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EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

Titled:

**MANAGING THE TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT COMPLEXITIES OF “THE
QUALIFIED TO BE PROGRESSED” LEARNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR QUALITY
TEACHING AND LEARNING.**

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2020

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, Fhulufhelo Patrick Muedi hereby declare that *Managing Teaching and Assessment Complexities of “the qualified to be progressed” Learners for Quality Teaching and Learning in South Africa* is my original work, and that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other university. Also, all sources used or quoted herein have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Signed:

Date:

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late father, Mr. Munzhedzi Harry Muedi, my late mother Mrs. Masindi Muedi, my late brother Nyelisani Freddy Muedi, and my children and all members of the Muedi Family for believing in me that one day, I will represent them as one of the academics in the field of education in this country.

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ABSTRACT

This study is premised on the fact that in South Africa, the learners' performances and their achievements are constantly under the microscope. It argues that teachers who teach in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase, especially those who teach Grade 12 are expected to produce good results at National Senior Certificate (NSC) level. This is in spite of the fact that some of the learners at that level have been progressed without meeting the promotional requirements. In this regard, this study investigated the management of teaching and assessment complexities of the "qualified to be progressed" learners (QP) for quality learning and teaching. It employed the mixed methods approach. Simple random sampling was used to select teachers who formed part of this study's sample. The School Management Team (SMT) members were purposefully selected, and these complemented the study sample. Information from the former was obtained through questionnaires while the latter were interviewed. There is a dichotomy between how teachers manage the teaching and assessment of the qualified to be progressed learners and what they actually do to manage the teaching and assessment in a mixed class of promoted and progressed learners. This study found out that there are no clearly developed strategies to help manage the teaching and assessment of the QP learners. In the absence of clear policies on the management of teaching and assessment of the QP learners, teachers find it difficult to close the achievement gap between the promoted and progressed learners. The study recommends that the DBE, through its curriculum section, should assist the SMTs in the development of strategies to help manage the teaching and assessment of the QP learners if we are to have quality teaching and learning.

Keywords: Assessment complexities, "Qualified to be progressed learner", Management of teaching, Management of learning, Quality learning and teaching.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APIP	Academic Performance Improvement Plan
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
CPTD	Continuous Professional Teacher Development
CTSE	Capital Theory of School Effectiveness
DBE	Department of Basic Education
FET	Further Education and Training
HOD	Head of Department
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management Systems
MEC	Member of Executive Council
NDP	National Development Plan
NETP	National Education Technology Plan
NSC	National Senior Certificate
QP	Qualified to be Progressed
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SADEC	Southern Africa Development Community
SAP	School Assessment Plan
SASA	South African Schools Act
SBA	School Based Assessment
SGB	School Governing Body
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SMT	School Management Team
SPSS	Statistical Package of Social Sciences
UNESCO	United Nations Education and Cultural Organisation
USA	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

During the apartheid era, the education system for black people faced infrastructural shortages. This deprived black learners of equal opportunities to quality education. It bred a culture where learners were progressed as long as they consistently attended school, with little or no regard over how they performed. This continued even after 1994, notwithstanding the educational reforms introduced after the country became a democracy (Kader, 2012). The shortage of classrooms and other related infrastructure led to overcrowding and large classes, and hence the high failure rate due to poor teaching and learning conditions. It should be noted that half of the South African learners who start grade one do not complete grade twelve (DBE, 2015). An explanation for this could be the high dropout rate which is caused by poverty and bad schooling conditions, inter alia. Most do so without having achieved an exit qualification such as the National Senior Certificate (NSC).

The poor performance by our learners has become a cause for concern in government as it gets worse and worse every year. Thus, there is a need to urgently mitigate against this dilemma. Pretorius (2014) stressed that the continued poor performance by our learners, particularly from 1994 onwards is puzzling, given that the government has done a lot to improve basic education in the country. That is, different policies and mechanisms were put in place to help improve the basic education system in this country. The problem here is that learners do not progress with their age cohorts as expected. Their failure to progress feed into their frustrations, and hence they drop out of school. In view of the above, the government formulated a policy that helped prevent the unnecessary repeating of grades in order to curb the abuse of the system and to ensure that the young exit the school system at an appropriate age (Budget Vote Speech, 1998). Currently,

learners are only allowed to repeat each grade once. Consequently, learners are automatically promoted to the next grade if they have already repeated the previous one without even passing it in their second attempt (DBE, 2016). According to Stott, Dreyer and Venter (2016), the progression policy, which restricts grade repetition, has only been implemented in the FET phase since coming into effect in 2013. The first such progressed learners did Grade 12 in 2014.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In view of the problems bedevilling basic education in South Africa, suffices it to note that our learners' performance should be prioritised by all those concerned with their education. That is, schools should do everything within their power to help them succeed regardless of whether they are progressed or not. The progression policy states that a learner may only be retained once in each phase in order to prevent him/her from continuously repeating one phase more than necessary (DBE, 2012). The progression policy is intended to minimise unnecessary school dropout. The idea here is for the schooling system to afford every learner the opportunity to attain an exit qualification such as the NSC. That is why, therefore, learners are progressed from either Grade 10 to 11, or from Grade 11 to 12 respectively (DBE, 2016).

The principle that informs this policy is centred on the need for learners not to spend more than four years doing the same phase, without any hope of progressing to the next level of their studies. Hartley (2006) stated that schools have no power to prevent the learners' promotion to the next grade even if they do not meet the required standards for promotion. Hartley (2006) added that if a learner has been progressed before, she/he, as a matter of principle, automatically qualifies to be progressed to the next grade as well. The assumption is that the learner could be assisted to acquire the necessary content that she/he lacks. Of major concern here is that the progression policy is silent on how learners who have been progressed should be taught and assessed. It also does not offer any strategies that should be applied in order to effectively support the teaching and assessment of such learners. Conversely, the Education Circuits throughout the country

are mandated to advance the implementation of quality education in order to help improve the learners' performances at school. Regardless of the significant strides that have been made over the past four years towards preventing learners from being retained in the same phase for longer than four years, the disparities between high performing and low performing learners are pronounced (DBE, 2016). Such disparities are particularly conspicuous in rural quintile three schools. These constitute all the schools in the Vhumbedzi Circuit. Within these schools, at least 30% of the promoted learners perform well while 70% struggle.

In an attempt to close this performance gap, the teaching and assessment of these learners has become complicated for teachers as they are supposed to have separate time teaching "the qualified to be progressed learners" alone. On that account, managing the teaching and assessment of "the qualified to be progressed" learners have become strenuous for them. It cannot be disputed that the accomplishment gap between the promoted learners and the progressed ones needs to be narrowed if we are to reduce the high failure and dropout rates in the Vhumbedzi Circuit. In order to succeed, there should be a systematic, focused and undivided attention in managing the teaching and assessment of the qualified to be progressed learners.

Circular E35 of 2015 contains the regulatory guidelines for implementing the progression within Grades 10 - 12 (DBE, 2015). This circular aligns the progression regulations with the minimum requirements for the NSC to ensure that a progressed learner meets the basic criteria for the former. This would assist her/him to cope with the next grade's demands. Ngoepe (2016) observed that the number of the "qualified to be progressed learners" pushed down the 2015 Grade 12 pass rate. She argued that the results dropped due to their having failed Grade 11 twice and were thus promoted without meeting the passing criteria. While many schools struggle to address the low levels of progressed learners' achievements, others have made remarkable progress with their NSC results, subsequently narrowing the attainment gap between their high performing learners and the progressed ones (who struggle at school) (Ngoepe, 2016). John (2015), however, admitted that the policy might have contributed to the decrease by 2.6% in 2014's NSC pass rate, compared to 2013's. In 2014, the Grade 12 pass rate dropped to 70.7% from

75.8% in 2013 (DBE, 2015). It is largely thought that the progression of learners significantly impacted on the 2016's Grade 12 NSC results. **Table 1.1** shows the 2015 Grade 12 NSC results for the country's nine provinces, with or without the progressed learners.

Table 1.1: 2015 National results of Grade 12.

NUMBER	NAME OF THE PROVINCE	% PASS WITH QP RESULTS	% PASS WITHOUT QP RESULTS
1.	Eastern Cape	56.8%	62%
2.	Free State	81.6%	87%
3.	Gauteng	84.2%	85%
4.	Kwazulu Natal	61.6%	67%
5.	Limpopo	65.9%	71.1%
6	Mpumalanga	78.6%	82.2%
7.	North West	81.5%	84%
8.	Northern Cape	69.4%	77.2%
9.	Western Cape	84.7%	88.%

Source: Report on National Senior Certificate Results (DBE, 16).

The Districts' Pass Rates in 2017

Table 1.2 reflects the results of the five districts in the Limpopo Province without the progressed learners.

Table 1.2: District Performance Pass Rate in 2017.

NUMBER	NAME OF DISTRICT	NO OF LEARNERS ENTERED	NO. WROTE	NUMBER PASS	PASS PERCENTAGE
1.	Capricorn	26 983	23 524	14 053	59.7%
2.	Mopani	18 070	16 870	11 425	67.7%
3.	Sekhukhune	21 967	16 772	9611	57.3%
4.	Vhembe	25 055	19 993	15 322	76.6%
5.	Waterberg	7 966	7 966	6 068	69.4%
TOTAL		100 041	83 227	54 625	65.6%

Source: Report on Limpopo Province Senior Certificate Results (DBE, 2017).

The District Performance Pass Rates of Progressed Learners in 2017

Table 1.3 presents results of the progressed learners in the Limpopo Province's five districts.

Table 1.3: District Performance Pass Rates of Progressed Learners in 2017.

NUMBER	NAME OF DISTRICT	NO. WROTE	NUMBER PASS	PASS PERCENTAGE
1.	Capricorn	5 809	868	32.8%
2.	Mopani	2 179	630	51.8%
3.	Sekhukhune	5 964	443	39.4%
4.	Vhembe	6 792	1 244	63.8%
5.	Waterberg	2 510	485	65.5%

Source: Report on the Limpopo Province's Senior Certificate Results (DBE, 2017).

The Circuit Performance Trends from 2014 to 2016

The Vhumbedzi Circuit's results show a decline in Grade 12's NSC pass rate in 2014 when the first set of progressed learners wrote their final examinations (DBE, 2014). That is, the Grade 12 results in this circuit indicates the decline thus: 2013: - 76.11%; 2014: - 63.97; and in 2015: - 58.16%. Within a period of three years, a total of (2014 – 540; 2015 – 955; and 2016 - 1046) 2537 learners wrote Grade 12 NSC examinations. Of these, only (2014 – 123; 2015 – 177; and 2016 - 135) 435 learners obtained a bachelor's degree pass for admission at university. This constitutes 17.14% of the learners who qualified for university education, while 82.86% dismally failed. In **Table 1.4**, the Vhumbedzi Circuit Schools' results for 2015 NSC are shown.

Table 1.4: 2015 Vhumbedzi Circuit Results.

Year: 2015 Name of school	No Enrolled	No Wrote (all)	No wrote (promoted)	No passed (promoted)	(Promoted)	No Wrote (Progressed)	No Passed (Progressed)	Pass% (Progressed)
Funzwani	84	84	71	42	50,00	13	0	0,00
Limbedzi	48	48	41	17	35,42	7	0	0,00
Mpfumedzeni	178	178	133	133	74,72	16	1	0,56
Mpandeli	182	182	134	134	73,63	9	1	0,55
Ntevhedzeni	39	39	24	8	20,51	31	0	0,00
Ntodeni	74	74	62	56	75,68	12	6	8,11
Ntsedzeni	84	84	47	47	55,95	11	2	2,38
Ranndogwana	101	101	69	58	57,43	32	5	4,95
Tondalushaka	140	128	79	79	61,72	57	3	2,34
Vuvumutshena	36	35	29	21	60,00	6	1	2,86
	966	953	358	595	62,43	194	19	9,79

Source: Circuit Statistics on Grade 12 Results (DBE, 2016).

Data in **Table 1.4** show a gloomy picture of the QP learners' performance in their NSC examinations. Of the 194 QP learners, only 19 managed to pass (9.79%). This confirms that the QP learners were progressed to the next class while deficient of content.

Table 1.5: Vhumbedzi Circuit Results, 2016.

Year: 2016								
Name of school	No Enrolled	No Wrote (all)	No wrote (promoted)	No passed (promoted)	Pas% (Promoted)	No Wrote (Progressed)	No Passed (Progressed)	Pass% (Progressed)
Funzwani	75	58	58	28	48,28	11	2	18,18
Limbedzi	42	33	33	15	45,45	14	10	71,43
Milton								
Mpfumedzeni	198	198	144	144	100,00	21	4	19,05
Mpandeli	213	213	131	131	100,00	69	11	15,94
Ntevhedzeni	54	30	23	3	13,04	31	0	0,00
Ntodeni	69	62	48	41	85,42	14	11	78,57
Ntsedzeni	57	57	34	34	100,00	25	1	4,00
Ranndogwana	83	83	55	37	67,27	28	4	14,29
Tondalushaka	140	133	90	53	58,89	43	1	2,33
Vuvumutshena	54	35	30	22	73,33	5	2	40,00
	985	902	646	508	78,64	261	46	17,62

Source: Circuit Statistics on Grade 12 Results (DBE, 2017).

Table 1.5 shows similar trends regarding the QP learners' poor performance at Grade 12 in 2016. Only 46 out of 261 (17.62%) of the learners who sat for their NSC examinations in this circuit passed.

Hausiku (2015) explained that the Grade 12 results are used as a barometer to measure the performance of the school as well as to rate effectiveness and efficiency of the school in producing learners who are able to access higher education in the country's education system. Regardless of the progression policy and the government's efforts in assisting

such learners to proceed with their studies without any major hiccups, their academic performances do not improve. This is compounded by the lack of policy on the management of teaching and assessment of the “qualified to be progressed” learners for quality teaching and learning. Although the progression policy runs across all phases of our schooling system, this study focused on the FET phase.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The learners who are “qualified to be progressed” are moved from Grade 10 to 11 and then progress to Grade 12 in the FET phase without complying with all the promotional requirements. Progression ends in Grade 12, and there is no (other) progression policy beyond that. This is symbiotic of a bottle-neck system in our education sector post Grade 12. As such, learners who perform poorly at Grade 12 are excluded from tertiary education. The Vhumbedzi Circuit’s Grade 12 results for 2015 and 2016 indicate that a considerable number of the QP learners performed badly in their academic studies. This might be a pointer to the fact that the QP learners do not cope with the content at their elevated grade in as much as they failed to do so in the previous one. In 2015, for example, 194 QP learners wrote their final NSC examinations, and only 27 passed. Also, 261 of such learners completed their NSC examinations in 2016, and only 14 did well. This means that teachers face serious challenges as they manage the teaching and assessment of learners with different cognitive levels.

The issue is, once learners are progressed, they are taught the same content matter as that taught to those with high IQs (those promoted on merit). Little if nothing is said of the strategies used to support the progressed slow learners. Also, not much has been written about the management of teaching and assessing the progressed learners. Literature is also silent on how such learners should be taught and assessed in order that they cope with the next grade’s content. Given the above, this study’s problem was that; not much has been written about the management of the teaching and assessment of the QP learners for quality teaching and learning in the secondary schools.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to investigate the management of the teaching and assessment complexities associated with the QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools.

1.5 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The following constitute this study's objectives:

- To examine how teaching and assessment in a mixed class of learners (progressed and promoted) is managed in Vhumbedzi secondary schools.
- To identify the strategies used to support QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools.
- To establish the effectiveness of the strategies used to support the QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools.
- To identify the challenges facing the SMT in managing the QP learners in secondary schools.
- To ascertain if the QP policy is implemented in the Vhumbedzi Circuit secondary schools.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study answered the following main research question.

- How are the teaching and assessment complexities associated with the QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools managed?

In order to fully answer the above main question, this study answered the subsidiary questions below.

- How is teaching and assessment in a mixed class of learners (progressed and promoted) managed in secondary schools?
- What are the strategies used to support QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools?
- How effective are the strategies used to support the QP learners?
- What are the challenges faced by the SMT in managing the QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools?
- How is the QP policy implemented in the Vhumbedzi Circuit secondary schools?

1.7 METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

1.7.1 Introduction

This section provides this study's methodology and its research design. These are briefly outlined, but their detailed descriptions are provided in Chapter three. Before outlining the above, it is worthwhile to provide a brief outline of this study's research paradigm in sub-sections that follow:

1.7.2 Research Paradigm

Nieuwenhuis (2007) stated that paradigms serve as the lens or organising principles by which reality is interpreted. This study was informed by the pragmatic research paradigm. The pragmatic paradigm underpins most mixed methods approaches including qualitative and quantitative which have been adopted in this study. It involved collecting data in a simultaneous or sequential manner using methods that are drawn from both quantitative and qualitative traditions in a way that addresses the research questions (Creswell, 2003). Morgan (2007) regards the pragmatic paradigm as a problem oriented philosophy that takes the view that the best methods are the methods that help to most effectively answer the research questions. He believes that in the pragmatic paradigm, quantitative and qualitative methods complement each other, emphasising on shared meanings and joint

actions. The pragmatic paradigm is outcome-oriented, and it is interested in determining the meaning of issues (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2006). Morgan (2007) added that the pragmatic paradigm is a deconstructive paradigm that advocates for the use of mixed methods in a research to evaluate the different aspects of the research problem.

1.7.3 Research Methodology

Methodology is the knowledge and the interpretive frame work that guides a particular research project (Harding, 1987). Le Grange (2009) stated that a methodology is a philosophical frame work that guides the research activity. It involves the consideration of the research design, data production and analysis, and theorising, in conjunction with the researcher's social, ethical and political concerns. Le Grange (2009) also indicated that methodology is part of the overall plan with specific procedures about what or who will supply the data, how the data will be obtained and how it will be analysed. In this study, the mixed methods approach was followed. The quantitative aspect of this methodology helped quantify the variations in the phenomenon, situation, problems or issues raised in order to ascertain the magnitude of those variations. On the other hand, the qualitative aspect was primarily used to describe a situation, phenomenon, problem or event through the use of variables measured on nominal or ordinal scales. It helped establish the variation in the situation, phenomenon or problem without quantifying it (Kumar, 2011). Using the mixed methods approach helped mitigate each aspect's weaknesses in this study.

1.7.4 Research Design

A research design is a plan, structure and strategy of investigation which is used to obtain answers to research question(s) or problem (Kerlinger, 1986). Mouton (2001) views it as a plan which is used when conducting a research. Creswell (2009) asserts that the research design is a plan that involves the intersection of the philosophical world-views,

approaches of inquiry and specific methods to be employed to direct the research under investigation. Given the nature of this study, a case study design was adopted.

