student can excel academically</p>	1	1.0	1.0	94.0
<p>The high rate of poverty has caused many children to drop out of school, thereby causing the country to have a high rate of unskilled labour.</p>	1	1.0	1.0	95.0
<p>The improvement of education can decrease poverty in rural areas. This can in turn decrease crime rate of the country</p>	1	1.0	1.0	96.0
<p>The outcome of learner performance is determined by household he/she is coming from. The government must implement policies that will help redress income and help the previously disadvantaged groups</p>	1	1.0	1.0	97.0
<p>The society should endeavor to help those living in the rural areas. We must fight poverty because it affects children and education</p>	1	1.0	1.0	98.0

They can give students feeding scheme, especially matric students that need more time to study	1	1.0	1.0	99.0
You can succeed in school whether you are wealthy or not	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Additional comments from the respondents on questionnaires

4.7 THE FINDINGS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRES RESPONDENTS

4.7.1 relationship between academic performance of rural secondary school learners and poverty

Respondent view on poverty trap as main cause of poor learner's performance in rural school in Nongoma area of Zululand District.

Statement: poverty is the main cause of the poor learner's performance in the rural secondary school in Nongoma area of Zululand District.

Table 4.5

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	25	25.0
Agree	55	55.0
Strongly Disagreed	16	16.0
Disagree	04	4.0
Total	100	100

The table show that 80% (25+55) agree that poverty is the main cause of the poor performance of learners in the rural secondary schools in Nongoma area of Zululand District .Meanwhile 20 (16+04) disagree that poverty cause poor performance of learners in the secondary schools. Generally, it can

be observed that majority of the learners that respond to the questionnaires believe that poverty impede academic success in the high school. A total of 80 learners out of 100 total responds translating to 80% affirmed that poverty hinder academic achievement.

Thus, it can be upheld that , learners from rural environment /community challenged with poverty which exposed them to poor education system which coincide with the work of Akoojee and Nkomo (2008) who opine that learners from rural dominate community struggle to learn due to lack of quality in the education system that poverty has exposed them to Fook and Sidhu (2013) .(Cavanagh ,2007; Haycock,2001)also supported that learners from rural community receive least support that can enhance their academic performance .

Respondent view on influence of household poverty on learner’s academic performance

Statement :Learners can excel or perform academically well regardless of their household status

Table 4.6

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	9	9.0
Agree	23	23.0
Strongly disagree	41	41.0
Disagree	27	27.0
Total	100	100

The table indicates that 32% (9.0 +23.0) agree that learners can excel academically no matter the kind of the household they come from , meanwhile the majority of the respondents which is 68% (41.0+27.0) disagree with this assertion that learners from poverty household will be limited in their academic performance due to the financial constraint of the household .This argument coincide with the international council of Nurses (2004) which describe poverty as elephant in the room that negatively affects academic success. Also (Barton , 2003; Crooks, 1995 ; ,Leach and Williams 2007; Ross, Smith , Slavin and Madden, 1997) also subscribe to the achievement gap in the educational setting of economically disadvantaged and non -economically disadvantaged learners .This implies that it is very challenging for learners from poor home or poverty stricken home to be successfully academically .

Respondents view about the influence of a learners environments and his growth in relation to his or her academic outcome

Statement: The relationship between the learner’s environments and his growth will determine his academic outcome.

Table 4.7

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	26	26.0
Agree	39	39.0
Strongly disagree	28	28.0
Disagree	7	7.0
Total	100	100

From the table, the majority of the respondents agree that a child’s environment and his growth will have a major impact on his or her academic outcome. 65% (26.0+ 39.0) agreed that the environment of a learner play an important role in his or her educational performance. According to the developmental system theories (Bronfenbrenner, U.1994) Sameroff, A. 2000) on ecological perspectives on developmental risk may be helpful in understanding the multiple mechanisms linking poverty with learners education and development. The finding of the study shows that the environment in which a learner grow will influence his or her educational achievement because his cognitive development is a function of the environment in which a learner spent his or her early development .Poverty affects learners psychosocial development across multiple contexts, including the family , home and school (Lacour &Tissington , 2011; Chireshe, 2010;Chilton , Chyatle &Braub,2007) and have detrimental effects on the socio –emotional and cognitive functioning , and their academic achievement (Brooks –Gunand Duncan 2007; Conger &Donella , 2007. Learners living in poverty are much more prone to the health and safety risks associated with malnutrition , diseases , infection and injury due to the kind of environment they stay than those learners who are not poor (Donald, Lazarus&Lolwana 2010; Jensen, 2007, Lacour and Tissington , 2011). This health and safety risk cause a myriad of problems for the learners. Learners from high poverty schools district were less likely to have access to qualified and experienced educator and more likely to face low expectation from educators (Flores, 2007 ;Peske and Haycock,2006)

4.7.2 effects of poverty on the academic performance of learners in the rural secondary schools of nongoma

Respondents view on if poverty is responsible for absenteeism and mass failure in national school certificate examination.