1.7.4.1 Population of the study

The study population is a group or individual participants from whom the required information pertaining to the phenomenon under study is obtained (Welman, 2010). Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2010) describe the study population as objects, individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events, or the conditions to which they are exposed. This study's population included teachers, members of the SMTs and the FET's principals from the Vhumbedzi Circuit in the Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. Their selection was based on the assumption that they were likely to help generate useful data for this study.

1.7.4.2 Sampling

Payne (2011) defines sampling as the process of selecting a sub set of people or social phenomenon to be studied from a large universe to which they belong. The stratified random sampling procedure that provides the estimates of what is true for a population from a smaller group of subjects (sample) was employed in this study. Each member of the population had the same chance of being selected as other members of the same group (McMillan & Schumacher, 2016). Creswell (2009) acknowledged that in a random sampling technique, each individual representative of the population provides the ability to generalise to the population. In this study, I requested the schools to provide me with the list of teachers from which the sample was selected. A detailed discussion to this effect is presented in Chapter Three.

1.7.4.3 Instrumentation

Slavin (2008) described a questionnaire as a set of written questions that usually consist of one or more scales to which the respondents make written responses. In the first phase

of this study, I administered a self-constructed questionnaire. It was divided into five sections (see Annexure A). Section A consisted of five closed-ended items that sought for the respondents' personal information. Sections B and C sought to establish the rate and extent to which teachers manage the teaching of both progressed and promoted learners, and the extent to which the former are supported in their learning.

Sections D and E sought to establish the rate and extent to which the assessment of both progressed and promoted learners is managed. The questionnaire was pre-tested using selected teachers, SMT members and principals from the circuit's ten secondary schools. This was to establish the validity of the questionnaire in generating appropriate responses from the participants. In this regard, the questionnaire was found to be perfect. More details concerning this instrument follow in Chapter Three.

1.7.5 Quantitative Data Collection Procedure

The participants were reached through their schools. The questionnaires were personally distributed to all the participants. The pre-signed informed consent forms were attached therein. The respondents were further assured that no attempt would be made to link their responses with their schools, and that confidentiality to their responses was guaranteed. I also explained to them that should they feel that they no longer wanted to continue with this study, they were free to pull out any time they so wished.

1.7.6 Quantitative data-analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse data. The following statistical procedures and comparisons were carried out informed by the Vhumbedzi Circuit statistics on learner performance.

- One-way frequency tables were drawn to organise and summarise the response frequencies.
- Two-way frequency tables were used when analysing the relationships between variables.

- Cross tabulations were computed to establish the p-values.

1.7.7 Qualitative Methodology

This study utilised the qualitative aspect of the mixed methods approach in order to obtain the detailed contextual information about the phenomenon being studied. The semi-structured interviews with teachers were used to gather data in this respect.

1.7.7.1 Sampling procedure

Sampling is a process of selecting a few objects from a bigger group from whom to obtain information concerning the study. This becomes the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group (Kumar, 2005). Here, purposeful sampling was used. A qualitative method deliberately uses purposive sampling (non-probability) with a particular purpose in mind. McMillan and Schumacher (2016) argued that in purposeful sampling (judgmental sampling), the researcher selects particular elements from the population that are informative about the topic of interest. McMillan and Schumacher (2016) elaborated that on the basis of the researcher's knowledge of the population; a judgment is made about which subjects should be selected to provide information to address the research problem.

David and Sutton (2004) stated that the units for sampling are selected by the researcher because of the embedded knowledge and the opinions of the respondents who carry specific knowledge and information concerning the topic. A sample of ten principals from the ten selected schools in the Vhumbedzi Circuit was interviewed. The sample consisted of post level one educators who had been teaching Grade 11 and 12 for the past three years, and the SMT members who had been Heads of Departments (HODs) for the past three years, and the principals. The reason for this selection was that these educators have certain characteristics, that is, the embedded knowledge, information and opinion related to the topic. The teachers and the SMT members have first-hand experience and

knowledge (through day-to-day activities) about the learning and teaching environment, and hence they became the natural selection choice.

1.7.7.2 Qualitative Data collection procedure

Data construction methods refer to various ways in which data is constructed and analysed. Murray and Hughes (2008) indicated that data construction include listening to the subjects, observing what people do and say, and examining documentary sources related to the topic under study. According to McClure (2002), interviews are basic fact finding interactions where one individual asks questions while another responds. Leedy and Ormord (2001) regard an interview as an interaction process between two individuals through which one individual asks specific structured or unstructured questions in an unrestricted manner or in their own way.

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Data were collected through the semi-structured face to face interviews. The interviews were organised in such a way that the respondents were encouraged to talk and express their experiences, understandings and ideas freely. This followed an interview schedule (see Annexure B). The semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain an insight into the experiences of the ten principals concerning the management of the teaching and assessment of the complexities of the QP learners. These interviews helped strengthen this study's data reliability and validity, given the first aspect of this study's methodology.

1.7.7.4 Qualitative data-analysis

Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns among those categories (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Creswell (2003) sees data-analysis as a process that consists of specified steps with multiple levels of analysis. It focuses on understanding how the participants make meaning of a given phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Siedel's (1998) work is useful in explaining the ongoing interactive and inductive reasoning process that I used in this

research. Information was gathered and organised by assigning codes to the themes. The themes were categorised by developing meaning from statements and then organise meanings into cluster of themes.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics deal with the beliefs about what is right or wrong, proper or improper, good or bad (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Academic research takes ethical considerations very serious as this may involve people and is about people (Punch, 2005). MacMillan and Schumacher (2006) suggested that the rights and welfare of the participants should be taken into account when conducting research. Given that this research involved teachers and principals, permission was sought from the Limpopo Province's Department of Education in the Vhembe East District to conduct it. The University of Zululand's Research Ethics Committee also gave me ethical approval to conduct my research in respect of undertakings I made for this study (see attached Annexure F).

1.9 DELIMITATION

This study was delimited to school principals, SMT members and teachers who teach at the FET phase in public secondary schools in Vhumbedzi Circuit in Vhembe East District of Limpopo Province. This parameter left out teachers who were teaching in the independent schools or any other institution outside the Department of Education.

1.10 KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION

First and foremost, this thesis has a possibility of producing articles for publication. I wish to submit two to three articles for publication in accredited journals. In addition to this, the said articles would be presented in conferences, either local or international. This study's findings and recommendations would be given to the DBE. This would assist schools in the implementation of the progression policy. Special attention would be given to the

management of the teaching and assessment complexities of the QP learners for quality teaching and learning at the FET phase.

It is envisaged that this research would benefit the community in the following ways:

- Through the print and electronic media, the school community will engage and interact through meetings, workshops and community radio “phone ins” and feedback.
- Parents would customise themselves with the curriculum content, and hence contribute meaningfully to the education of their children through School Governing Body workshops.
- The DBE would solicit for inputs to help improve the teaching and assessment programme.
- This study would help develop nodal points of support and monitoring of the QP learners in their areas of needs.
- Through in-service training and workshops on the teaching and assessment of the QPs, teachers would be effectively equipped and empowered.
- A window of continuous teacher development in the management and administration of teaching and assessment, in collaboration with the South African Council for Educators (SACE), would be opened through the Continuous Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) accredited meetings.
- At circuit level, this study would assist in the development of the teaching and assessment methods.

1.11 STUDY LAY-OUT

The first Chapter introduces this study and provides its background. Also outlined herein are the study’s research problem, objectives and research questions, methodology and the research design, and the data collection methods.

Chapter Two reviews literature related to this study. It also outlines the theoretical framework that informs this study. Here, literature is reviewed to put this study in the context of what has been written thus far.

The next Chapter details this study's methodology, its research design, population, sampling and sample, and the methods used to collect data. Data analysis procedures and the ethical considerations also appear in this Chapter.

The succeeding Chapter presents analyses and interprets data as collected through interviews and questionnaires. Data were presented and analysed in descriptive statistics through frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendency such as means and medians, and standard deviation.

Chapter Five concludes this study. It provides its findings based on the preceding Chapter. The findings are informed by this study's objectives and research questions as outlined in Chapter One. Thereafter, the recommendations are provided as the last section of this study.

1.12 SUMMARY

This Chapter introduced this study and outlined its background. Also included is the statement of the problem which gives the reader the researcher's perspective regarding what triggered this study. The aim of this research is clearly outlined. The research design, methodology and the key concepts such as the study population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection and analysis were explicitly described. This makes the reader understand all the procedures that were followed when conducting this study. This Chapter leads to the literature review, the subject of the following Chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding Chapter introduced this study. In this one, literature is reviewed to situate this study in the context of what other scholars say about the phenomenon under study. In reviewing literature, this study first focused on international scholars, then narrowed its focus to Africa, South Africa and ended with those about this province (Limpopo). But, before we provide a detailed review of literature here, it is worthwhile to first outline this study's theoretical foundation in order to understand the theories that informed it. This study was informed by Hargreaves' (2001) Capital Theory of School Effectiveness. This theory is detailed below.

2.2 THEORATICAL FRAMEWORK

This section discusses Hargreaves' (2001) Capital Theory of School Effectiveness (CTSE) that underpins this study. The CTSE has four key concepts, viz; outcomes, leverage, intellectual capital and social capital (Hargreaves, 2001). He mentioned that intellectual outcomes include many forms of knowledge, skills and understanding. Hargreaves (2001) posits that for persons to excel and achieve intellectually, it is not a matter of their capacity. To him, the purpose of education is to initiate the young children into these excellences through which they acquire the disposition to make sound intellectual and moral judgments and choices. Leverage is about the relationship between the teacher's input and the educational output. It may be defined as the quality and quantity of the effected change on the learners' intellectual and moral states as a function of the level of the teachers' invested energy (Hargreaves, 2001). Hargreaves (2001) sees the social capital in terms of its cultural and structural components. Cultural is mainly the

level of trust between people and collaboration. The high levels of social capital in a school strengthens its intellectual capital. The teaching strategies help the QP learners acquire substantial knowledge in their interaction with teachers to narrow the content knowledge gap from the previous grade. The school effectiveness is concerned with the organisation's policies and practices, and specifically how they relate to and promote the overall goals of the school and the teacher's effectiveness at classroom level (Scheerens, 2000). An effective school mobilises its intellectual capital. For an instance, its capacity to create and transfer knowledge, and its social capital to learners, especially its capacity to generate trust and to sustain networks. Thus, supporting the learners who were promoted without merit in the FET phase calls for the application of the CTSE as it addresses how learners should be supported to successfully acquire knowledge to improve their performance. Hargreaves (2001) believes that the outstanding schools discover how to combine high leverage strategies and sequencing their implementation over time so that both the outcomes' quality and quantity are higher in relation to the investment made.

The perception is that the QP learners' intellectual capacity and cognitive levels are low (Scheerens, 2000). However, based on the manner in which the capital theory addresses the application of high leverage strategies, the QP learners' academic achievements may improve if this theory is applied. Hargreaves (2001) indicated that this theory, as it is based on the outcomes (both cognitive and moral), leverages the relationship between the teacher's input and the educational output. If good and well developed teaching strategies are applied, the QP learners who are progressed to the next grade without merit may improve their performance, and hence pass their examinations. Hargreaves (2001) believes that changes in the learners' intellectual and moral states result from the teachers' efforts. Changes in the QP learners' cognitive level may be realised if complexities in teaching and assessment are well managed through meaningful and effective strategies. Effective schools mobilise their intellectual capital to achieve the desired educational outcomes in intellectual and moral excellences. This is done through the successful use of high leverage strategies grounded in evidence-informed and innovative professional practices (Hargreaves, 2001).

Scheerens (2000) explained intellectual capital as a sum of the knowledge and experience of the school stakeholders deployed to achieve the school's goals. Scheerens (2000) indicated that intellectualism grows through two important processes; the creation of knowledge, and the capacity to transfer knowledge between situation and people. Hargreaves (2001) argued that instead of teachers employing too much effort in teaching, the use of effective strategies results with the improved learners' performances. The QP learners might, therefore, improve in their academic studies if teaching and assessment strategies are well managed. This theory was applicable here because its concepts (outcomes, leverage, intellectual capital, and social capital) have a bearing on the learners' performance and quality of their results. The progression policy's desired outcomes are to improve the performance and the quality of education delivered to every child in secondary schools, regardless of promotion or progression. This theory helped this study to analyse the strategies school principals employ to enhance their learners' performances at the FET band.

2.3 OPERATIONAL DEFINATIONS

The following concepts are defined in the study:

2.3.1. Promotion: – the movement of a learner from one grade to the next when they comply with the promotion requirements of that grade (DBE, 2012). In this study, a promoted learner is the FET learner who has attained the minimum pass requirements and, consequently, they should be moved to the next grade (Grade 11 or 12).

2.3.2. Progression: - the advancement of a learner from one grade to the next, in spite of the learner's failure to comply with all the promotional requirements (DBE, 2012). Here, the concept is used to mean the learners' progression to the next grade in the FET phase when they have failed either Grade 10 or 11 for the second time.

2.3.3. Social promotion: - the practice of promoting learners (in the USA, Pakistan, Finland and Sweden) to the next grade even if they have not achieved the expected

learning standards or promoted to the next grade even though they are not academically ready (Roderick, Nagaoka, Bacon & Easton, 2000).

2.3.4. Automatic Promotion: - refers to the policy (in Kenya and Uganda) of advancing a learner to the next grade by the end of the year without considering her/his educational achievements. Automatic Promotion is the practice allowing learners to progress from one class to the next irrespective of their academic performance (Taye, 2003).

2.3.5. Dropout: - a learner leaving the education system without completing her/his studies. In North Carolina, a dropout learner is a learner leaving school if it is not because of death before passing the grade or without completing formal schooling programme or without going to attend to another school through transfer (Chavez, Belkin, Homback & Adams, 2004).

2.3.6. Teaching: - the process of attending to and intervening in the learner's needs, experiences and feelings so that she/he learns beyond what she/he already knows. Teaching is an interactive process, primarily involving classroom talk which takes place between teachers and learners and occurs during certain definable activities (Elbow, 1968).

2.3.7. Assessment for learning: - an approach to teaching and learning that creates feedback, and should be used to improve the learner's performance (Orey, 2010).

2.4 MANAGEMENT OF TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT COMPLEXITIES OF “THE QUALIFIED TO BE PROGRESSED” LEARNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

According to the national policy on the programme and promotion requirements for the National Curriculum Statements, Grades R - 12 learners who were retained more than once at some stage in a phase, automatically qualify to be “progressed” to the next grade and such learners are referred to as the “Qualified to be Progressed” (DBE, 2012). This policy was introduced to prevent learners who do not qualify for promotion from repeating

the same (FET) phase for more than four years. Progression means the learner progresses towards attaining the outcomes at the level appropriate to a grade throughout the year (Western Cape Education Department, 2007). Munje and Maarman (2016) describe progression as the movement of a learner from one grade to the next, excluding grade R, in spite of her/him not meeting all the promotional requirements. Although specific requirements are provided to guide this learner promotion process, the School Progression Policy (SPP) ensures that learners progress with their age mates (Munje & Maarman, 2016). Stott, Dreyer and Venter (2015) explained progression as the movement of a learner to the next higher grade despite not having obtained the minimum pass requirements as stipulated by the education authorities. Lekalakala (2013) regards progression as an upward manipulation of marks to promote and enrol learners in the FET academic stream phase without having been promoted to this point through their own academic achievements. Lekalakala (2013) argued that this manipulation of marks is done because a learner may only fail once within the FET phase, otherwise she/he must be automatically progressed.

2.4.1 Global View on Learner Progression

Teachers view retention as a means of reducing the skill variance in the classroom in an attempt to better the learners' needs (Johnson & Rudolph, 2001). Johnson and Rudolph (2001) believe that many teachers look at retention as an opportunity for learners to mature and succeed with the materials they struggle with, and to be better prepared to move on through the school system. Xia and Kirby (2009) pointed out that grade repetition has adverse effects on the learners' self-esteem and motivation, and stigmatises and impairs their natural ability to relate with their peers. In order to protect them from retention's harmful effects, social promotion was introduced. According to Steiner (1986), social promotion evolved as a response to retention's "ills", which started in the 1930s. Globally, the learner progression (also known as social or automatic promotion) is generally understood to be the practice of allowing learners who have failed to meet the performance standards and academic requirements to pass to the next grade, instead of satisfying the requirements (Moses, Van der Berg & Rich, 2017).

Moses et al. (2017) added that progression is the practice of advancing a learner who has not gained sufficient academic skills and knowledge of one grade level to the next level, or the unwarranted elevation of a learner to the next grade without academically qualifying. It is also viewed as the practice of allowing learners to progress from one class to the next, irrespective of their academic performance (Okurut, 2015). It can be defined as the automatic promotion and a credible alternative to grade retention, in the search for efficiency and better learning outcomes (Okurut, 2015). In support of the automatic promotion policy, Ndaruhutse (2008) acknowledged that repetition does not improve the slow learners' performance, nor does it reduce the range of abilities since each grade carries the retained learner to the next year as a source of difference in ability.

According to Steiner (1986), the progression practice is aimed at keeping such learners at the same pace with their peers without satisfying the performance standards began back in the 1930s. The policy was introduced to reduce grade repetition and the dropout rates that were regarded as factors hindering the development of human potential, and the waste of physical resources. Vespoor (2006) believes that learner progression eliminates repetition, while increasing the survival and completion rates by reducing the dropout rate and lowering the number of years the low performers spend at school. This is also considered to be the practice that raises the QP learners' self-esteem and motivation as it eliminates the stigma and improves their ability to relate with their peers (Xia & Kirby, 2009).

2.4.2 International views on learner progression

In the United States of America (USA), a guideline was drawn to guide schools and educators on how to design and implement policies that help learners meet academic standards at key transition points before being promoted. Riley (1998) stated that learners who do not meet the required performance standards for promotion to the next grade are provided with the effective extra help such as after-school tutoring programmes and summer school so that they are promoted on time.

Riley (1998) regards the progression of learners in the USA as a social promotion which is generally understood to be the practice of allowing learners who have failed to meet the performance standards and academic requirements. This helps them move on to the next grade alongside their peers, instead of completing or satisfying the requirements. Riley (1998) added that promoting students in this way is called social promotion because it is often carried out in the presumed interest of the learner's social and psychological well-being, with no regard to their achievement. In Pakistan's (in 2003) Punjab Province, the government gave a directive to all public schools that compels them to progressively promote all children in the lower grades in order to reduce the high dropout rates (Adongo, 2017). In Brazil, the automatic grade progression was introduced in the early 2000s to accelerate the progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals' universal primary education for all (UNESCO, 2012). The automatic goal to promote learners to the next grade even if they failed was introduced in order to reduce repetition rates, and increase school completion rates (Glick & Sahn, 2010).

2.4.3 Continental view on learner progression

Continentially, Ugandan's policy of automatic promotion (as adopted in 2005), also aims at reducing the dropout rates as well as allowing learners to progress to the next grade with their peers (Ndaruhutse, 2005). Ndaruhutse (2008) concluded that the 2005 automatic promotion policy was targeted at reducing grade repetition, school dropout and, improving the pedagogical duration and efficacy, and hence improve the learning outcomes. According to Adongo (2017), the government of Kenya introduced the learners' progression policy in 2006 so that it reduces repetition believed to be the main source of resource wastage. In Kenya and Uganda, the learner progression is known as automatic promotion. Automatic promotion was adopted in 2006 to help reduce the resource wastages that were seen as an obstacle to human development (Adongo, 2017). It was assumed that it would help eliminate the learners' negative attitudes towards schooling.

2.3.4 Regional (SADC) View on Learner Progression

The introduction of learner progression, automatic or social promotion policy in the education system in the SADC region was necessitated by the circumstances and the contexts individual countries faced at the time. In this region, automatic or social promotion was introduced due to the demand for access to education soon after independence (Cunningham & Owen, 2000). In Namibia, this policy was adopted immediately after independence in 1990. According to Anderson (2004), the automatic promotion stipulates, among others, that a learner, who does not comply with the minimum promotion requirements for the second time, must be promoted or transferred to the next grade. Anderson (2004) clarified that the policy does not allow the learner to repeat the grade more than once unless the school authority is absolutely convinced that the learner who should be progressed would not benefit from such progression. This practice resulted in the promotion of learners in batches of similar age and presumably, similar abilities. This kind of promotion, that is, promotion by class instead of individual abilities, implies that learners are capable of learning the same materials, though not at the same time (Cunningham & Owen, 2000).

2.4.5 The Learner Progression Policy in South Africa

The South African government (in December, 2012) issued a regulation pertaining to the National Curriculum Statement for Grades R - 12 (promulgated as Notice No. R1114). It states that a learner may only be retained once in the FET phase so that she/he is not retained there for longer than four years (DBE, 2012). DBE (2012a) defines progression as the advancement of a learner from one grade to the next (excluding Grade R), even though the learner did not comply with all the promotional requirements. This policy intends to uphold the best interests of learners, while simultaneously minimising unnecessary school dropout. This supposedly gives every learner the opportunity to achieve an exit qualification such as the NSC. The learner who has been progressed from Grades 10 – 12, however, is not guaranteed certification in Grade 12.

Such a learner must comply with the certification requirements as contemplated in paragraph 37(1)(a) of the National Policy. This pertains to the promotion requirements with regard to the National Curriculum Statement for Grades R – 12, and it enables him/her to obtain the NSC (DBE, 2012a). The policy in this respect stipulates that since such learners are likely to repeat the new grade, the intention of promoting learners is to dignity and build their self-esteem, and to encourage their socialisation. In this view, such learners should be progressed to the next grade (DBE, 2012b). Apart from restoring the learners' dignity and self-esteem, this policy is also meant to help South Africa realise its Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of ensuring that all children progress according to age (Statistics South Africa, 2013). Hartley (2006) believes that learner progression is a good systematic indicator of quality education despite the existing uncertainties around the learners' academic performance. In this country's historical context, automatic progression is preferred in that retention is regarded as being synonymous with learner dropout (Branson, Hofmeyr & Lam, 2013). Thus, the SPP is meant to ensure that apart from spending a maximum of four years in one phase, learners are able to progress with their age mates (Munje & Maarman, 2016). However, learners of the same age may most likely vary over a broad spectrum in terms of their learning abilities.

2.5 THE MANAGEMENT OF TEACHING “THE QUALIFIED TO BE PROGRESSED” AND PROMOTED LEARNERS

Teaching is the implementation of a predetermined teaching plan that brings all relevant factors together to address a specific outcome in context. Killen (2015) views teaching as a process of helping learners to find information, remember it, understand and apply it, and evaluate and are creative with it. Teaching is a vehicle of curriculum implementation, premised on the NCS and, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) frameworks. The teaching activities are a road map along which the teachers and learners should travel. The teacher is expected to reflect on the key drivers of her/his plan and then coordinate all planned activities for the benefit of learners. This should be based on projected lesson outcomes. Sayed (2015) suggested that the learners' prior knowledge should be tested in order to identify the gaps that would potentially hinder the process of

assisting the progressed learners with their education. Information presented on concepts, content and other teaching processes should give direction on how teachers engage learners with different cognitive levels. A successful lesson depends primarily on how teachers arrange the learners' activities based on their IQ. The progression policy does not outline how teaching and assessment of "qualified to be progressed" learners should be managed. Although the policy is silent on this issue, it is appropriate to understand other researchers' views on how teachers should manage teaching in classes where learners have different cognitive levels. The following subsections discuss the management of teaching and assessment in a class of progressed and promoted learners.

2.5.1 Learning Environment

The learning environment refers to the classroom environment and how it works for or feels to the learners (Dorgue, 2015). Dorgue (2015) argued that it is important that teachers create a classroom atmosphere that serves all learners, no matter their learning abilities. An understanding of the learners' level of performance is useful for the success of teaching and learning. Ellington and Earl (1998) believe that the classroom environment sets the tone for learning, and makes the learners behave in certain ways. They pointed out that it is important to consider the type of learners when selecting an appropriate teaching method for a lesson.

Jacobs, Vakalise and Gawe (2016) agreed that the learning environment becomes productive when teachers establish the learners' individual needs, and hence adjust their different teaching approaches based on the evidence gathered. Jacobs et al. (2016) believe that there is no class which is homogenous. Thus, the more teachers learn of their learners' needs, the better would be their approach to teaching. Green and O'Sullivan (2009) contend that for a school to operate well, it must be well resourced and have a range of enabling conditions such as skilled, motivated and well-trained staff supported

by good conditions of service, strong leadership and management capabilities, access to on-going professional development, understand the implementation of the curriculum and, safe and healthy environment, inter alia.

2.5.2 Productive learning environments

Jones, Jones and Vermete (2013) posit that positive and productive environments are key to the learners' academic, emotional and social success at school. Jones *et al.* (2013) believe that creating a learning environment where all learners can academically thrive requires an understanding of the complexities of classroom management. In building productive learning, teachers should make learning more relevant to the learners' level of performance. When teaching a class of both progressed and promoted learners, a teacher should find ways to adapt their lessons to the ability of all learners. This is also helpful in discovering the strategies to meet the needs of the progressed as well as those of the promoted learners.

2.6 PROVISION OF RESOURCES TO SUPPORT TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

2.6.1 Science Laboratory

The facilities such as the library, computer and science laboratories are very important in supporting classroom teaching. Clough (2002) asserted that good schools combine classroom teaching with laboratory experiments to ensure that their learners grasp each and every concept thoroughly. Clough (2002) added that learners are able to retain knowledge longer when experiments are performed practically. Laboratory sessions are important because practical work brings to reality what is theoretically explained (Mji & Makgato, 2006). Onwu (1999) observed that the laboratory enables all learners, including

the QPs, to improve their higher order learning skills such as analysis, problem solving, and evaluating.

2.6.2 Library

The school library is a resource which is essential in supporting teaching and learning processes (Saraswat, 2018). According to Saraswat (2018), the library facilitates the teacher's work and helps each learner to understand concepts taught, and provides a lot of opportunities to access the resources concerning the desired information. It is logical to assume that the availability of libraries provides learners with the opportunity to read materials to improve their reading skills and content knowledge. The extra reading of relevant sources in the library may contribute to the QP learners' improved performance.

2.6.3 Computer Laboratory

The use of computers enhances the learners' learning by giving them the opportunity to get additional information as they do their assignments (Omenyo, 2016). Omenyo (2016) revealed that learners are exposed to vast information from the internet to enrich their basic knowledge if the computer laboratory is made available to them. The use of computer laboratory enhances the flexibility of the teaching style, with the added advantage of promoting the learners' responsiveness to the variations in the teaching methods.

2.6.4 Teacher Content Knowledge

The teacher's content knowledge is very important to the improvement of teaching and learning. Ball, Hill and Bass (2005) suggested that to teach well, teachers need

specialised knowledge in what they teach, a broad sense of diverse methods of teaching and, most specifically, ways of explaining and representing the specific content they teach. Thus, it is imperative that teachers should be specialist in what they know and master concepts of the subjects they teach. This is important, as almost all the schools have QP learners who are twice as challenged because of the subject content knowledge gaps. The teachers' subject content knowledge is important in a class of different cognitive levels. This is so especially when a teacher confuses the QP learners with content knowledge from the previous grade while teaching new content. Bertram (2011) observed that teachers need to have knowledge of the subject and also understand how best to teach its content to learners, taking into account the activities and assessment tasks to be provided.

2.7 STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT QP LEARNERS

2.7.1 Timetabling: General School Timetable

A timetable informs learners about the lesson periods and their allotted times. It is a necessary tool for the smooth flow of lessons and class changes at school. Corallo and McDonald (2002) regard the timetable as a mirror that reflects the entire programme from a classroom set to the entire school. According to Corallo and McDonald (2002), the timetable is the framework within which the school programme hinges. It prevents unnecessary loss of time as it guides on what is to be done and when. The timetable balances the teaching of all subjects at school, where both the QP learners and the promoted ones' needs are equally taken care of.

2.7.2 Study Timetable

A study timetable is a plan that helps learners balance their study time in order to accommodate household chores as well (Corallo & McDonald, 2002). Corallo and McDonald (2002) believe that when learners plan ahead of their tests or examinations,

they know what they need to do, when they should do that and, how much time they actually need to complete a specific task.

2.7.3 Homework Timetable

According to the National Education Evaluation and Development Unit (NEEDU) (2018), the homework timetable is a vital part of the learner's education because it provides him/her with the opportunities to further his/her understanding of the work they have not completed in class. Homework enables learners to develop important skills such as the ability to study and work independently (NEEDU, 2018). When learners work independently, they improve in their studies. Schools give learners different tasks in various subjects to be done at home. In order to avoid over burdening the learners with a lot of projects in different subjects every day, some schools came up with the homework timetable for different subjects.

2.7.4 Planning for Effective Teaching and Learning

Planning should be an important part of every organisation if good results are to be realised. Chonco (2001) contends that planning for effective learning is a critical feature for the improvement of the learners' academic performance. In teaching and learning, the key factors in planning are the NCS for Grades R - 12 and, the CAPS. These tools guide on what to focus on and, set out the achievement standards. An effective teaching and learning process is normally facilitated by an effective planning, school organisation, safe and secure, and conducive school environment. Leepo (2015) posits that in a cooperative and conducive school environment, the effective and results oriented planning should aim to meet the school targets. Leepo (2015) added that the implementation of the results-directed plan should be such that it caters for both the QP learners and the promoted ones. This means that in its implementation, the progress made in teaching and learning should be monitored and evaluated to assess its impact. It is through the impact assessment that the progress made by the QP learners could be evaluated.

Clarke (2007) pointed out that in a well-managed school, planning is the first important task to be done in creating an effective teaching and learning environment. Planning is about setting up systems, policies, procedures and time-tables necessary for the school to work efficiently. Clarke (2007) asserted that allocation of physical, financial, and human resources should be prioritised to address the needs of all learners in school. The best way to meet the learners with different cognitive levels' needs is to organise lessons differently. School principals should assist teachers to plan thoroughly to ensure that teaching and learning become part of their school culture. In doing so, progressed learners will cope with the content in new grade and improve their academic performance in line with the promoted ones.

2.7.5 Lesson Planning and Preparation for Effective Teaching and Learning

Lessons are planned according to what teachers want to achieve. When teachers plan for lessons, they need to take into cognisance that those might not be appropriate to their learners. In order to adjust their teaching approaches, Scrivener (2017) believes teachers need to give feedback timeously to learners about what was taught in the previous lessons. A teacher has to understand how teaching the learners with different cognitive levels should be managed. Thomas and Shaw (1993) mentioned that teachers need to decide whether the lesson is inclusive or not. They also acknowledged that appropriate activities that cater for all the learners' cognitive development and understanding should be the permanent feature of the lesson plans. This means that teachers should organise their lesson plans such that their activities are all embracing. This would in turn ensure the maximum involvement and participation of all learners during that lesson. The DBE (2011) believes that adaptations are made to the types of activities planned for the learners, and these are based on the learners' readiness, developmental levels, interests and backgrounds.

2.7.6 Selection of Curricula Content

Van der Berg, Tylor, Gustafson, Spaul, and Armstrong (2011) claim that with the introduction of the learner progression policy, many learners reach Grade 12 insufficiently prepared for their final examinations. That is, the QP learners move from Grade 10 to 11, and then progressed from Grade 11 to 12 without having complied with all the promotion requirements. The observation is that progressed learners are taught the same content at the same pace with those who were meritocratically promoted. The point is that the former should be assisted in acquiring the necessary content knowledge they need in their new grade. Teaching learners with different cognitive levels requires a particular approach/method to follow so that teachers are able to involve all learners in the teaching and learning process. Reddy (2016) revealed that in planning for the lesson presentation, teachers should be able to select the relevant content materials from the curricula for learners with different learning abilities. Teachers should be able to provide the balanced content and learning activities that would motivate and interest all learners in the class. Simanova (2010) declared that advanced learners tend to participate more actively than weaker ones. This study assumed that the promoted learners tend to participate more actively than the progressed ones due to the content knowledge gap.

Reddy (2016) advised that teachers should ask themselves how they could best present content to benefit all learners in a mixed class of both the QP and promoted learners. They need to plan differently and use a variety of content delivery methods in order to effectively present it to all learners in class. Thus, the content delivery methods should speak to each level of learning within the classroom. Buehl (2001) observed that organising the content materials to cater for learners with different learning abilities in a classroom of both promoted and progressed learners may take time, and more often involves extra intensive preparation. Buehl (2001) believes that once teachers have a basic idea of their learners' learning levels, they can design content curricula and settings suitable for learners with different cognitive levels. In this case, progressed learners would

be able to cope with content in the new grade. As a result, the class as a whole would develop a sense of unity as no particular learner would do badly in class.

Jacobs, Vakalisa and Gawe (2016) concur that the selection of learning content may mark the success or failure of the lesson. Jacobs *et al.* (2016) explained that the breaking down of the content into sequenced meaningful concepts and tasks promotes successful teaching and learning. Teachers, SMTs and principals should be trained on curricula differentiation, SIAS policy and different forms of assessment. This would help teachers in tracking the performance of the QP learners before they reach Grade 12. Curriculum differentiation is a key strategy which is an important in responding to the needs of learners with different cognitive levels. This strategy assists the teacher in adapting, modifying, changing or varying teaching methods when teaching and assessing a new curriculum content to cater for the learners with different learning abilities.

2.7.7 Differentiated Teaching Methods

Teachers move both the promoted and QP learners to the next grade with little regard for their different abilities, knowledge, socio-economic backgrounds and personalities. In order to respond to their diverse needs, teachers should differentiate their teaching methods and strategies. Nzoka and Orodho (2014) claimed that it is very difficult to find activities that involve all the learners without some getting bored, being confused or insecure. In order to make them feel more like a group and contribute to each other's learning, Nzoka and Orodho (2014) recommended that teachers should use differentiated teaching to cater for the diverse learning needs. All learners are different in terms of their achievement, ability, learning and cognitive styles as well as attitudes, pace of learning, personality and motivation. Nzoka and Orodho (2014) asserted that teachers should use differentiated teaching instructions when teaching learners of different cognitive levels so that the slow performing progressed learners and the average ones are motivated in their learning. When using differentiated teaching instructions, teachers cater for a wide range

of the learners' interests and cultural background, and this leads to a dynamic classroom interaction. Thus, teachers can use differentiated teaching instructions that involve planning lessons that meet the needs of promoted and progressed learners. Bingham, Dorta, McCaskey and O'Keefe (1995) stated that one of the best approaches in teaching a class of learners with different learning abilities is to start by assessing learners, both formally and informally, in order to identify their individual academic skills, learning styles and interests. Bingham et al (1995) noted that once teachers have an idea of the type of learners they have in their classrooms, they can accordingly plan curricula and course activities. Reddy (2016) warned that teaching learners with different learning levels could be difficult. However, he believes that differentiating learning abilities can help teachers teach content materials in a way that engages with all learners at the same time. Teaching learners with creativity and desire to understand how they can learn best, with the right tools, teachers can reach each of their learners no matter how different their styles of learning might be. The effective management of teaching is likely to occur if learners and teachers are provided with sufficient support. The other methods include these discussed below.

2.7.8 Multi-level Teaching Method

The multi-level instruction is based on the premise that one lesson will be taught in the whole class. This teaching method is used as one of the strategies that help struggling learners achieve good results (DBE, 2000). Hess (2001) is of the idea that this teaching approach allows the teacher to plan for all learners in one lesson. This teaching plan should include different methods for learners with diverse learning needs. Learners are different in terms of their achievement, ability, learning and cognitive styles as well as attitudes, pace of learning, personality and motivation. Sasson (2007) advised that a teacher should plan different tasks for the same activity. The same task can be assigned to the whole class for both progressed and promoted learners, but making sure that these learners do not do the same activities or exercises.

2.7.9 Scaffolding through Activities

Struggling learners, especially the QP ones, usually have difficulty working independently, and may require extensive initial guidance. Instructional scaffolding is the support given to the learners during the learning process, and it is tailored to meet the learners' needs. The intention is to help them grasp new tasks and concepts they otherwise could not achieve on their own (Alibali, 2006). Alibali (2006) contends that scaffolds are learning support structures that are temporarily put in place to assist struggling learners until they are able to complete or master the tasks. Progressed learners do not progress well in certain concepts. When scaffolds are incorporated in the classroom, progressed learners are actively motivated in their learning. Alibali (2006) suggested that teachers may use a variety of scaffolds as learners' progress through tasks to accommodate their different levels of knowledge.

This learning method is designed to promote a deeper level of learning. Hogan and Pressley (1997) explained that scaffolding means a variety of instructional techniques used to progressively move learners towards the stronger understanding and, ultimately greater independence in their learning. In addition, scaffolding is often used to bridge the learning gaps. Progressed learners struggle with content. They have difficulties in understanding some concepts in certain subjects. Thus, scaffolds could be used to support them when they do complex topics. Through scaffolding activities, progressed learners might incrementally improve their understanding of the subject matter, thereby closing the content gap between them and the promoted learners. The following guide instructional scaffolding:

- Select suitable tasks that match with curriculum goals, course learning objectives and the learners' needs.
- Consider the learners' backgrounds and prior knowledge when assessing their progress.
- Use a variety of support structures as learners' progress through tasks.

- Monitor the learners' progress through timeous feedback.
- Help them become less dependent on instructional support as they work on tasks, and encourage them to practice tasks in different contexts (Hogan & Pressley, 1997).