Statement: Poverty increase the level of absenteeism in our secondary schools and contribute to mass failure in Matric examination.

Table 4.8

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Agree	35	35.0
Agree	42	42.0
Strongly Disagree	19	19.0
Disagree	04	4.0
Total	100	100

The result from the table indicates that 77% (35.0+42.0) of the respondents agree that poverty increase the level of absenteeism in our high schools and also contribute to mass failure in the national school certificate examination result most especially in the schools that were located in the rural area . 23% (19.+ 4.0) of the responds disagree with this statement . The finding suggest that majority (77%)of the respondent from the 5 (five) schools are in agreement that poverty increase the level of the absenteeism in our secondary schools and contribute to mass failure in matric examination . The findings correlates with the study of school absenteeism and poverty conducted by Zhang (2003) that learners living in the disadvantaged household with parents or guardians who are unemployed and in receipt of government welfare grants are more likely to miss schools than their counterparts whose parents are engaged with one form of occupation or the other. Due to the financial predicament faced by some households, the children who belongs to those poverty groups may find it challenging to be in school all the time because of the stress of walking long distances which can discourage them from attending school. This also coincide with the work of (Astone & Mclanahan , 1994; Mclanahan & Sandefour , 1994, Wojtkiewilz&Donato,1995).

The economic theory view educational attainment of learners as a function of household production and parental investment (Becker,1993, 1981; Bryant,1990; Parish & Willis, 1993).

Respondent view on the effect of poverty on learner's academic performance.

Statement : Poverty trap leads or contribute to low self - esteem of the learners or lack of confidence which resulted in failure or total drop out of school

Table 4.9

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	45	45.0
Agree	32	32.0
Strongly disagree	19	19.0
Disagree	04	4.0
Total	100	100

The above table shows that 77% (45+32) of the respondent agree that poverty have a great effect on the academic performance of the learners while 23% (19+04) disagree with the belief .The finding suggest that the largest percentage of the respondents from each of the school in which the study take place concord to the assertion. This was in line with Singh explanation on the impact of poverty when he said: The excellent potentialities of the learners are destroyed prematurely or are allowed to develop only partially by the adverse socio – economics condition. According to a study by Phipps and Lethbridge (2007) consistency associated higher incomes with better outcomes for learners . It is well established that poverty is one of the primary causes of school truancy and drop-out (Cuthrell, et al, 2010) . Learners living in poverty can have devastating effects on education because poverty they will not be able to focus on their learning and this will resulted in poor learning outcome (Benneth 2008) .

Respondent view on the growing of achievement gap of learners between learners from impoverished home and learners from rich household

Statement : Poverty trap creates a wide range of differences between the less privileged and learners from affluence homes

Table 4.10

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	41	41.0
Agree	42	42.0
Strongly Disagree	10	10.0
Disagree	07	7.0
Total	100	100

The table indicates that 83% (41+42) of the respondents support that poverty has created inequality and differences in the achievement gap of the learners in the secondary schools while only 17% (10+7) disagree . The majority of the respondent observed that poverty is an elephant in the house that creates a wide range of gap in our society and most especially in the schools and limits the achievements of the learners in the rural community schools compared with their counterpart in the city or urban area where the learners have access to all the basic needs the aid the teaching and learning .According to Neuman (2013) there is an ever growing gap in the achievement gap of learners from varying walks of life . Studies show that learners from poor background tends to achieve very low compared to their counterpart that have access to all education needs and quality teaching that boost learning. Duncan et al , ((2013) emphasized that learners from poverty homes will achieve very low academically compared to that learners that come from affluence home .