2.7.10 Monitoring and evaluation

The purpose of monitoring and evaluation in teaching is to help teachers become more effective in their teaching (Bailey, 2006). Bailey (2006) contends that the SMT members, including the principals, are able to identify the teachers' strength through observing them as they teach in class. Danielson (2001) is of the opinion that monitoring and evaluation create the opportunity for the SMT members, especially the HODs, to determine the applied teaching methods' effectiveness. Through observation, the HOD is able to establish how the teacher teaches, how they create a positive atmosphere for learning, in a differentiated class with learners who were promoted based on other conditions than academic and those who qualified based on their performance.

2.7.11 SMT Support to teaching and learning

The purpose of management is to provide guidance in all areas of the school to enable the creation and support of conditions under which high quality teaching and learning could prevail (Bush, Courbet, Kiggundu & van Rooyen, 2010). Hoadley (2007) stressed that leading learning and teaching is one of the major functions of the principal. Principals influence teaching in a number of ways, some of which are; establishing a climate conducive to learning, ensuring the professional development of teachers, and providing the ongoing feedback on the teachers' practices (Grissom, Loeb & Master, 2013). The principal and the SMT members should create the conditions and structures mindful of the fact that promotion of the learners in class was differentiated. Leadership and management create the conditions under which teachers can work effectively in class

with differentiated learners (Taylor, 2008) to enhance their performance. The SMT is responsible for developing a comprehensive school plan that improves the learners' academic performance. Bush et al. (2010) maintained that the role of the principal is to focus on managing teaching and assessment by ensuring that teachers prepare tasks for differentiated learners, and that they are in class on time teaching. Teachers who are well prepared and have lesson plans to cater for the QP and promoted learners, and are always on time teaching may cover subject content that was not covered in the previous grade. Hausiku (2015) believes that the SMT is key to the effective management of classes where there are learners with varied academic performance levels based on their promotion. Hausiku (2015) acknowledged that the SMT has the responsibility to provide an environment that ensures high quality teaching and learning at school.

The SMT's none-committal and unwillingness to provide leadership that can ultimately lead to quality education through regular monitoring of the learners' written work and their attendance may negatively affect the learners' performance. Motshekga (2010) averred that some school management teams do not understand their roles and responsibilities, and are thus unable to plan and monitor curricula properly. This end with inappropriate subject offerings and combinations as well as poor time-tabling. School performance is crucially linked to the principals and the SMTs' leadership and management roles (Manuel, Ramaposa, Almat, Balintulo, Coovadia, Eberhard, Essop, Gasa, Goba, Godsell, Gosa, Harrison, Karaan, Mahlati, Makgoba, Malikane, Maphi, Masilela, Moloi, Molwantwa, Muller, Netshitenzhe, Rennsburg, Tylor, Vilakazi, & von Holdt, 2011). Manuel et al. (2011) indicated that most of the schools in South Africa that perform well are schools where principals run them efficiently.

These schools are disciplined, support the teachers, mentor less experienced staff members, involve parents whose children have been promoted on the basis of other conditions than academic performance. Parental involvement may assist these QP learners to cope with conditions in class where other learners are already advanced.

Webster, Blatchford, and Russell (2013) believe that for the school to improve learners' performance and produce quality results, SMTs should make frequent classroom visits to monitor and observe teachers in class teaching. Webster et al. (2013) added that to enhance quality teaching and learning, the SMT should ensure that lessons are well planned, taking into account that there are learners who were promoted without qualifying academically.

2.7.12 QP Learners' school attendance to improve performance

The Department of Basic Education has developed a policy on learner attendance with the main aspect of that all learners should attend school on every school day (DBE, 2010). Applegate (2003) believes that learners' academic performance improves if learners attend school regularly. This view is supported by Roby (2004) who contends that a learner becomes successful if he or she goes to school every day. DeKalb (1999) added that learners who attend every day usually get high marks in tests than their peers who absent themselves from school and not attending school regularly. Teasley (2004) argues that the research showed a clear correlation between good school attendance and the levels of learner performance. Thus managing QP school attendance may result in good performance. Hence, Circular E35 of 2015 (DBE, 2015) stipulates that for the minimum requirements for the learner progression, a learner must have attended school on a regular basis to ensure that a learner is fully exposed to school curricular. Once QP learners' attendance improves, we equally expect them to improve in their academic performance as well.

2.7.13 Parental support to learning and teaching

It is universally recognised that home and other environmental factors contribute greatly to the development of cognitive skills (Van der Berg et al., 2011). Leithwood (2010) regards the home environment as the crucial starting point of the child's teaching and learning where parents play an important role in shaping and preparing a child for formal

education at school. The new NCS demands that a lot of work should be done at home where parents should assist their children with assignments, homework and projects (Corallo & McDonald, 2002). The Pupil Progress Project (PPP) results indicate that children who frequently do homework and read at home have a performance advantage over those who do not (Taylor, 2008). School principals should make it easier for parents to be informed about the performance level of those learners promoted without qualifying academically being taught in the same class with those who were promoted based on their academic performance so that they also play their part as well (Phurutse, 2005). The establishment of a good school - community relationship is a key ingredient in successfully securing the mutual participation of parents in the day to day running of schools (Legotlo, Maaga, Sebego, Westhuizen, Mosoge, Woudt & Steyn, 2002).

2.8 MANAGING ASSESSMENT

Tests and final examinations at the end of the academic year are a symbiotic way of measuring the learners' progress, and are integral to the schools' accountability (Goodman, 2012). Goodman (2012) believes that these visible forms of tracking progress (summative assessment) are used when learners who satisfy minimum pass requirements are promoted or when those who fail are progressed. Teachers should administer tests to learners which marking, teachers would then be able to develop teaching strategies to ensure that QP learners improve in their academic performance (Robinson-Karpus, 2006). The results would from the administered tests would also be used for accountability as well as to determine the extent to which QP learners have improved in the academic performance. Assessment usually provides the focus on the improvement of the learners' learning progress.

The outcomes of the assessment may be used to check if learners cope with the content of the grade to which they have been progressed or promoted. The same applies to this study where the interviewees stressed that they use the assessment outcomes to

determine whether learners understand what they are taught in class. Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (2006) stated that teachers assess learners to achieve meaningful goals for teaching and learning. They assess to inspect the effectiveness of their teaching approaches and to improve the teaching and learning process. Alderson and Banerjee (2001) proclaimed that teachers need to be aware that they are assessing learners who have different levels of efficiency and understanding of concepts. Indeed, the respondents confirmed that teachers are aware of their learners' capabilities when it comes to their understanding of concepts in different subjects.

In South Africa, learners in the FET band in public schools write common examinations to test them for either promotion or progression to the next grade. William (2013) declared that assessment in most schools is both far too lenient and unreliable as a sorter amongst the learners with different abilities, often leaving them unprepared, and hence lenient and largely random grade progression. Thus, the quality of assessments needs to take into consideration the different levels of learner performance in the same class, including those progressed without qualifying. As a result, poor assessments grossly affect the quality of strategies meant to support learners in a mixed class. Thus, teaching and assessment here is compromised.

2.8.1 Assessment for learning

The assessment for learning is a process of seeking and interpreting evidence for the use by learners and their teachers to measure where the former are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall & William, 2003). Goodman (2012) regards it as a task of providing feedback to both the teachers and learners regarding the latter's progress towards achieving the learning objectives. It should be noted that feedback is given after assessment, and assessment is done after the teaching and learning process. The idea here is to determine and evaluate how

effective is the process of teaching and learning, so that the teaching and assessment of the QP learners could be managed effectively.

2.8.2 Assessment of learning

Jones and Moreland (2005) regards the assessment of learning as an approach that enables teachers to gather evidence and make judgment about the learners' achievements based on the outcomes and set standards. Jones and Moreland (2005) believes that this kind of an assessment is usually summative and is mostly done at the end of the unit, term or semester, and may be used to rank or grade learners. At the end of each term, the learners' assessment may be used to provide evidence of both the QP and promoted learners' achievements as well as to determine the level of understanding these learners have gained.

2.8.3 Assessment quality and Standardised National Assessment as Feedback

It is important that teachers first understand the assessment imperatives before they embark on the teaching and learning processes (Brown & Knight, 1994). What is critical is the unpacking of the learning outcomes that should be delivered through a number of supportive teaching strategies. Brown and Knight (1994) stated that it is not the curriculum which shapes the assessment, but the assessment which shapes the curriculum and embodies the purpose of learning. Given that the first objective in this study sought to address the issues of how the teaching and assessment in a mixed class is managed, one would agree with the above authors' observations that only through assessment can we shape the school curricula. This means that if teachers do not do effective assessment, then they would in turn poorly shape the school curricula. As a result, this would negatively impact on the differentiated class groups, particular the QP learners due to their low levels of grasping content taught.

The way in which assessment is designed and implemented does not provide information to learners, teachers and parents (William, 2013). Strydom and Van der Westhuizen (2002) claimed that some schools do not develop clear policies related to the assessment and computation of final examination marks. Thus, it is difficult to give reasons why large numbers of learners are being pushed through without qualifying for promotion. Du Plessis, Conley and Du Plessis (2007) believe that assessment guides the direction of teaching and learning as far as compliance with defined standards is concerned. Brown and Hirschfeld (2008) shares this view, seeing assessment as a process that involves identifying appropriate standards and criteria and making judgments about the quality of teaching and learning. Du Plessis et al. (2007) argued that assessment should not be restricted to the attaining of marks alone, but to examine the in-depth of how teaching manifested them. Brookhart (2001) regards assessment as an important strategy of teaching and learning. When planning for teaching, teachers can use the information obtained from assessment to realign their teaching strategies accordingly. In view of the second objective, this would mean re-strategising one's lesson delivery in order to effectively support the QP learners. Also, information from assessment would enable the teachers to evaluate and reformulate their support mechanism so that the QP learners are supported according to the weaknesses realised therein.

2.9 STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ASSESSMENT

2.9.1 Balanced Assessment

Hoadley (2012) pointed out that teaching, learning and assessment are inextricably linked. It is through assessment that the effective teaching and learning process can be evaluated. The feedback after assessment informs teaching and learning, and allows for the critique of the outcomes, methodology and materials used. The assessment practices can have a profound impact on the process of teaching and learning in that they set standards that guide the intervention strategies for assisting progressed learners.

2.9.2 Learners' Self-assessment

The current curricula include assessment as part of teaching and learning. In this case, recognising the components of the assessment process (the nature of the task, level of cognitive processing, and context) is key in the selection of the most appropriate assessment tools. The teaching and learning assessment is learner centred. With the formative assessment, teachers look at the individual learners and how they respond to the assessment and, then provide them with feedback. To improve learning through the formative assessment, it is necessary for both teachers and learners to be actively involved in the teaching and learning process. For this reason, Noon and Duncan (2005) stressed that learners should develop necessary skills to assess their learning and progress thereof. This means that after formative assessment, learners should be able to identify problematic areas in their subjects.

2.9.3 Profiling and assessment

Robinson-Karpus (2006) contends that formative assessment helps teachers identify gaps in the content taught to learners. In this way, teachers are able to provide remedial action to close the noted gaps. Robinson-Karpus (2006) stated that after profiling his/her learners, the teacher then explains to them the nature of the test to be given. Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (2006) believes that reasonable adjustments should be made to all types of assessments to make them user friendly. Teachers should link the teaching and learning process with the outside world. Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth (2006) asserted that in terms of teaching, teachers should connect prior and current learning. In order to assist progressed learners, the teacher should link the previous grade content with the current one.

2.9.4 Peer Assessment

A class is composed of learners with different cognitive levels. William (2013) believes that peers could assess each other's work, especially when the focus is on improving their performance. William (2013) added that when learners assess each other's work, they do so effectively. Rodrigue-Falcon, Allan, Barret and Forrest (2010) encouraged teachers to set activities that foster group discussions among the learners who differ in cognitive development. Rodrigue-Falcon et al. (2010) reiterated that teachers should create a safe teaching and learning environment for learners to ensure they fully participate in all teaching and learning activities. This would help them to interact well with their peers and teachers as well as to know each other better as they all contribute to the teaching and learning process.

2.9.5 Effective Feedback

MacLellan (2001) asserted that giving specific feedback is supportive and helpful to the students' learning processes. MacLellan (2001) noted that when teachers provide learners with constructive feedback based on their assessment, learners discover their strengths and weaknesses. The teachers' feedback forms the basis for the learners' support in their bid to acquire knowledge. The QP learners may benefit from effective feedback as they become aware of their progress and the areas they need to improve. Smith and Gorard (2005) concurred, adding that feedback plays an important role in assisting teachers to improve the learners' day to day assessment. According to William (2013), when giving feedback, the teacher uses information gleaned from the test to decide which aspects of the unit require remediating. To William (2013), if learners do well they should be provided with extension materials in preparation for the next assessment. Rodrigue-Falcon et al. (2010) corroborated the above by stating that quality feedback helps teachers make better judgments about what to re-teach or which materials to extend in order to address the content gaps discovered after assessment.

According to Rodrigue-Falcon et al. (2010), learners would develop confidence in their teachers, and hence are more likely to take their feedback seriously. After formative assessment and feedback is given timeously, learners are able to do self-introspection for future improvement. This reduces the number of learners who would otherwise be potentially progressed. One of the key elements of assessment is to determine the learners' strengths and weaknesses so that teachers can improve their teaching and assessment techniques (MacLellan, 2001). Assessment improves learning, and it gives learners specific pointers on their strengths and weaknesses. Progressed learners should not only be taught to obtain the pass mark in the next grade, but to help them close the knowledge gap in content so that they are able to cope with the next grade's assessment standards. The DBE (2007) indicated that assessment is used to determine whether the teaching and learning which took place achieved the desired outcomes take, and or whether there were some difficulties encountered. Also, assessment is used to inform the parents, role-players and stakeholders about the learners' performances across the curricula.

2.9.6 QP Learners' Assessment

Assessment for learning is all about informing learners about their progress. It empowers them to take necessary action concerning their weaknesses in order to improve their performance (Jones & Moreland, 2005). Jones and Moreland (2005) observed that through formative assessment and quality feedback, teachers are able to determine the QP learners' understanding of the content covered, and then decide on the teaching strategies suitable for helping close the knowledge gaps they have identified. Heritage, Kim and Vendlinski (2008) believe that the best practice for teachers who teach classes with QP learners is to give them tasks and activities that cover their level of understanding and content retention. At the end of the lesson, teachers should know whether the results with regard to QP learners' performance are in line with the support provided to them.

2.9.7 Error-Item analysis

According to Ball, Thames and Phelps (2013), error analysis is a multifaceted activity that involves the analysis of correct, partially correct and incorrect processes with the view to coming up with possible remedial strategies. Understanding errors can help teachers develop their teaching strategies to improve their teaching approach (DBE, 2013). After assessment, error analysis is the most important activity in identifying the errors that learners consistently make before the teacher comes up with strategies to solve them. The teacher would then develop strategies to ensure that learners are able to solve similar or related problems by using the concepts that they have mastered from what they have been taught. to solve similar or related problems. Chapman and King (2008) argued that the item analysis process is not only useful in improving items, but it can also be used to eliminate ambiguous or misleading items in a single test administration. In addition, the item analysis helps improve the teacher's skills in test construction through identifying specific subject content areas that need more emphasis or clarity. If the error and item analysis processes are correctly done, the learners' academic performance may improve, and hence the unnecessary learners' progression may be eliminated.

2.9.8. Past Examination Question Papers: Diagnostic Report

Since 2010, the DBE has published diagnostic reports that show how learners performed in different subjects. These reports indicate areas where learners experience challenges. They also provide suggestions for improving their performance. A diagnostic report is a useful tool that assists teachers when planning for lessons and assessment tasks. It also provides them with strategies to deal with the learners' weaknesses. Thus, the said reports contain information that could be used to come up with a subject improvement plan (DBE, 2011). Teachers should be encouraged to regularly use the diagnostic report when preparing their lesson plans and when setting assessment tests

2.10 CONCLUSION

Literature review provided the theoretical base for understanding the general views as put forward by other scholars concerning this study. Through literature review, this study revealed that managing the teaching and assessment of the QP learners is very complex because these learners are taught the same content with the promoted ones who are academically superior to them. Van der Berg et al. (2011) claims that with the introduction of learner progression policy, the QP learners reach Grade 12 insufficiently prepared for their final examinations. The QP learners are moved from Grade 10 to 11 and then progressed from 11 to 12 irrespective of their academic potential. The literature revealed that to manage the teaching and assessment of the QP learners, teachers should plan and prepare lessons which include activities to cater for both promoted and QP learners. In planning, teachers need to carefully select the subject content appropriate for learners' different abilities. This would ensure their maximum involvement and participation. Literature also revealed that adequate facilities such as libraries and laboratories are essential to support teaching and assessment of learners with different abilities. SMTs have an important role to play in monitoring and support teaching and support of QP learners.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter presents the methodology and research design that were adopted by this study. Also discussed herein are this study's population, sample and sampling procedures, the data collection methods and the ethical considerations, *inter alia*. The first section here outlines this study's paradigm perspective. Thereafter, this study's methodology and its inherent research design follow. The following research questions were used to guide this study:

- How is teaching and assessment in a mixed class of learners (progressed and promoted) managed in secondary schools?
- What are the strategies used to support QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools?
- How effective are the strategies used to support the QP learners?
- What are the challenges faced by the SMT in managing the QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools?
- How is the QP policy implemented in the Vhumbedzi Circuit secondary schools?

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Nieuwenhuis (2016) stated that paradigms serve as the lens or organising principles by which reality is interpreted. This study was informed by the pragmatic research paradigm. Pragmatic paradigm is associated with the mixed methods approach. It involves collecting data simultaneously or sequentially using methods that are drawn from both quantitative and qualitative traditions in a way that addresses the research questions (Creswell, 2003).

Morgan (2007) regards pragmatic paradigm as a problem oriented philosophy that takes the view that the best methods are the methods that help to most effectively answer the research questions. He believes that through the pragmatic paradigm, quantitative and qualitative methods complement each other, emphasising on shared meanings and joint action. The pragmatic paradigm is outcome-oriented, and it is interested in determining the meaning of issues (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2006). Morgan (2007) added that the pragmatic paradigm is a deconstructive paradigm that advocates for the use of mixed methods in a research to evaluate the different aspects of the research problem.

3.3 METHODOLOGY

Methodology is the knowledge and interpretive frame work with some certain procedures that guide a researcher in a particular research project (Harding, 1987). Le Grange (2009) stated that a methodology is a philosophical frame work that guides the research activity. It involves a consideration of the research design, data production and analysis, and theorising, in conjunction with the researcher's social, ethical and political concerns. Le Grange (2009) also indicated that methodology is part of the overall plan with specific procedures about what or who will supply the data, how the data will be obtained and how it will be analysed. In this study, the mixed methods approach was followed.

The quantitative aspect of this methodology helped quantify the variations in the phenomenon, situation, problem or issues raised in order to ascertain the magnitude of those variations. On the other hand, the qualitative aspect was primarily used to describe a situation, phenomenon, problem or event through the use of variables measured on nominal or ordinal scales. It helped establish the variation in the situation, phenomenon or problem without quantifying it (Kumar, 2011). Using the mixed methods approach, therefore, helped mitigate each aspect's weaknesses. Both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered sequentially in two phases. The primary emphasis was on quantitative data where information obtained was integrated with the qualitative data to obtain a detailed understanding of what was studied. An explanatory mixed methods

approach first collect quantitative data, followed by the qualitative one. This helped explain or elaborate on the quantitative results of this study (Creswell, 2005). This study was done in two phases, and each phase is clearly outlined below, with its population, sample and sampling techniques. The first phase was a survey where quantitative data was collected through questionnaires with both closed and open-ended questions. The use of the closed and open-ended questions ensured that the respondents provided their views on issues raised. Same questions were repeated to measure the validity of the responses. The questionnaires were distributed to 135 purposefully selected teachers who teach at the FET phase in the Vhumbedzi Circuit's ten secondary schools. The second phase was the qualitative aspect that involved interviews with the circuit's ten secondary school principals who were part of the SMTs.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan, structure and strategy of investigation that is conceived to obtain answers to research question(s) or problem (Kerlinger, 1986). Mouton (2001) views it as an action plan which details how a research is to be conducted. Creswell (2009) asserts that the research design is a plan that involves the intersection of the philosophical world-views, approaches of inquiry and specific methods to be employed to direct the research under investigation. Given the nature of this study, a survey design was adopted. The survey study design was selected over other designs because it enabled this study to access a variety of different sources (Ngwenya, 2017). That is, it enabled this researcher to visit the Vhumbedzi Circuit and investigate the units of analysis such as the secondary schools that offer FET related subjects, teachers, and principals.

3.4.1 Preparation for the Field Trip

I requested for the permission to undertake this study in the Vhumbedzi Circuit's ten secondary schools from DBE, Vhembe District (see Annexure B). The permission was granted as sought. This opened the way for this study's field trip phase.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

In this study, data was collected from teachers and principals in the Vhumbedzi Circuit. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) contend that the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods helps provide a better understanding of the research topic in order to give detailed answers to the research questions, identify new research questions and suggest changes to the subsequent research design. Creswell (2005) believes that the researcher could collect quantitative and qualitative forms of data separately in two phases so that data from one aspect enhance or complement that from the other.

3.5.1 First Phase: Quantitative data collection procedure

Hayes, Bonner and Douglas (2013) regard quantitative research as a study involving collection and analysis of numerical data in order to explain, predict or quantify the variation in the phenomenon, situation, problem or issues in order to ascertain the magnitude of variation. McMillan and Schumacher (2001) stated that survey data are used to describe and explain the status of a phenomenon, to trace change and to draw comparisons. This study's first phase was a survey that used questionnaires.

3.5.2 Population and Sampling

The study population is a group or individuals from whom the required information to find answers to the research questions is obtained (Welman, 2010). Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2010) see population as the study objects that consist of individual, groups, organisations, human products and events, or the conditions to which they are exposed. The population for this study included, teachers, members of the SMTs and the school principals from the Vhumbedzi Circuit in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. Slavin (2008) defined it as a group of respondents selected from a larger group to which research findings are assumed to apply. Babbie and Mouton (2010) believe that random sampling allows anyone in the population to have an equal opportunity of being selected in the survey, thus minimising the elements of bias in study findings.

3.5.3 Sampling Procedure

The selection of the participants was based on the assumption that they were likely to generate useful data for the research. From the Vhumbedzi Circuit's ten secondary schools, 135 teachers and ten principals were selected to be part of this study. This study's sample consisted of 145 respondents. Stratified random sampling procedure, which efficiently provided the estimates of what is true for a population from a smaller group of subjects, was employed in this study. The circuit under study has ten secondary schools. These schools are in quintile one to three. That is, six are in quintile 2, three in quintile 1 and one in quintile 3. These schools have many similarities in terms of learner background, and are located in a community with similar socio-economic status. In this method, each member of the population had the same chance of being selected as other members (McMillan & Schumacher (2006). Creswell (2009) maintained that in random sampling, each individual representative of the population provides the ability to generalise to that population.

3.5.4 Questionnaire development

Slavin (2008) regards a questionnaire as a set of written questions usually consisting of one or more scales to which respondents make written responses. It has a well-structured list of questions that are used to obtain responses from the selected sample of the respondents. The questionnaire was useful in obtaining information used to confirm the strategies that are used in the management of teaching and assessment of the QP learners for quality learning and teaching in South Africa. Its questions were structured in such a way that they shed light on the strategies that are used to improve the management of teaching and assessment of the QP learners. The questionnaire had five sections (A - E).

Section A sought for the respondents' personal details such as one's age, sex, qualifications and work experience.

In section B, the focus was on the management of teaching. The information sought here pertained to the rate at which the teaching of both progressed and promoted learners was managed in this circuit.

Under section C, the information about the support in teaching was the focal point. Here, the idea was to establish the extent to which the teaching of the QP learners was supported by all concerned. For section D, the issues required had to do with the management of assessment and how it was done. The last section needed information about the support for assessment and the extent to which it is provided to the QP learners.

3.5.5 Questionnaire pre-testing

Before the questionnaire's final approval by this researcher, it was pre-tested for possible defects. The pre-testing was administered with 25 selected teachers, ten SMTs, and three principals from the same circuit. The participants were typical of the people from whom the main study obtained its information. The pre-testing was administered to determine any potential problems that might arise during the data collection process. Creswell (2009) observed that testing is important to establish the content validity of an instrument and to improve questions, format and scales. After pre-testing, the questionnaire was found to be appropriate for data collection.

3.5.6 Quantitative data collection procedure

The data collection instrument used here was a self-administered questionnaire with both closed and open ended questions. Teachers and the SMTs were given the questionnaire.

Numbers indicating the respondents' potential responses were used to construct variable degrees of their opinions. The results provided the descriptive information that helped answer the research questions. A questionnaire was chosen because of its being relatively economic, contain the same questions for all the respondents, and ensures anonymity. The respondents were contacted through their schools after appointments were made. The pre-signed consent forms with this researcher's contact details were attached to the questionnaire. All questions in the questionnaire were written in English. One hundred and forty-five questionnaires were distributed to schools, and 135 of these were returned. This constituted a 93.1% return rate which is acceptable for data analysis.

3.6 QUANTITATIVE DATA-ANALYSIS

Here, the questionnaires were analysed in detail and their responses presented in percentages. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyse data in the quantitative aspect. The following statistical procedures and comparisons were done informed by the Vhumbedzi Circuit's statistics on learner performance.

- One-way frequency tables were drawn up to organise and summarise the response frequencies.
- Two-way frequency tables were used when analysing the relationship between variables.
- Cross tabulations were computed to establish the p-value.

3.7 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Neuman (2003) regards reliability and validity as two important central issues in all measurements that are significant in establishing truthfulness, credibility or the believability of the findings. Thus, this researcher supports the view that when social scientists construct and evaluate measurements, special attention should be given to the reliability and validity of the instrument.

3.7.1 Reliability

Babbie and Mouton (2010) contend that reliability is the central concept in measurement that shows consistency when repeatedly applied to the same people under the same condition but at different times, would yield the same results. Babbie and Mouton's (2010) view was echoed by Macmillan and Schumacher (2006) who said that reliability refers to consistency of measurement, or the extent to which the scores of respondents are similar over different forms of the same instrument or occasion of data collection. Vithal and Jansen (2010) indicated that the questionnaire's reliability is about the consistency of a measure, score or rating. The questionnaire, as a measurement instrument that is reliable, provides consistent results when a given individual is measured repeatedly under near-identical conditions (Bipath, 2005). If the same experimental design leads to the same results on subsequent occasions and using different samples, then the experiment is said to be reliable (Maree, 2016).

The questionnaire had excellent internal consistency reliability because its Cronbach alpha coefficient was .94. The internal consistency reliabilities of the questionnaire's subscales were as follows:

- The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the management of teaching subscale was .81. This suggested a very good internal consistency reliability.
- The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the support of teaching subscale was .88. This also suggested a very good internal consistency reliability.
- The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the management of assessment subscale was .79, and this was acceptable.
- The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the support of assessment subscale was .86. This also suggested a very good internal consistency reliability.

3.7.2 Validity

The validity concept is just as important a concept as reliability. In qualitative studies, Neuman (2003) regards validity as a technical term which refers to the closeness of data collected through interviews to the reality. Vithal and Jansen (2010) argue that validity is an attempt to “check out” whether the meaning and interpretation of an event is sound or whether a particular measure is an accurate reflection. Validity is a measurement concept that is concerned with the degree to which a measurement instrument actually measures what it purports to measure (Bipath, 2005). The validity of a questionnaire as a research tool relates to the extent to which inferences and uses made on the basis of scores are reasonable and appropriate (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

In line with the above, this researcher ensured that the questionnaire used as a data collection instrument complied with the demands for reliability and validity. The questionnaire was seen as ideal for conducting this study. Questions used were tested and retested through pilot studies in order to determine the consistency of responses elicited.

3.8 SECOND PHASE: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ASPECT

The second phase of data collection was the qualitative aspect of this study's methodology. This was used in order to have a detailed contextual information about this topic. Using the qualitative aspect of this methodology helped this researcher get a wide range of interconnected views that went a long way in helping answer this study's research questions. It should be noted that the qualitative approach is more important in seeking insight from the respondents than the statistical analysis discussed above. Terrell (2012) defines qualitative data as descriptive data which is non-numerical that captures concepts and opinions. According to Terrell (2012), qualitative data collection methods include semi-structured interviews focus group discussions. These were used to collect data from the principals.

3.8.1 Sampling Procedure

Sampling is a process of selecting a few individuals from a bigger group to become the basis for estimating or predicting the prevalence of an unknown piece of information, situation or outcome regarding the bigger group (Kumar, 2005). In this study, purposeful sampling was used to select the participants for this aspect of data collection. Qualitative sampling relies on purposive sampling technique. That is, deliberately choosing those required to take part in the study. McMillan and Schumacher (2016) indicated that in purposeful sampling (judgmental sampling), the researcher selects particular elements from the population that are representative or informative about the topic of interest. In this study, ten principals from all ten secondary schools in the Vhumbedzi Circuit were sampled by virtue of them being directly involved with the management of teaching and assessment at school. McMillan and Schumacher (2016) elaborated that on the basis of the researcher's interest in the population, a judgment is made about which subjects should be selected to provide information to address the purpose of the research. David and Sutton (2004) stated that the units for sampling are selected by the researcher because of the embedded knowledge and the respondents' opinions with specific knowledge and information on the topic.

This researcher is a circuit manager and hence has the embedded knowledge about the sampling of the respondents. A sample of ten principals from the selected secondary schools in the Vhumbedzi Circuit was interviewed. The sample consisted of principals in secondary schools with Grades 10, 11 and 12. The reason for this selection was that these principals have embedded knowledge and opinions related to the topic. They have first-hand experiences, opinions and knowledge concerning the teaching and environment, and hence became natural selection choice.

3.8.2 Qualitative Data Collection Procedure

Data collection methods refer to various ways in which data is collected and analysed. Murray and Hughes (2008) said that it comprises of listening to the subjects, observing

what people do and say, and examining the documents human beings have constructed. Data was obtained through in-depth interviews. One-on-one semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain an insight into the experiences of the ten principals in relation to the management of teaching and assessment complexities concerning the qualified to be progressed learners. The in-depth interviews strengthened data reliability and validity. Ten principals were interviewed on how teaching and assessment complexities of the QP learners were managed. Bertram (2004) regards an interview as a good method for gaining in depth data from a small number of people. Permission was sought from the participants prior to having the interviews with them. This was to get their co-operation and readiness to participate in this study.

3.8.3 Interview Schedule

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, and Delport (2005) described an interview schedule as a list containing a set of structured questions prepared to serve as a guide for interviewers in collecting information. The interview schedule was used to collect data from the school principals (see Annexure B).

3.8.4 The Interview Process

According to Brindley (2003), the interview is a very important data collection method which is essential in fostering interactions where one individual asks questions while the other responds. Brindley (2003) believes that interviews assist the researcher to obtain a better understanding of an individual's behaviour and decision making. The interviews were conducted in the afternoons, subject to consultations and confirmation with the respondents. This ensured that their daily routines were not interrupted. The interviews were done through face-to-face interactions with the respondents. The following outlines the interview settings and how the interviews were conducted.

3.8.5 Setting of the Interview

The in-depth face to face interviews with principals were conducted in October and November. The arrangements were made with them for the provision of quiet rooms where interviews were to be conducted. Principals were able to select rooms that provided privacy and comfort. All respondents agreed to put their cell phones on silent mode to avoid interruptions during the sessions. The interview meetings took between 30 and 45 minutes with each respondent.

3.8.6 Interview Procedure

The in-depth interviews with ten principals involved open-ended questions. These were conducted to clarify and confirm the trend as observed in the quantitative findings. The purpose of the interviews were explained to the respondents before the interviews commenced. I also explained the interview format and its duration.

3.8.7 Recording the Interviews

The interviews were tape recorded. This ensured the completeness of the verbal interactions that ensued, and it provided materials for reliability checks. A composite list of questions derived from the analysis of quantitative findings was used here. The interview conversations were audio recorded with the consent from each participant. Each interview was transcribed and the transcription was given to each participant to check whether what was transcribed was valid. A Huawei P20 cell phone was used to record conversations during the proceedings. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) pointed out that effective interviewing depends on efficient probing and sequencing. When interviewing the principals, probing was done so that they elaborated on certain issues.

3.9 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories in order to identify patterns (McMillan & Schumacher, 2016). Creswell (2003) sees data-analysis as a process consisting of specified steps with multiple levels of analysis. The qualitative data-analysis process focused on understanding how participants made meaning out of the phenomenon being studied. This was done through analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values feelings and experience (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In short, qualitative data analysis is the process of examining qualitative data to derive an explanation for phenomenon in question.

Siedel (1998) explained the ongoing and iterative inductive reasoning process that I used in my research. Information was gathered and organised by assigning codes to clustered data. Here, the thematic content analysis was adopted to analyse qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews. Creswell (2003) believes that qualitative data analysis gives the researcher an understanding of the research objectives by revealing patterns and themes. Data were arranged into themes and sub-themes after transcribing what was audio-recorded.

3.10 MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS

I made sure that measures of trustworthiness are observed.

3.10.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the confidence in the truth of data and its interpretation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, I will present a true picture on how teachers and SMTs in Vhumbedzi Circuit Secondary School responded on the management teaching and learning of QP learners during in- depth interviews.

3.10.2 Dependability

The concept dependability implies traceable variability, which can be recognized to identify source (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I made sure that future investigators refer to my study for literature review in their own studies.

3.10.3 Confirmability

Narratives and notes will be kept safely to enable conduction of an adequate trail and to determine if the conclusions, interpretations and recommendations can be traced to their sources.

3.10.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings. I will provide sufficient details of my research findings from the data collected in Vhumbedzi Circuit to enable the readers to compare with own environment to justify if the findings are applicable to their own situation.

3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Researchers need to protect their research participants, develop trust among them, promote the research's integrity, guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect badly on their organisations/institutions and cope with challenging problems (Creswell, 2009). I fully adhered to the ethical guidelines so that the participants were not put at risk by participating in this study. I explained the purpose and procedures of this study to all of them before data collection commenced. Also, the participants were requested to sign the consent forms before they were interviewed. I maintained

confidentiality by ensuring that the data were not linked to the participants by names. This means that the participants' names and those of their respective schools were protected. Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Recorded data were stored in the researcher's personal laptop, which is password accessed. Babbie and Mouton (2010) asserted that in a confidential survey, the researcher can identify a given person's responses, but essentially promise not to do so publicly. In this study, the respondents were guaranteed that the information they provided will be treated with the strictest confidentiality to avoid any form of embarrassment to them.

3.11.1 Anonymity

Anonymity is about the protection of the respondents' interests, their wellbeing and their identity, especially in a survey research (Mouton, 2010). If revealing the respondents' responses by the researcher may in one way or the other injure them, anonymity becomes more important. The respondents have a right to remain anonymous if they so wish. In this case, the researcher does not reveal their names or associate them with the data collected. Anonymity refers to the principle that the identity of an individual is kept secret (Bak, 2004). Mouton (2001) pointed out that the conditions of anonymity also apply to the collection of data by devices where the respondents are free to reject such devices if they do not understand how they work. In the questionnaire names were not required.

3.11.2 The Research Purpose

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) suggested that when collecting data, the researcher should be open and honest as possible when interacting with the respondents. But, there are circumstances in which either withholding information about the research or deceiving respondents may be justified. A letter of disclosure and request for permission to conduct this study within the Vhumbedzi Circuit was sent to the Department of Education's Vhembe District Offices. The request was duly granted.

3.11.3 Caring and Fairness

A sense of caring and fairness must be part of the researcher's reasoning, actions and personality (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Before the respondents completed the questionnaire, the researcher had an open discussion with them to clarify grey areas concerning this study. This promoted fairness to all concerned.

3.12. CONCLUSION

The research process and methodology used in collecting data were outlined in this Chapter. Reasons and the rationale behind the research procedures were provided in order to assist in understanding the interpretations and data analysis that form part of the next Chapter. This Chapter justified why it adopted the research processes that were used by this study. A clear description of this study's population and the sampling procedures were provided. The explanation and advantages of the data collection procedures and the instruments used were given. In the following Chapter, data are presented and analysed.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter presents the results of the data from both the questionnaires and the interviews regarding the management of teaching and assessment complexities of the “qualified to be progressed” learners for quality learning and teaching.

4.2 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Themes emerged from the data analysed concerning the implementation of the progression policy regarding the management of teaching and assessment, and the extent to which the teaching and assessment of the “qualified to be progressed” learners is managed. The responses to the questionnaire and interviews are presented.

4.3 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE DATA RESULTS

This section presents the questionnaires’ responses. As this is a mixed method research design, questionnaire responses are enhanced and clarified by responses from interviewed participants. The quantitative data analysis determines how numeric scores to the data are assigned, assesses the types of scores to be used, the selection of a statistical programme and putting the data into programme and cleaning up that data for analysis (Creswell, 2015). About one hundred and thirty five (135) questionnaires were returned from about 150 that were distributed to the teachers. This constitutes 90% return. The second aspect of data collection involved the use of semi-structured interviews with ten principals. According to Patton (2014), research interviews with between two and ten respondents are adequate to reach data saturation.