Respondent view in comparison of learners from rural area to learners from the urban area

Statement :The understanding of poverty trap and its effects allow me to have a clear understanding of learners’ better performance in urban areas compared to learners’ performance in the rural environment

Table 4.11

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	34	34.0
Agree	49	49.0
Strongly Disagree	13	13.0
Disagree	04	4.0
Total	100	100

The table above indicates that 83% (34 +49) agree that learners from urban secondary schools excel academically better than learners in the rural schools due to couples of factors that aid learning in

the urban compared to rural schools. 17 % (13+04) disagree but due to the majority that agree to this , the researcher established this fact that understanding the poverty will give a clear understanding while learners in the city perform excellently well than learners in the rural schools. Study also highlight the effect of poverty on neighborhoods , community and cultural patterns as factors that limit good academic success of the learners in the rural area . Low incomes families tends to live in low income neighborhood, often characterized by high density, crime, and few opportunities for academic socialization. Black, M & A. Krishnakumah .1988emphasised that schools are often underfunded, beset by disciplinary problems, staffed by poorly equipped teachers, and confronted with difficulties meeting their educational mandate compared to learners in the urban area.

As Parker, Greer, and Zuckerman1988 noted almost two decades ago, learners growing up in poverty experience double jeopardy. Not only are they directly exposed to risks in their homes and communities, including, illness, crowding and family stress, lack of psychosocial stimulation, and limited resources, but they often experience more serious consequences to risks than learners from higher income families in the city.

4.7.3 strategies to alleviate poverty

Respondent view on the strategies to alleviate poverty

Government strategies to improve rural and region education development through different policies that can influence the learners academic performance in the rural schools

Table 4.12

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	44	44.0
Agree	43	43.0
Strongly Disagree	10	10.0
Disagree	03	3.0
Total	100	100

The table show that 87% (44 +43) agree that introduction of new different policies can improve the academic performance of the learners thereby improve the quality of education in the rural communities and improve learners performance in the long run , but 13% (10 +03) disagree but majority of the respondent believe that if government can introduce some new development policies , it will

have a positive effect on the academic performance of the learners . This finding is in agreement with World Bank chief economist Nicholas Stern when he said that finding ways of reducing poverty is essential for children healthy development. However neither education alone nor economic growth alone is likely to be sufficient. He warns that investment led economic growth will not mitigate poverty. Empowering poor people so that they can participate in economic growth requires investment in health , in education , and in social protection as well as building institutions that enable them to participate in decisions that shape their lives . Thus interventions are needed that address all aspects of the empowerment framework.

Also the alleviation of poverty demands not only economic solutions, but also the adoption of strategies by government, communities, and families that reverse the deleterious process where poverty limits and disrupts both physical and mental development that hinders good achievement of learners (Narayan , D & P . Petesch (2007).

The finding also agrees with the Association for supervisor and curriculum development recently (2016) published a type of call for educators to engage to engage students in impoverished areas in a way that is consonant with poverty literacy.

Respondent view on the bridging gap of social economic imbalances that limit learner's performance

Statement : Bridging gap of social economic imbalances can alleviate poverty and improve learners performance in secondary schools

Table 4.14

Response	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly agree	38	38.0
Agree	49	49.0
Strongly Disagree	12	12.1
Disagree	01	1.0
Total	100	100

Poverty remains predominantly a rural phenomenon and the poor are often concentrated on marginal lands where there are millions of people in a state of extreme poverty, but also where no fewer people have become rich quickly. Most of the poor are concentrated in the rural area and self-sufficient agriculture is their main livelihood which hinder their children to have access to basic resources that can help them in their academic performance and this also create a wide gap in terms of income between their counterpart .Persistently, high and growing inequality in access to basic social services such as education and health care, exacerbated by income inequality, is also a significant concern. The table indicates that if government can introduce policies that will close this wide gap of inequality and imbalances, the academic performance of the learners in the rural school will improve for better because they will be able to avoid some resources that will help them to excel in the classroom like their counterpart. 87% (38+49) which comprises of the majority of the respondent agree to this while 13% (12+1) disagree. The finding of this study emphasized that inequality of income impede academic success of the rural learners but if government is able to correct this imbalances through adequate and appropriate policy, the education achievement of rural learners can improve significantly.