4.3.1 Respondents' Personal Information

The table below shows the respondents' personal details as obtained through the questionnaire.

Table 4.9: The respondents' personal information.

Personal Items	% Respondents According to Category	
Gender	Male	70 (51.9%)
	Female	65 (48.1%)
Age	25-35 years old	14 (10.4%)
	36-49 years old	90 (66.6%)
	50-65 years old	31 (31%)
Qualifications	M+2 years	1 (0.7%)
	M+3 years	26 (19.3%)
	M+4 years	84 (62.2%)
	M+5 years	24 (17.8%)
Teaching Experiences	0-5 years	22 (16.3%)
	6-20 years	80 (59.3%)
	21-36 years	33 (24.4%)
Position held at School	Principal	8 (5.9%)
	Deputy Principal	5 (3.7%)
	HOD	26 (19.3%)
	PL 1 Educator	96 (71.1%)

4.3.1.1 Respondents' sex

The analysed data in Table 4.1 shows that there were 51.9% males compared to 48.1% females who responded to the questionnaire.

4.3.1.2 Respondents' age range

In Table 4.1, the results representing the respondents' age range show that 66.6% were teachers in the 36 – 49 age range. These are the ages at which teachers are no longer active and are nearing retirement. At this age range, teachers are likely to be ineffective and that may lead to the poor management of teaching and assessment in their respective subjects. Nonetheless, these formed the majority of the respondents.

A small percentage of 10.4% were teachers aged between 25 and 35 years. These should have been the ages in the majority because they are the youthful ages where individuals are still active. Of note in Table 1 is that teachers aged between 50 and 65 constituted about 31% of the respondents. This age range is for those about to retire.

During the second phase of qualitative data collection, ten principals were interviewed. Of these, only one principal was a female aged 48. The rest were males whose age range was 48 - 55 years. This does not go well with the effective management of teaching and assessment as teachers of such old ages are nearing retirement, and hence may not be as active and enthusiastic in their work as the young ones are.

4.3.1.3 Respondents' qualifications

Table 4.1 reveals that the respondents who offer subjects in the FET phase are qualified, with 80% of them with qualifications above Grade 12, plus three years in an institution of higher learning. This is an indication that most of the teachers who teach in this phase have relevant subject content knowledge. Only one respondent has Grade 12 and a two year teacher training qualification.

4.3.1.4 Respondents' teaching experience

Table 4.1 shows that 59.3% of the respondents have a teaching experience of between 6 and 20 years. This implies that the majority of the teachers here are reasonably experienced to manage the teaching and assessment in a class of learners with different cognitive levels. Those with experience of between 0 and 5 years made up 16.3% of the respondents. Teachers in this category may need a lot of support from the SMTs as they lack the experience to teach at the FET phase and manage the teaching and assessment of the “qualified to be progressed” learners effectively. The respondents with the long teaching experience were those with between 21 and 36 years, and these made 24.4%. This category of teachers may be helpful in supporting the less experienced ones in managing the teaching and assessment for quality teaching and learning.

4.3.1.5 Respondents' position at school

In Table 4.1, the majority of the respondents (71.1%) are post level one teachers. It should be noted that 19.3% of the HODs are members of SMTs that offer subjects in Grade 12. Only 3.7% and 5.9% of the respondents are principals and deputy principals respectively. These also teach Grade 12 learners. This implies that 9.6% of the respondents are SMT members with the administrative responsibility of making sure that the teaching and assessment of the QP learners is properly managed. In addition, these SMTs also monitor and support teachers in managing the teaching and assessment complexities of the QP learners for quality learning and teaching. However, looking at the number of the HODs at these schools, one may conclude that the supervision of teachers may not be that effective. This suggests that teachers do not receive enough support on how they should manage the teaching and assessment in a class of learners with different cognitive levels.

4.4 MANAGING THE TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT COMPLEXITIES OF QP LEARNERS FOR QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

This section presents data on the management of teaching and assessment complexities of the QP learners for quality teaching and learning.

4.4.1 Management of Teaching and Assessment in a Class of Learners with different Cognitive Levels

In this section, data regarding how teaching and assessment should be in a class of both the QP and promoted learners is presented. This is in the form of assignments and project activities in which the QP learners are required to use the library.

Table 4.2 below presents the rate at which learners are given assignments and project activities where they are supposed to use the library.

Table 4.10: The rate of assignments and project activities given to the learners.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	36	26.7
Seldom	16	11.9
Sometimes	36	26.7
Often	27	20.0
Always	20	14.5
Total	135	100

The library helps the school to meet its targets and goals in order to improve the learners' performances (Saraswat, 2018). Results in Table 4.2 show that a little more than a quarter (26.7%) of the respondents do not give the learners assignments and projects, while 14.6% consistently do so. These results are inconsistent with Saraswat's (2018) observations that libraries facilitate the teachers' work and help learners understand what

is taught to them, in addition to providing them with a lot of opportunities to access resources for the desired information.

During the interviews, the principals revealed that their school libraries are not adequately resourced. They indicated their frustrations with the lack of resources to support the management of teaching and learning, especially the lack of critical reference facilities such as libraries. In the absence of libraries, learners find it difficult to refer to other relevant sources when doing assignments and projects. Nine principals indicated that they do not have libraries in their schools. Principal D remarked thus:

“We do not have a school library that provides our learners with opportunities to consult relevant reading materials. We converted one classroom into a reading and study room. This room accommodates different classes. This is an unhealthy set-up in the context of our learners taking us seriously. We urgently need a well-resourced library as the former is not well resourced with books. When we give the QP learners extra work, they do not have anywhere to go for relevant sources”.

This is an indication that learners are not fully supported in teaching and learning due to the lack of well-resource libraries. There is, therefore, a probability that learners may be assessed while not fully prepared content wise. If the QP learners are not given assignments and projects where they should utilise the library, they are negatively impacted academically. This leads to them performing poorly during assessments. Schools need libraries to help learners do extra reading to improve their knowledge.

4.4.2 QP and Laboratory Experiments in Science Subjects

The Table 4.3. shows the rate at which learners do science experiments in the laboratory.

Table 4.11: The rate at which learners do science experiments in the laboratory

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	69	51.1
Seldom	6	4.4
Sometimes	31	23.0
Often	14	10.4
Always	15	11.1
Total	135	100

The school science laboratory is a unique facility that enhances the learners' interest, knowledge of science concepts and procedures, and the scientific skills that can develop new understanding in learners (Lunetta & Hofstein, 2005). Table 4.3's results indicate that more than half (51.1%) of the respondents do not give their learners work that requires doing experiments in the science laboratory. This does not auger well with Mji and Makgato's (2006) assertion that laboratory sessions are important because practical work brings to life what is explained theoretically. In schools where there are laboratories, learners complement what is in the textbook with experiments. Conversely, learners who do not do experiments in the laboratory are negatively affected in their academic performance.

This may also result with many progressed learners failing to cope with the science subjects' content. The interviewees here indicated that they find it difficult to teach science subjects without conducting experiments. When teachers combine classroom teaching with laboratory experiments, learners are holistically prepared for their Grade 12 final examinations. The majority of the respondents confirmed that the bulk of their QP learners do science subjects. Thus, the unavailability of science laboratories in their schools is a drawback to their quest to improve their learners' academic performances. The respondents also revealed that without science laboratories, both the promoted and QP learners perform poorly in science subjects. This was aptly put by principal B thus,

“Our teachers are unable to do science experiments as we do not have laboratories to enhance our learners’ knowledge of science. Unfortunately, our school does not even have a science kit for use by our teachers and learners during practical work”.

Onwu (1999) added that the laboratory enables learners who struggle to respond to high order questions, especially the QP learners, to improve higher order learning skills such as analysis, problem solving and evaluating. Johnstone and Al-Shuaili (2001) established that a science laboratory provides a meaningful context for learning. Given the importance of laboratories as outlined above, it is apparent that their lack thereof in this circuit is a cause for concern. Principal E resignedly said of the situation,

“It is difficult to teach science at this school as we do not have laboratories. How can learners pass physical science if they do not do their practical work in a school lab? Many of the QP learners do Physical Science and Mathematics. We urgently need laboratories to help them in this respect”.

The above statements by these respondents are an indication that the lack of an important facility such as a science laboratory also contributes to large numbers of the QP learners who fail science subjects. Schools in the Vhumbedzi Circuit, therefore, require state of the art science laboratories if we are to see a reduction in the number of learners who are progressed to the next grade.

4.4.3 QP Projects for Computer Laboratory

Table 4.4 indicates the rate at which learners are given projects that should be done through the use of a computer laboratory.

Table 4.12: QP Projects for Computer Laboratory.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	61	45.2
Seldom	16	11.9
Sometimes	29	21.5
Often	22	16.3
Always	7	5.1
Total	135	100

In Table 4.4, 45.2% of the teachers never give their learners projects that force them to use computer laboratories. This implies that the QP learners are not exposed to vast stores of information (the internet) to enrich their basic knowledge.

In contrast, 5.1% of the respondents indicated that they always give their learners projects to do through the use of the computer laboratory. The large discrepancy in percentages is symbolic of the poor management of the learners' projects in the context of their access to computers. It suggests that the education systems as undertaken in this circuit denies learners the opportunity to get additional information through the use of computers. Omenyo (2016) believes that the use of computer laboratory allows for flexibility in one's teaching style, with the added bonus of promoting responsiveness to the variations of teaching methods that are available and promoted through the internet system. One of the principals (G) confirmed that they do not have a computer laboratory in their school, and this makes it difficult for the learners to access information through the computer. His views were that

“As a school, our learners do not have access to information from the internet to enrich their knowledge. The school has only one computer that is used by all of us to type tests and other administrative tasks. If one checks with the teachers, one would realise that most of them use their own laptops for school work as well as to

access information from the internet. Emails from the DBE are received through personal laptops”.

In view of the above, lack of resources has profound effects on teaching and learning support urgently needed by learners to improve their performance. Given this dire situation, schools are forced to adhere to the progression policy without their QP learners academically qualifying. To support the teaching and learning processes, computer laboratories are a must in secondary schools. Their necessity lies in that they aid interactive classroom activities. Thus, these should be provided to schools by the DBE to enable learners to access information through the internet.

4.4.4 Strategies used to Support QP Learners

This sub-section presents strategies that are used to support the QP learners. The use of the register is one such strategy. Table 4.5 shows how the respondents use the register to monitor their learners’ attendance at school. Learner attendance at school has become the teachers’ focus in their bid to improve the learners’ performances (Applegate, 2003). Circular E35 of 2015 (DBE, 2015) stipulates that for the minimum requirements for the learner’s progression, a learner must have attended school on regular basis to ensure that she/he is fully exposed to the school curricula.

Table 4.13: The rate at which the attendance register is used.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	3	2.2
Seldom	3	2.2
Sometimes	32	23.7
Often	32	23.7
Always	65	48.2
Total	135	100

Given the data in Table 4.5, it is clear that 48.1% of the respondents always mark their attendance register before the resumption of lessons. On the same matter, principal E added that,

“Our teachers control attendance registers daily before they teach to ensure that learners are at school daily. Teachers also record names of those who are absent at that time”.

If indeed teachers mark the attendance registers as stipulated in the policy, and supported by principal E's comments, we should see learners' attendance improving. Once the learners' attendance improves, we equally expect them to improve in their academic performance as well. Unless, of course, if teachers mark the learners' attendance registers as a procedure, not for any meaningful purpose at all. We should not lose sight of the fact that according to the progression policy, the minimum number of days the learner is required to be at school plays a critical role, and hence the need for teachers to mark registers effectively.

This is in line with Roby (2004) narrative that it is important for the child to go to school every day if he or she wants to pass and be promoted to the next grade. Thus, adding 23.7% of the respondents who often consult their attendance register before they teach to the 48.2% of those who always mark theirs before classes, it can be concluded that almost 71.8% of the teachers mark the attendance registers before they teach. If the teachers adhere to the DBE's (2010) directive, learners would be encouraged to attend school daily. It would then become easy for the same teachers to make informed decisions on the QP learners' progression.

4.4.5 Period Attendance Register

In Table 4.6, data on how teachers mark their period attendance register is presented.

Table 4.14: The rate at which period attendance register is being controlled.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	3	2.2
Seldom	2	1.5
Sometimes	18	13.3
Often	34	25.2
Always	78	57.8
Total	135	100

The progression policy stipulates that for a learner to be progressed, she/he must have attended the school on a regular basis, and that she/he must not be absent from school for more than twenty days (DBE, 2016). Table 4.6 shows that of the entire population sample that completed the questionnaire, 57.8% mark their period attendance registers whenever they go to a different class to monitor how learners attend each lesson. This speaks to Bhengu and Mkhize's (2013) assertion that it must be a common practice for teachers in schools to sign period attendance registers when they go to different classes. Also, principal D concurred with Bhengu and Mkhize's (2013) point, adding that, "We mark period attendance registers to gather information on learner attendance during school teaching periods". Principal D's comment was collaborated by principal A's, who remarked that, "We mark learner class attendance using the period attendance registers", adding, "We almost mark and record all those learners who always attend classes and those who dodge them".

This illustrates that it is easy for teachers in different schools to confirm how learners were attending school when making decision if a learner qualifies to be progressed to the next grade based on the QP policy on learner attendance. The marking of the period attendance register as shown above serves as proof that the majority of the schools are committed to the use of period attendance registers as a monitoring tool in this respect. With only 3% of the respondents showing that they never mark their period attendance registers whenever they go to different classes, the results reveal that the majority of

teachers mark the period attendance registers as is one of the requirements in the policy governing school attendance monitoring. Thus, the QP learners' academic performance should improve, unless teachers themselves are not serious here.

4.4.6 School Timetable

Table 4.15 shows that the majority of the respondents (83.7%) follow the school master time table as they teach. This is consistent with Ellen (1996) who contends that the school master timetable is an essential plan in a school that shows the daily allotment of time among several subjects and activities in different grades. With only 0.7% of the respondents admitting that even though schools have general time tables, some teachers never follow them in their teaching, we may conclude that the majority of the schools here use the school's master timetable to monitor the teachers' movements in and out of classrooms.

Table 4.7: School time-table.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	1	0.7
Sometimes	5	3.7
Often	16	11.9
Always	113	83.7
Total	135	100

The principals agreed, adding that as school SMTs, they use the master time-table to monitor the teachers' movements at school during working hours. Principal F explained that when he wants to visit a class to assess the teaching and learning process, he checks the master time-table from which he develops his own class visits timetable. The principal added that this helps him identify which subject is taught in which classroom and at what

time, and who teaches that. Principal G summed this thus, “The master timetable helps us to plan and group learners according to their learning abilities to ensure that when teachers go to those classes, they are able to plan for each subject effectively”.

Given the fact that schools are able to design the master timetable as indicated above by the principals, the only issue that may be lacking here is the management of teaching and assessment according to the plan. Unless teachers are taught on the strategies to implement their plans, the QP learners may continue to underperform. In this regard, principal H pointed out that in their school, the effective teaching of the challenging subjects such as Mathematics and Life Sciences requires that they be allocated extra time in the master time-table. Ellen (1986) contends that the school master timetable helps adjust the school work according to the learners’ needs. This sentiment is in tandem with what principal H said in this regard,

“When the master timetable is drawn, we make provision for the extra time needed for certain subjects that are presumed difficult to the QP learners. For example, in the mornings, teachers have extra periods to teach the QP learners only, focusing on topics that are difficult to them”.

Birbas, Daskalaki and Housos (2009) acknowledged that for the proper management of teaching and learning, there should be a master time-table that caters for different periods at school. The school master time table helps ease confusion at school as it stipulates exactly what is to be done at what time. It also provides the SMT with the latitude to increase the contact time, provided there is a need for that. It thus directs the attention of both the learner and the teacher to one lesson at a time.

4.4.7 Study Time-Table: All Grades

Table 4.8 shows how study time tables for all grades are developed.

Table 4.8: Study time-table: all grades

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	16	11.9
Seldom	7	5.2
Sometimes	23	17.0
Often	16	11.9
Always	73	54.0
Total	135	100

Results in Table 4.8 indicate that 54.0% of the respondents developed the study time-table for their grades. This is to make sure that learners are always engaged with their studies. This is in line with Corallo and McDonald's (2002) position that the NSC demands that learners should have a lot of work to do on their own at their own time where they may get information from other sources related to their subjects. The principals added their voices here as well. They are of the belief that the study timetable is one of the strategies used to support learners who were progressed without making the grade. The respondents also emphasised that it is important for the QP learners to prioritise their time. In this case, they should spend it studying different subjects.

According to Corallo and McDonald (2002), the study timetable helps learners engage with their studies in their own time and pace. Corallo and McDonald (2002) argued that it is important to have an effective timetable to help learners manage the time spent on each subject or topic. Their views resonate well with principal C's opinion that,

"We provide learners with study timetables to assist them to use their time productively. That is, to help them prioritise subjects in terms of which ones should be given more time in view of how they perform in those different subjects. This also helps them focus on their studies in order to do well in their examinations".

Looking at the above statement, it is clear that teachers and their SMTs do their best to help the QP learners improve their performance. However, the concern which schools

have is whether the study timetable provided is fruitfully utilised or not. If not, schools in collaboration with parents, should monitor how learners use their study time. In cases where schools want to closely monitor how learners make use of their study timetables, the SMTs should focus on the QP learners who are prone to mischief, given their unkind relationship with books. Corallo and McDonald (2002) stressed that the QP learners should be provided with special programme to enable them to learn at their own time and space.

4.4.8 Lesson Planning

Table 4.9 shows how teachers plan for their lessons.

Table 4.9: Lesson planning

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	9	6.7
Often	26	19.3
Always	100	74
Total	135	100

The Limpopo Provincial Education Department (LPED) (2016) indicated that an effective teaching and learning process is normally facilitated by an effective planning. Results in Table 4.9 indicate that 74% of the respondents always plan before they teach, while 19.3% said that they often plan before they teach. Only 6.7% said that they sometimes plan before they teach. This shows that the majority of the respondents plan before they teach. In the contrary, the majority of the principals illustrated that it is difficult to plan a lesson for learners with different cognitive levels. They are of the opinion that when planning for a lesson, teachers should develop strategies suitable for both the promoted and QP learners. Respondent B remarked as follows:

“It is not an easy task to plan for both the QP and promoted learners in one class because their cognitive levels are different. This means that teachers who teach a

class composed of these learners have to balance between the low level and high cognitive levels as their IQs are not the same”.

Principal C added that,

“We do not separate the promoted from the progressed learners when we plan for our lessons. We use one lesson plan to teach them together. The only difference is that we profile them and use different strategies in our teaching. Sometimes we plan extra classes for the QP learners to deal with topics that are difficult to them. The extra classes are mostly done in the afternoons”.

Principal E remarked thus, “When it comes to lesson planning, it is difficult to include activities that are inclusive of both the progressed and promoted learners”. This confirms how difficult it is to plan for a lesson that caters for both the QP and promoted learners. This means that teachers need training on how to vary the manner in which they organise and plan for their lesson activities. They need to plan before they teach to ensure that learners with different cognitive levels participate in their lessons. As Scrivener (2017) observed, a well-planned lesson caters for learners with different cognitive levels. The best way to meet the learners’ different needs is to organise lessons differently (DBE, 2011). Stella (2012) agreed, adding that the best way to teach a mixed class of learners with different learning needs and a range of different abilities is to design an effective lesson plan with different activities. This implies that in a class of both the QP and promoted learners, a teacher should produce a lesson plan that is all inclusive in order to promote her/his learners’ participation therein.

4.4.9 Daily lesson preparations

Sasson (2007) believes that a teacher should prepare tasks for the whole class that may cater for learners with different learning abilities. Table 4.10 shows that 65.9% of the respondents always do their daily preparations before they teach. All the principals confirmed this, pointing out that they always prepare lessons to ensure that their day-to-

day classroom activities provide the individual learners with necessary knowledge based on their different cognitive levels and performances.

Table 4.10: Daily lesson preparations.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	1	0,7
Seldom	4	3.0
Sometimes	14	10.4
Often	27	20.7
Always	89	65.9
Total	135	100

With only 0.7% of the respondents indicating that they never do daily preparations, we may conclude that the majority of the teachers thoroughly prepare for their lessons before they start teaching learners of different cognitive levels. Principal E emphasised that,

“We encourage all our teachers to go to class well prepared. We do not allow them to go to classes unprepared. Most of the teachers here have files for preparations which we monitor once a week. We do not allow teachers to do preparations on pieces of papers, but to have written documents that must be produced as evidence”.

Principal G agreed thus,

“Teachers do written preparations because as a principal, I must check for evidence that indeed they prepare what they teach. I always encourage them to do written preparations because they must produce those as evidence in their IQMS summative evaluation for pay progression”.

For principal H, the bottom line was that,

“As a principal, I do check lesson preparations because I have to know what is being prepared for our learners, and then provide support. I also check if the activities in the preparations are inclusive of both QP and promoted learners”.

Given the kind of expressions these respondents made, suffices it to note that teachers might prepare lessons for compliance's sake, while in practice, they do the opposite of what they prepared. In other words, putting effort in teaching and learning is not guaranteed here. It all depends on one's conscience and professionalism. Thus, if schools are to see the QP learners' performance improving to the same level with the promoted ones, teachers should be assisted on how to prepare lessons that positively impact on the former's performance. This is consistent with Thomas and Shaw's (1993) assertion that teachers need to prepare a lesson that focuses on the “whole class” with different cognitive levels.

Thomas and Shaw (1993) emphasised that appropriate activities that cater for the level of learning of each group of learners have to be prepared to ensure that they cover the same general theme with all other learners. The data also revealed that there is no lesson which is separately prepared for either the QP or promoted learners alone. Only all-embracing lesson plans are prepared by teachers here. To ensure the maximum involvement of all learners, teachers need to differentiate the manner in which their activities are planned and organised in a lesson plan. This dovetails with Taghipour (2013) emphasis that lesson preparation provides teachers with many variations in activities, methods and materials to be used during the teaching and learning process.

4.4.10 Educational Media

Educational media is viewed as the teaching materials that make learning exciting, and less monotonous (Stosic, 2015). Figures in Table 4.11 show that 17.7% of the

respondents always prepare their teaching media for each lesson, whereas 30.4% sometimes organise such media for their teaching.

Table 4.11: Educational Media.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	21	15.6
Seldom	14	10.4
Sometimes	41	30.4
Often	35	25.9
Always	24	17.7
Total	135	100

These results suggest that the majority of the respondents do not organise their teaching media. Most of those interviewed revealed that teaching media such as television are too expensive as they also require that the school buys data to access the educational programmes. Principal C observed that,

“There are lesson broadcasts on television which present Mathematics and Physical Science, but our learners do not have access to those lessons as we do not have a set of television to help them access those educational channels”.

Principal J bemoaned the fact that,

“Our Geography teacher does not have a globe in his classroom. Instead, he uses a map in the place of a globe. Learners in his Geography class do not concentrate during his lessons. There is no excitement there and learners get bored when he teaches them. That is why the learners’ performance in that Geography class is poor”.

This is consistent with National Education Technology Plan (2017) line of reasoning on this matter in that media helps motivate or excite learners during lessons. This encourages them to participate in the teaching and learning process. Media also promote

attentiveness during lesson. This illustrates that schools need to be assisted in terms of acquiring educational media to provide learners with productive learning experiences to keep them focused. Educational media is flexible because it can be used to all levels of learners in all subjects. Masterman (1999), in support of the above, contends that teaching media also encourages learners to take more responsibility for and control over their own learning, engage in joint planning of the syllabus, and take longer-term perspectives independently. The use of media in teaching and learning process is a necessity that cannot be overlooked or down played. It attracts the learners' attention and makes the teaching and learning activities more interesting and also effective.

4.4.11. Teacher Supervision through Lesson Observations

Table 4.12 shows that less than half (34.8%) of the respondents always have their lessons observed as they teach, while 3.1% are never observed.

Table 4.12: Supervision of teachers through lesson observations.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	4	3.1
Seldom	13	9.6
Sometimes	33	24.4
Often	38	28.1
Always	47	34.8
Total	135	100

These results (Table 4.12) are not consistent with those of Bailey's (2006) which showed that the SMT members should observe teachers' lessons in order to identify their teaching strengths and weaknesses. This would help determine the effectiveness of their pedagogical approaches in lesson delivery. Danielson (2001) believes that through

observing teachers teaching, the SMT members are in a position to see how they create conducive atmosphere for effective learning. This would be in addition to how they apply different teaching methods to deal with learners with different cognitive levels. The interviewees expressed their support of teachers being observed while teaching. Their argument is that this makes them assess the teachers' commitments in their core duty of teaching learners, and the school's academic progress. However, the interviewees noted the difficulties associated with regular lesson observations. Their reservations stem from their other administrative workload they claim is too much for them. For example, principal E stated that,

"Lesson observations at our school are not done effectively because as the principal, I also have to deal with the other administrative tasks here. That is, I also teach and have to do all work associated with a class teacher as our school is small. Thus, it is difficult for me to teach and at the same time have time to regularly observe other teachers teaching".

The above response implies that principals are willing to regularly observe their teachers' lesson deliveries, but are overwhelmed by too much workload. Other administrative duties circumvent their abilities to regularly supervise and monitor what goes on in the classroom. As such, their schools' teaching and learning issues are compromised. This is reflected in the following comment by principal F,

"As a principal, I do not do class visits to observe my teachers delivering lessons. I sometimes move around checking with them, and listening to what they teach. I am too committed for observing them teach".

This situation, if unchecked, could result in the learners' poor academic performance. The significance of observing the teaching and learning activities was confirmed by Bernstein (2011) who pointed out that learning occurs if teachers are in class on time teaching instead of neglecting their core duty.

4.4.12 Teachers' Subject Specialisation

Table 4.13: Teachers' Subject Specialisation.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	4	3.1
Seldom	6	4.4
Sometimes	8	5.9
Often	33	24.4
Always	84	62.2
Total	135	100

The quality of education in any country is measured by commitment and competency of its teachers. The former is, therefore, as good as its teachers' competence levels (DBE, 2011). In other words, the academic performance of learners and the quality of results is determined by competency of the teachers in the context of their subject specialisation, and how they the use of appropriate teaching strategies and approaches. Teachers are expected to be competent in the subjects they teach. The Limpopo Department of Education (2011) stated that in the main, teachers should generate content knowledge beyond what the textbooks offer, and they should regularly use different teaching methods.

The digits in Table 4.13 show that 62.2% of the respondents are always allocated subjects they specialised in. This speaks to Bertram's (2011) understanding that the teachers' content knowledge is a prerequisite to the learners' good performance at school, especially those who teach the QP learners with knowledge gaps from the previous grade. According to the interviewees, teachers are allocated subjects they specialised in at university. Principal E confirmed that,

"In terms of subject allocation to teachers, we give them those they are experts in. But, our case is different as we are a small school with few teachers. We are forced to allocate teachers subjects they did not major in at university".

Principals F added that,

“We allocate them according to their professional qualifications. But, we also consider one’s interest in the subject because a teacher might have qualified to teach Physical Science, and also have an interest in teaching other subjects. Such a teacher is given the opportunity to teach the subject he/she is interested in teaching”.

This was echoed by principal J who said,

“We allocate teachers according to their professional competency. For example, if a teacher specialised in Mathematics, we allocate him/her Maths. We also allocate that teacher other subjects that form the general stream. The case is the same with teachers who specialised in general subjects”.

From the above texts, the informants confirmed that they are allocated subjects according to their professional qualifications. This suggests that what is needed is for the department to train them on how to manage the teaching and assessment of the QP learners for the improved educational outcomes.

With about 3.1% of the respondents indicating that they have never been allocated subjects of their specialisation, one would argue that subject allocation in this circuit is first according to specialisation, and then one’s interests thereafter. Ball, Hill and Bass (2005) concurred that teachers should have subject content depth so that they are able to select appropriate content to teach to different categories of learners. This means that a subject specialist teacher is able to select content suitable for both the QP and promoted learners. This might help minimise the number of learners who would otherwise be moved to the next grade through the progression policy. It is important that a teacher specialises in the subject which he or she teaches to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning process at school.

4.4.13 Different Teaching Methods

Table 4.164: Teaching methods.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	12	8.9
Often	32	23.7
Always	91	67.4
Total	135	100

Table 4.14 shows that 67.4% of the respondents always apply different methods when teaching different themes or concepts in their subject areas. Only 8.9% stated that they sometimes do so. The above information was also supported by the interviewees who acknowledged that they use different methods when teaching different concepts. These respondents also emphasised that teachers use different teaching strategies when teaching learners where they take into account their different backgrounds and abilities. In principal B's own words,

"We encourage our teachers to use different strategies when teaching because some of the sections might be difficult for the QP learners to understand. Most of the QP learners have content knowledge gaps, thus they are taken care of when lesson presentations are varied".

Principal D remarked that,

"There were some general complaints from some teachers at our school about the QP learners' passive participation in class. As a school, we agreed that we must seriously consider the selection of teaching approaches when we teach different concepts".

The above views are in support of Vikoo's (2003) remarks that learners have different learning styles and capabilities, and each learner masters content at his/her own pace. Marsh (2009), in collaboration with the above, contends that the monitoring of teachers

provides clues on individual progress and the difficulties faced, whether the teaching pace is too fast or too slow, and which learners need individual attention. It was discovered that when preparing for lessons, teachers also take into cognisance the learners' individual differences. This suggests that the selection of an appropriate teaching method is one of the important processes that ensure successful teaching. Johnson (2017) confirmed that a teacher should use a wide range of teaching methods to cater for both the promoted and QP learners' diverse needs.

4.4.14 HODs and Supervision

Table 4.15 presents results showing that more than half of the respondents (51.1%) are always observed by their HODs when teaching. This ensures that they complete the syllabi every year. A mere 0.7% confirmed that they are never observed while teaching. These results point to a worrying trend that has seen teachers not being observed by the HODs while teaching for quite a long time. This is an almost equal number to those who are regularly observed.

Table 4.15: HODs and Supervision.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	1	0.7
Seldom	7	5.2
Sometimes	27	20.0
Often	31	23.0
Always	69	51.1
Total	135	100

The above table partially agrees with Du Plessis (2013) who claimed that monitoring can inform the SMTs about the learners' needs and the challenges that teachers experience about the learners' performances. This means that when teachers complete the syllabi

every year, progressed learners would have benefitted from the teaching and learning processes that went on at school throughout the year.

In the context of the above table, the school principals agreed that when monitoring is consistently done, challenges experienced by learners (including the QP ones) can be identified and addressed timeously before they sit for their final NSC Grade 12 examinations. Principal D said that as managers, they have a curricula management plan where every week, they check the teachers' files and then give them necessary support in areas they face difficulties. They also check the learners' exercise books. Principal J added that they also provide the HODs with the monitoring tools to use when checking lesson plans, preparations, content coverage and subject improvement. Apparently, monitoring enhances learning and the syllabi completion. This means that the number of progressed learners is reduced as well.

4.4.15 Curriculum Management and Workshops

Table 4.16: Curriculum management workshops.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Seldom	1	0.7
Sometimes	32	23.7
Often	45	33.3
Always	57	42.3
Total	135	100

Table 4.16 shows that workshops on curriculum management are regularly done as 42.3% of the respondents indicated that they always have these. About 23.7% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes hold workshops on curriculum management. This implies that only half of the respondents are regularly assisted in their subjects on areas where challenges on curriculum implementation are most experienced. The

principals also admitted that the department is not doing enough in workshopping them, especially on curriculum management vis-à-vis the QP learners. They further decried their lack of capacitation and that of their teachers on how to teach the progressed learners, blaming their sorry situation on the DBE. In the absence of such workshops, schools are expected to develop their own teaching strategies in order to assist the QP learners. The principals also complained about the large numbers of the QP learners in classes. They stated that these make it difficult for teachers to give individual attention to learners. Principal F said,

“The DBE does not workshop us. Our school curriculum co-ordinator convenes meetings at the beginning of each year where we sit as members of staff and outline what we are supposed to do, and how we can manage curricula, the number of tests we are supposed to give and tasks to be written. This is done taking into account how we should handle the QP learners”.

Principal G seconded the above views, pointing out that they do not have workshops organised by their department, but only hold meetings at school level wherein they discuss about how they would work with both the QP and promoted learners.

Principal I had this to say,

“We are only invited to meetings where we are told to implement the policy on progression. We are not workshopped in terms of how strategies should be developed to assist the QP learners. As a school, we sit down with teachers, especially those teaching Grade 12, and share ideas on how we should handle the QP learners”.

The above principals’ remarks insinuate that schools were given the progression policy without follow up workshops on how to manage the teaching and assessment of the QP learners. This implies that schools will continue to have challenges in managing the teaching of the QP learners unless they are workshopped on how to do so. It is important that the DBE conduct regular workshops for teachers on curriculum management. This would ensure that they are able to select the relevant curriculum content and strategies that would help them respond to their learners’ needs.

4.4.16 Lesson Observations by HODs

Learning occurs when teachers are in class teaching effectively (Bernstein, 2011). Opfer (2016) believes that to inculcate good teaching strategies, teachers in the same school should engage in peer observation as they deliver their lessons.

Table 4. 17 .Lesson Observation by HODs

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	17	12.6
Seldom	16	11.9
Sometimes	41	30.4
Often	42	31.1
Always	19	14.0
Total	135	100

Thus, teachers should be observed while teaching in order to help them get exposure through peer review mechanisms. The data in Table 4.17 disclosed that only 14% of the respondents are always observed while teaching. Some principals confirmed that their HODs observe teachers teaching.

Principal E observed that,

“The observation of teachers teaching stops with the HODs. These compile reports on how the QP learners are supported in class. The HODs then make follow up visits to find out how the QP learners cope with supportive strategies, and also to check on their progress, and whether the support given is effective or not”.

Principal F added that teachers are observed when they are in class teaching. He, however, showed his displeasure in the manner in which the HODs observe teachers while teaching. He remarked thus,

“The HODs do monitor, but we need to improve on that because it is currently not effective. It is a cause for concern because the HODs do not have a clear programme with specific

dates for their class visits. We always find teachers unprepared, without proper lesson plans and class records”.

Thus, 31.1% of the respondents indicated that they are often observed. It is worthwhile to note that some of principals monitor teaching by merely moving around and listening to teachers from the outside. This was revealed by Principal C who said that,

“We do monitor teaching and also make use of the monitoring instruments when we observe a teacher teaching. Sometimes we just move around to check whether teaching is taking place, not necessarily getting inside the classroom to sit and listen”.

The observation of teachers teaching by principals moving around and eavesdropping is unprofessional and more of a witch-hunt than anything else. The SMT should have a well-developed class-observation programme with specific dates. Approximately 12.6% of the respondents claimed that they are never observed by the HODs while in class teaching. This is inconsistent with Opfer’s (2016) assertion that teachers should engage in peer observations as they teach at school. Opfer (2016) contends that peer observation while teaching aims at improving the teachers’ teaching strategies. This implies that if teachers are not assisted with their teaching approaches, they may not improve their teaching. This does not ensure that progressed learners receive adequate support. There is no consistence in the observation of teachers in that 30.4% of the respondents said that they are sometimes observed while teaching, and 11.9% confirmed that they are seldom observed.

The principals, on the other hand, revealed that schools observe teachers differently. The purpose behind observing teachers delivering lessons is to provide them with opportunities to get feedback from an objective and experienced supervisor (Bailey, 2006). Bailey (2006) pointed out that schools where SMT members observe teachers teaching expose them to opportunities where they receive meaningful and direct feedback about their teaching. Such feedback, according to Bailey (2006), also helps them address areas of concern in their teaching.

4.5 STRATEGIES OF SUPPORTING LEARNERS PROGRESSED WITHOUT ACADEMICALLY QUALIFYING

This section deals with the teaching support where teachers were to indicate the extent to which they support the teaching of “the qualified to be progressed learners”.

The objective of the intervention strategies is to facilitate the creation of an effective environment for teaching, learning and assessment that provides opportunities for teachers and learners to achieve the educational outcomes at all levels (DBE, 2011). Intervention strategies are instructional strategies that are developed to assist learners experiencing learning difficulties. Teaching strategies are multidimensional, and there is no single teaching that is guaranteed improved learner outcomes (Hattie, 2009).

4.5.1 Intervention strategies and programmes to assist progressed learners catch up with promoted ones

Table 4.18 Intervention strategies and programmes to assist progressed learners catch up with promoted ones.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	7	5.2
Seldom	7	5.2
Sometimes	22	16.2
Often	51	37.8
Always	48	35.6
Total	135	100

The information in Table 4.18 indicates that 35.6% of the respondents always develop the intervention strategies and programmes to assist progressed learners catch up with the promoted ones, while 5.2% never do that. The 35.6% is too low, and this implies that the majority of the QP learners here are not assisted to catch up with the progressed

ones. This was confirmed by the principals who said that even though they have intervention strategies they develop at school level, they do not specifically address the catch-up issues concerning the QP learners. They emphasised that the strategies they develop cater for both the QP and promoted learners. Principal A stated that,

“Our school policy dictates that teachers should develop intervention strategies for their different subjects in the context of all learners. Developed strategies are discussed at different subject committee meetings to check if they are relevant and implementable. After all, these strategies are for all learners, not specifically for progressed ones only”.