4.8 SUMMARY

The chapter presented evidence to answer the question on the effect of household poverty trap on the academic performance of secondary school learners in the rural area of Nongoma. The study examined and evaluated the effect of household poverty on the academic performance of secondary school learners and suggested educational policies measure and solutions to reduce the consequences caused by poverty on the academic performance of the learners in the rural schools. The analysis of the empirical data yielded five themes, financial resources constraints, the lack of nutrition and health issues, sexual abuse and harassment, stereotyping and stigmatization and the home- and neighborhood. The next chapter gives the summary conclusions and recommendation in relation to the results and will aim to answer the main research questions as well as the sun question. Recommendations for further studies will also be suggested.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a summary of the study together with conclusions and recommendations derived from it. The empirical research conducted in chapter three and the data analysis that follows in chapter four are integrated in order to present the conclusion and recommendations. An attempt has been made to collate responses to individual aspects so as to arrive at specific conclusions and recommendations that may hopefully help to assuage the problems identified in the study.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 contains the introduction and orientation to the study (see paragraph 1.1), which includes a background to the study, clarification of concepts, the aims and objectives of the research, a description of methodology, delimitation of the field of study and the conclusion.

Chapter 1 also shows the effect and relationship of household poverty on the academic performance of rural secondary schools learners, such as absenteeism , school dropout , malnutrition , stereotyping and stigmatization (see paragraph 1.2) Poverty play a significant role in limiting learners from impoverish home from developing to their full potentials and achieved their heart desire (see paragraph 1.2) This chapter also highlight the different kind of disease that learners from disadvantage home are exposed to despite Government measure and policies to encourage all learners to receive good and sound education (see paragraph 1.2) . This chapter also shows that the educational restructuring undertaken by the state since 1990 has encompassed reforms in education sectors. These reforms include the extension of educational provision with a view to expanding the labour market (see paragraph 1.2)

In Chapter 2, the researcher examines the broader historical and conceptual framework of poverty trap (see paragraph 2.2), which includes the description of poverty trap, definition and types of poverty, the dynamic process of poverty , history and origin of poverty (see paragraph 2.3) Philosophies underpinning poverty trap and the effect on academic performance of learners were also discussed (see paragraph 2.6). Theories of poverty trap were also outlined (see paragraph 2.6). The researcher selected an appropriate theory that underpinned the theoretical perspectives: Urie Brenfenbrnner’s ecological theory. These perspectives explore the psychological effects of poverty on the academic performance of learners from economically disadvantaged household (see paragraph 2.6). This chapter also extrapolates the past and contemporary issues pertaining to poverty trap whereby the history of poverty and the origin of poverty were unpacked (see paragraph 2.8.1)

Chapter 2 further maintains that poverty hindered millions of rural learners from having access to education despite concerted efforts to push the cause forward .(see paragraph 2.8.2) .The study reveals that poverty is the reason for learner’s labour, truancy , broken homes ,and the engagement of learners as house helps , as the clog in the wheel of learners access to education (see paragraph 2.8.2) This chapter also extrapolates the effect of household poverty trap on learners academic performance , (see paragraph 2.9) , relationship between learners academic performance and poverty trap (see paragraph 2.10 and the extent of poverty trap on learners academic performance (see paragraph 2.11) . The chapter also uncovered the financial constraint as an impediment for a learner to perform to the optimum level academically (see paragraph 2.9.1). The chapter furthermore discussed the South Africa and global origin of poverty.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology that the researcher employed in order to obtain data from respondents concerning the Effect of household poverty trap on the academic performance of secondary school learners in Nongoma in Zululand District. This chapter also discusses the research design, which includes the delimitation of the field of survey, the acquisition of permission from the Department of Education to conduct research, the selection of respondents (size of the sample, the sampling procedures), the research instrument (questionnaires), the pilot study, administration of the questionnaires, processing of data and ethical considerations (see paragraph 3.1).

Chapter 4 focuses on analysis, presentation, and interpretation of empirical data that was elicited from the respondents by means of questionnaire items and focus group interview. Scoring was carried out and checked by a qualified A-test user. Each item was assigned its column. Since the data analysis involved item analysis, the scores for each item were tabulated. The statistical tables were drawn up from the replies to the questionnaires and were presented together with brief reports based on analyses and interpretation of the data.

Chapter 5 reviews the entire study project. It also provides a summary of the findings (conclusions) from the literature as well as an empirical survey and a set of recommendations, which is hoped may help to solve the problems identified (see paragraph 5.3).

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

This section deals with several important findings with regard to the effect of household poverty trap on the secondary school learners in Nongoma in the Zululand District. The summary of the findings (conclusion) is not exhaustive but only deals with salient issues that emerged from the study, as discussed below.

5.3.1 Financial constraints.

The study revealed that poor financial background led to drop out of learners from schools in the rural area. The results from the focus group interview established that the direct and indirect cost of education acted as a major barriers for learners to excel academically. Williams, et al (2010) indicated that inability of the learners from poverty home to access quality education and possess some basic learning aids have seen the learners from affluence home getting preference above the learners from the poor household.

The study also established that rural learners was affected by financial cost that include not only school fees , though there is free education but other indirect costs , such as the cost of transport , food , writing materials and school uniforms. As a result of these, learners were uncomfortable in the classroom, leading to poor concentration in class, absconding from lessons, and in some instances, missing lessons. This observation was in line with finding by Burrows and Maunder (2004).

5.3.2 Stigmatization and stereotyping

It was observed in this study that poor learners attended poor schools which were poorly endowed with resources and dilapidated building and they were taught by negligent and care –free educators. The educators also have a negative attitude towards the learners from poor background, thus exacerbating their plight. In the light of the above , living in poverty involves been stigmatized , marginalized , and stereotyped negatively (Cozzarelli , et al .,(2001) and excluded (Lott, 2002) . As a consequences, poor learners may experiences feeling of shame and embarrassment, and have trouble of believing in their strength and ability (Chinyoka, 2011).

The researcher established that high level of academic failure were recorded among the learners in the rural schools because of frustration, demotivation, and demoralization leading to poor academic performance.

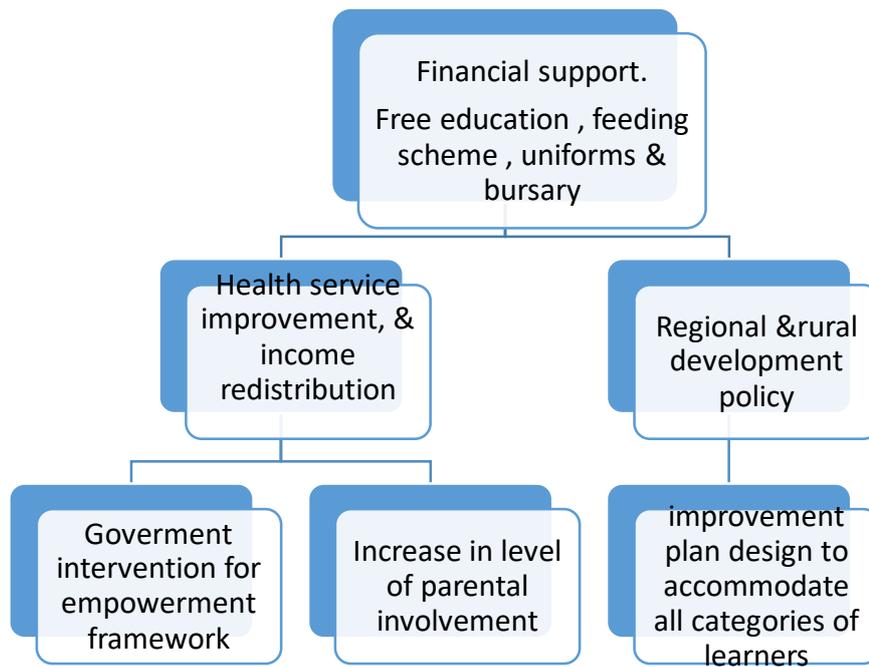
5.3.3 Poor nutrition and health issues

The educator interviewed and from the questionnaires collected, it was emphasized that lack of nutritious food triggered an array of health problems, many of which could become chronic. The grater incidence of health issues among lower income learners led to increased absences from schools, grade retention, school drop- out and various disabilities that impact learning negatively. The study observed that negative effects on the learners listening span , caused attention deficiencies , poor retentive memory , concentration problems and difficulties in respects of schools attendance , motivation , and academic performance . In the light of the above , Stevens ,et al (2012 , Ignowski, (2012) Bolger,et al .(2005) and Costello, et al ,(2003) together with Duncan and Brook-Gunn (2007) indicated that a vicious cycle of poverty can be noted where the learners from poor home background suffer from malnutrition , poor physical and mental health , social emotional , all causing poor academic performance . It is therefore difficult to break the cycle of poverty among poor learners. This however, does not rule out the fact that some learners have resilience and will continue to excel, despite coming from impoverished household.

5.3.4 Sexual abuse and harassment.

The finding of the study also established that, learners from poor households also engaged in sexual survival strategies to secure support for their basic needs but risking life and of contracting HIV /AIDS. The consequences is the curtailment of their education. The risk of infection arises from the early onset of sexual activity, commercial sex, and sex abuse, all of which are precipitated by economic need, peer pressure and drug abuse. All of the above persuade the vicious cycle of poverty to continue among the learners and resulted in poor academic outcome

5.4 RECOMMENDATION



5.4.1 Recommendations from this study as derived from

- It is critical to address the effects of poverty as experienced by learners. In South Africa and mostly in the rural area, collaboration work is needed among all stakeholders, especially in revisiting the main root causes of poverty, namely socioeconomic instability, political unrest, income unequally and unequal distribution of resources in the region.
- The government should generate more employment opportunities for as people many as possible. Increase in income subsidy such as grants to provide basic necessity for the learners from poverty household.
- The government should formulate a policy that will make basic education compulsory for all the children regardless of their socio-economic status.

- Polices, law and community based monitoring system should be put in place to eliminate child labour and sexual abuse of learners.
- The government & education could be sensitized and train to provide support for learners from impoverished backgrounds.
- Poverty is societal problem that must be addressed by the microsystem of school, the families and neighborhood, the mesosystem and the exosystem as well as macrosystem (political, ideology)

5.4.2 Recommendation for further study

- There exist a need to explore the impact of household economic situation on the learner. It would be interesting to further explore the benefit analysis of household causes of poverty.
- There is also a need for both quantitative and quantitative research on secondary school learners on the impact of drug abuse, achievement gap on the academic performance of learners from poverty stricken home.
- The need also exist to explore the impact of teachers attitude on the academic performance of rural secondary school learners.
- Finally, although it is important to understand the underlying issues that affect the plight of the learners, it is equally important to look at why many learners exposed to such risk manage to rise above them.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This study presented evidence to answer the question on the effect of household poverty trap on the secondary school learners in Nongoma Circuit in Zululand District and suggested sound educational policies, measures and solation to reduce the consequences caused by poverty on the academic performance of learners from poverty household.

The study established that poverty affect the learners cognitive development across multiple contexts including family, the neighborhood and the school and has determined achievements. It was discovered that many learners drop-out of schools due to poverty related variable such as financial constraint's household socio-economic issues, poor mental & physical health, delinquent behavior, drug and alcohol abuse, stigmatization and marginalization, causing behavioral and socio-emotional problems and development delays.

Home-based variables, such as the lack of lighting, limited space to do homework, too much domestic chores, the shortage of learning resources and unsupportive parents impact negatively on the learner's academic performance.

It was found from the study that financial constraint and economic background lead the learners to attend poor schools where the quality of education was exacerbated.

The stereotyping and social satisfaction impacted negatively on the learners' self-confidence, hence leading to high levels of failure in schools.

Despite the negative effects of poverty on academic performance highlighted in this study, the researcher also ascertained that poverty should not be an excuse for educational practical to expect less from learners from impoverished households. While it is true that they do indeed come to school with numerous issues and challenges that interfere with their learning. There is need for teachers, principal and all stakeholders to focus on the learners, in an effort of finding ways to help them overcome these challenges and gain the most they can from the education. Denying the certain group of learner's access to education. Denying the certain group of learner's access to education is endangering the efforts to realize the intentionally agreed Millennium Development Goals. Their education is likely to be their one chance to break the poverty cycle and escape from it. It is therefore one of the best reasons for all learners to succeed in their schooling.

In the light of the above, learners raised in low-income families are at risk of academic and social problems, as well as poor health and well-being, which can in turn, undermine their educational achievements. In spite of the overwhelming effects of poverty on the learner's education and development, some educators pointed out that a significant number of learners from low-income families have thrived in their academic performance.

The study underpin mainly by Urie Bronfenbrennens ecological theory. The researcher focused not only on the learner's home/households but also from the wider community as well. Possible solutions are being sought in the form of recommendation as a way forward to overcome the plight of all learners from disadvantage socio-economic home

5.6 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Unfortunately the data collection process was undertaken during the term when educators were very busy to complete the curriculum. Hectic and brisk schedule in the secondary schools led to the situation where the researcher sometimes failed to get hold of the intended respondents. Numerous visits to the schools were, however, done to gather the relevant information from the educators and learners. Interviews were schedules with the target educators over and over until the researcher was able to get hold of the five educators together and the interview was done and adequate data

was eventually collected. It was a serious & tasking activity. Also the principals posit a great challenge to release the learners during distribution of questionnaires. The researcher faced serious challenges to get this questionnaires answered but above all odds, it was collated eventually.

Time constraints also militated against the researcher operations. Due to the limitation on respect of time and resources, this study only focused 5 secondary schools in Nongoma circuit. The selection of the five schools and the grades were carefully and purposely done to ensure that the findings were valid and authentic.

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