The response from principal A was echoed by principal G, who remarked that,

“We are on our own as a school. We do not have any assistance from the Department of Education when it comes to the development of intervention strategies. To improve the learners’ performance in different subjects, all teachers participate in crafting the intervention strategies. Our teachers know how their learners perform, their strengths and weaknesses in different subjects. Thus, we are well positioned to develop intervention strategies for all these learners”.

Given that schools are not assisted by the government; one might say that the progression policy is doomed to fail as such schools lack the much needed assistance from the DBE. Yes, teachers can and would certainly develop intervention strategies in this context, but of what use will these be if they are not in turn supported by the DBE through the provision of learning media to help them use those strategies effectively? In other words, the teachers’ efforts here are a waste of time in as much as helping the QP learners is concerned. That is, the teachers’ teaching and learning strategies would not matter in situations where the schools are under resourced.

Principal J noted that,

“In a class of QP and promoted learners, our teachers are able to select content and develop strategies that suit both sets of learners. They strategise using the previous grade’s subject content wherein the QP learners are taught separately in order to narrow the content gap”.

These comments comply with Opfer's (2016) position that teachers should be allowed time to develop teaching strategies on their own as they know their learners' cognitive levels and the subject content suitable for them. This is also supportive of Hattie's (2009) assertion that teaching strategies are generally multidimensional and they should be developed to cater for learners of different learning abilities. This suggests that strategies should be developed taking into account the subject content and the learners' abilities.

Only a few schools are able to develop intervention strategies that are specifically QP learner oriented, as evidenced by the 5.2% of the respondents who indicated that they never develop such intervention strategies. This is also an indication that if teachers do not develop intervention strategies that are specifically directed at improving the performance of the QP learners, it would be difficult for them to catch up with the promoted learners. Thus, unless teachers are encouraged to develop these strategies, the QP learners would continue to underperform.

4.5.2 Profiling QP learners for support

Table 4.19 shows the profiling of learners after analysing school term results. This helped identify the challenging topics for support purposes.

Table 4.19: Profiling QP learners for support.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	4	3.0
Seldom	8	5.9
Sometimes	37	27.4
Often	35	25.9
Always	51	37.8
Total	135	100

The results in Table 4.19 show that 37.8% of the respondents always profile learners after analysing their results to identify challenging topics in order to provide them with support. About 27.4% sometimes do so, while 3% never do anything about that. This indicates that the majority of learners are not profiled. Thus, teachers may not be able to identify areas where the QP learners still experience challenges in different subjects. They might continue to underperform as a result. Even though some of the principals confirmed during interviews that they profile the QP learners to identify challenging topics, there is a need for all schools to do so if the performance is to improve. These are some of the remarks by the principals, and principal A had this to say,

“Yes, we profile them according to item analysis and how they respond to different themes. We do profiling in order to check which topics give them challenges as the QP learners. This makes us choose appropriate approaches for the effective to teaching”.

Principal F added that,

“We encourage teachers to record marks when they give assessment tasks. Like what our Business Studies teacher does. He highlights in red all learners who fail tests four times to show that they are at risk. The moment one takes the mark sheet, one easily identifies the learners who are not doing well. We profile them according to their performance”.

Principal I said that they profile learners according to how they performed in Grades 10 and 11 where they look at the subjects and sections they passed, and those they failed. These principals’ remarks auger well with Park, Ji and Lim’s (2015) assertion that learner profiling helps the teacher to identify themes that learners experience challenges in or that need immediate attention. Park et al. (2015) believes that when challenges in a subject are identified in this way, the teacher then selects suitable approaches to support the QP learners so that they improve their academic performance. Park et al’s views (2015) echoed McCarthy’s (2014) claims that learner profiling is the best strategy in identifying the learner’s challenges in order to provide him/her with the relevant support. Tomlison (2001) is also in agreement that profiling learners assists the teacher in

identifying learners at risk at the earliest convenient time. This means that if learners are profiled early, teachers would quickly provide support to those struggling with their studies.

4.5.3 Lesson Planning for QP Learners' Activities

Table 4.20 below shows the frequency with which teachers plan lessons for their QP learners.

Table 4.20 Lesson Planning for QP Learners' Activities.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	20	14.8
Seldom	8	5.9
Sometimes	41	30.4
Often	41	30.4
Always	25	18.5
Total	135	100

In Table 4.20, a very small percentage of 18.5% of the respondents indicated that they always plan for the lessons to teach the QP learners, and 4.8% do not. This shows that the majority of teachers do not plan for the activities that would help them teach the QP learners. Nine principals also confirmed this when they stated that they do not plan for the activities when teaching the QP learners. To them, lessons are planned for all learners, not a specific category. This is how they responded, starting with principal A,

“It is not possible to prepare separate activities for the QP and promoted learners as they are in one class. We cannot separate them, we collectively handle them. In terms of lesson plans, the preparation is the same, but in terms of making them understand, the extension of the lesson plan is such that the QP learners are given simple tasks as they are slow learners”.

Principals B emphatically said no, they do not plan for different activities but,

“We plan to teach the QP and promoted learners the same concepts. We only separate them in the afternoons where we teach them according to their weaknesses in different themes”.

Principals C said that they do not plan lesson activities for the QP learners only. There are no lessons prepared for the QP and promoted learners separately.

Only one principal indicated that in his school, they plan for lesson activities that are specifically for the QP learners. He pointed out that,

“Yes, teachers plan and prepare content specifically for the Q.P learners, including the promoted ones who struggle with their studies. There are learners who were promoted, but do not perform well in class. They are grouped with the QP learners so that they are taught the same subject matter”.

Here, the informants’ responses are to the effect that they do not develop separate plans for concepts that specifically cater for the QP learners. This suggests that the DBE expects teachers to plan and prepare learning activities that ensures that the QP learners improve their performance. However, these teachers are not workshopped on strategies that enable them to handle mixed classes of learners with different learning abilities. Thus, if the QP learners are to do well in their studies, teachers should be trained on how to teach such learners effectively. It should be revealed that generally, the interviewees’ observations here are not consistent with Tomlinson’s (2014) position that in a class where some learners experience challenges in certain themes, teachers should include activities that cater for that specific group of learners. Tomlinson (2014) believes that in almost every class, there are learners who require special consideration. If schools are to improve the QP learners’ performance, they should include activities that cater for their specific needs.

4.5.4 Extra lessons for QP Learners

Table 4.21 contains information on the provision of extra lessons to the QP learners.

Table 4.1721 Extra lessons for QP Learners.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	14	10.4
Seldom	6	4.4
Sometimes	35	25.9
Often	43	31.9
Always	37	27.4
Total	135	100

The results in Table 4.21 inform us that 27.4% of the respondents always provide extra lessons to the QP learners, while 10.4% said that they never provide such lessons. These low percentages are an indication that even though the majority of the schools know that their QP learners do not perform as expected, they have failed to make any provisions for extra lessons to remediate this problem. The interviewees also admitted that extra classes are helpful in supporting learners who were progressed. However, they argued that there is no timetable designed for the QP learners' extra classes. They pointed out that this depends on individual teachers to make arrangements with their QP learners for extra lessons. Principal A's position here was that,

"It is not easy at our school. Teachers refuse to teach in the afternoon. They complain that given that at the Department of Education's Offices, employees there are paid overtime, while the same privilege is not extended to them if they work overtime. We teach all learners during school hours. It is quite difficult to convince teachers otherwise".

Principal C lamented that giving the QP learners special attention by conducting extra lessons is where they have challenges. He said that they only encourage all learners to do extra classes at identified centres that are funded by the Department of Education.

Principal G had this to say,

“We teach both the promoted and progressed learners the same themes in one class during school hours. There is no timetable for the QP learners’ extra lessons. But, some teachers teach those who struggle in the mornings before the school starts, and in the afternoons after the prescribed working hours. Others teach progressed learners who struggle to cope with the content in the new grade after school hours only. Teachers usually repeat the content taught in class earlier”.

Principal H bemoaned the system of teaching a mixed class of fast and slow learners thus,

“Honestly speaking, it is tough to teach a mixed class of QP and promoted learners during normal school hours. At our school, we emphasise on producing good results. As a result, teachers sometimes teach after school hours, even on Saturdays. They arrange with the QP learners to teach selected topics that were poorly done. In this way, teachers give learners individual attention. In turn, such learners are motivated to ask questions on issues they experience difficulties on”.

The results in Table 4.21 the principals’ remarks do not fit in well with Tomlinson’s (2014) observation that today’s classroom teacher is faced with the challenges of addressing a wide variety of learners’ learning abilities. Tomlinson (2014) contends that to effectively manage a wide variety of needs, a teacher needs to identify learners who require additional support and provide extra lessons. If schools, therefore, want the QP learners’ performance to improve, they should give them extra lessons.

This shows the teachers’ willingness to provide extra lessons to the QP learners. However, the concerns raised by the respondents include, among others, the teachers’ lack of skills or strategies to handle mixed classes of learners with different learning abilities, and the lack of incentives for teachers who give extra lessons after normal working hours. The department should provide incentives for teachers who are willing to teach after hours if the QP learners’ academic performance is to improve.

4.5.5 Control of QP Learners' Attendance

Table 4.22 presents results showing the QP learners' school attendance monitoring frequency.

Table 4.22 Control of QP Learners' Attendance.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	9	6.7
Seldom	15	11.1
Sometimes	22	16.3
Often	39	28.9
Always	50	37.0
Total	135	100

The data in Table 4.22 reflect that 37% of the respondents always monitor their QP learners' regular school attendance, whereas 6.7% never do so. As such, less than half of the respondents monitor their learners' school attendance. This suggests that the majority of learners may always be absent from school or miss certain subjects without teachers noticing that. Nearly all the principals interviewed agreed that monitoring learner attendance is a policy that must be implemented without fail. However, principals noted that teachers do not monitor the QP learners' regular school attendance. On this issue, principal A expressed his thoughts thus,

"We monitor the learners' attendance through marking the daily attendance registers. The attendance registers are marked every morning during the first period, and in the afternoon during the last period. There is no separate attendance register for the QP learners".

Meanwhile, principal C confirmed that they use class attendance registers to monitor every learner's attendance trend. He acknowledged that there is no separate register for QP learners. Principal D pointed out that their learners, whether QPs or promoted ones,

are monitored through the class attendance register whether they regularly attend school or not. Principal F added that they usually mark the learners' attendance registers every day when the school begins. He said that they pay special attention to the QP learners as they mark the registers because these sometimes absent themselves from school. The above speak to Pitre (2010) who indicated that the attendance rate is important because learners are more likely to succeed in their academics when they consistently attend school. The study also revealed that some teachers do not effectively control their learners' attendance. This might negatively affect the QP learners' performance as they get less exposed to the curricula due to their misdemeanours.

4.5.6 Curriculum Coverage According to Pacesetters

Table 4.23 shows that of the teachers' curricula coverage according to pacesetters. Its results show that 73.3% of the respondents always cover the curriculum according to pacesetters. This is a good percentage when compared with the 0.7% of those who never do so. The results indicate that teachers are able to cover the content prescribed for the academic year. The completion of work according to pacesetters gives learners an added advantage when it comes to their examinations. The principals said that if teachers cover the curricula accordingly, it becomes easy for learners to respond to questions in different sections of the subject.

Table 4.23 Curriculum Coverage According to Pacesetters

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	1	0.7
Seldom	2	1.5
Sometimes	10	7.4
Often	23	17.1
Always	99	73.3
Total	135	100

This is how the principals responded, starting with principal E,

“At the beginning of the year, the SMT members, especially the HODs, sit down with their subject teachers where they go through how pacesetters should be used in line with the curricula. We always monitor to find out whether they are able to cover the curricula as per the pacesetters. So far, they are able to do so”.

Principal H pointed out that,

“In our school, we monitor curricula delivery according to individual subjects. We also check progress in terms of curricula coverage as per the pacesetters. I have noted that teachers teach as per pacesetters and hence covered the curricula accordingly. Some are ahead of the pacesetters and they do revision with learners. This assist our learners a lot, especially our Grade 12 classes that have the highest number of the QP learners”.

Table 4.23’s outcomes and the principals’ views here are consistent with Fleisch’s (2016) argument that teachers should teach and cover what is prescribed in the curriculum before learners write the end of year examinations. Curriculum coverage is an integrated tracking tool which focuses on planned activities, activities that have been completed, list of topics not yet done and the planned interventions (Fleisch, 2016). Fleisch (2016) goes on to say that teachers should teach and cover all aspects of the curricula. These results suggest that the majority of teachers are able to cover curricula as per pacesetters. Thus, the learners’ performance is likely to improve.

4.5.7 Workshops on Content Delivery

Table 4.24 shows the extent to which teachers are workshopped on delivering content to the QP learners. The results show that 28.9% of the respondents are always workshopped on how to deliver content to the QP learners, and 24.4% indicated to the contrary. This means that the majority of the teachers might find it difficult to deliver content to the QP learners as they lack knowledge and understanding on how to do so.

Table 4.24 Workshops on Content Delivery

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	33	24.4
Seldom	11	8.1
Sometimes	19	14.2
Often	33	24.4
Always	39	28.9
Total	135	100

The interviewees acknowledge that workshops attended by teachers do not specify any category of learners, but are inclusive of all learners. The interviewees complained that the Department of Education wants schools to implement the progression policy, yet it does not play its part on how to teach learners once progressed. The following are remarks made by four principals. Principal A said of the whole issue,

“No, there are no workshops organised and conducted by the Department of Education to workshop teachers on how to deliver content to the QP learners. Teachers have to devise some mechanisms on how to deliver content that covers all learners as classes are mixed with promoted and progressed learners”.

Principal B was a bit harsh in his complaints, arguing that,

“The Department of Education just imposes policies on us. There is no direction on how to teach these QP learners to cover content gaps from previous grades as they do not conduct workshops on how to deliver such content to these learners. They do not workshop us on how to handle these QP learners. It is so frustrating”.

Principal E also complained about teachers not being workshopped on how to teach the QP learners by the Department of Education, but the progression policy has to be implemented. He continued thus,

“We do in-house workshops at school on our own. We do train each other on how to identify where the learners lack in individual subjects, and where teachers should put more effort. What we workshop emanate from item analysis”.

Principal J also felt that something must be done in the absence of workshops that should be conducted by the DBE. He concluded thus,

“We are not workshopped by our Department of Education, but at school we try to do something, specifically for the QP learners. We guide teachers through different approaches on how to teach these learners as they are slow performers who need assistance”.

The above extracts imply that even though the Department of Education indicated that teachers should have knowledge that enable them to teach the grades they have been given, they do not provide workshops to capacitate them on content delivery concerning the QP learners. Responses from the respondents epitomise the need for the DBE to organise and conduct workshops for teachers on how to deliver content to QP learners. The fact that teachers are not workshopped on how to deliver content to such learners shows that it may be difficult to assist them improve their academic performance.

4.6 Management of Teaching Items

The data analysis in Table 4.25 shows that the general time-table is used to manage teaching ($M = 4.78$, $MD = 5.00$, $SD = .58$). This is followed by lesson planning ($M = 4.67$, $MD = 5.00$, $SD = .60$) and the application of different teaching methods ($M = 4.59$, $MD = 5.00$, $SD = .65$).

Further data analysis reveals that computer laboratories ($M = 2.24$, $MD = 2.00$, $SD = 1.32$), science laboratories ($M = 2.26$, $MD = 1.00$, $SD = 1.45$) and libraries ($M = 2.84$, $MD = 3.00$, $SD = 1.40$) are least used by the respondents when they teach.

Table 4.25: The Management of Teaching

Management of teaching items		Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
B1	I give QP learners assignments and project activities that require library use.	2.84	3.00	1.40
B2	My QP and promoted learners do Science experiments in laboratory.	2.26	2.00	1.45
B3	I give QP and promoted learners projects that enable them to use the computer laboratory.	2.24	2.00	1.32
B4	I mark attendance register before I present my lessons.	4.13	4.00	1.00
B5	I mark period attendance register whenever I go to different classes.	4.35	5.00	0.92
B6	At our school, we follow the master time-table when we teach.	4.78	5.00	0.58
B7	Our school has a study time table for all grades.	3.98	5.00	1.41
B8	I plan each lesson before I teach.	4.67	5.00	0.60
B9	I do daily lesson preparations.	4.47	5.00	0.85
B10	I organise teaching media for each lesson I teach.	3.20	3.00	1.29
B11	Teachers are observed as they teach in class at our school.	3.80	4.00	1.11
B12	I am allocated the subjects I specialised in at school.	4.39	5.00	0.99
B13	I apply different teaching methods when handling different themes in my subject.	4.59	5.00	0.65
B14	My HOD monitors my work to ensure that I complete the syllabus every year.	4.19	5.00	0.98
B15	I am workshopped on curriculum management.	4.17	4.00	0.82
B16	My HOD observes me in class when I teach.	3.22	3.00	1.21
B17	My school has developed intervention strategies and programmes to assist progressed learners catch up with promoted ones.	3.93	4.00	1.09

4.6.1 Curriculum Delivery

Table 4.26 shows how teachers cover all sections of the curricula.

Table 4.26 Curriculum Delivery.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	2	1.5
Sometimes	9	6.6
Often	29	21.5
Always	95	70.4
Total	135	100

Teachers should ensure that they cover all aspects of the curriculum and the full range of cognitive levels in their teaching and assessment strategies in order that they respond to the demands of the examinations fully (DBE, 2016). It should be noted that 70.4% of the respondents always teach all sections of the curriculum in their subjects every year. This is in agreement with Behar (1994) who stated that teachers know their learners better and this makes them provide insight into the types of the sections that ought to be emphasised in each subject. Behar (1994) added that teachers are able to identify sections of the curriculum that may adequately prepare learners to advance to the next grade. The principals agreed, with principal G noting that normally, their teachers teach all prescribed sections in the syllabus, covering all the work and checking if all sections have been taught.

This confirms that the majority of teachers teach prescribed topics and concepts so that the QP learners may improve their performance in tests and in their final examinations. As a matter of policy, the DBE (2016) stated that teachers should teach learners all prescribed themes before they write their final examinations. Those who do not cover all sections of the syllabus should be encouraged to do so as a matter of urgency. Doing so fully prepares learners before they are assessed.

4.6.2. Subject Themes

Table 4.27 reveals the teachers' views on themes they teach in their respective grades.

Table 4.27 Subject Themes.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	24	17.8
Seldom	17	12.6
Sometimes	49	36.2
Often	24	17.8
Always	21	15.6
Total	135	100

In a class, learners are not of the same cognitive level. Promoted and progressed learners may not participate at the same level when responding to the curriculum content delivery. The data analysed in Table 4.27 above reveals that 17.8% of the respondents indicated that all topics are often simple to their learners. About 12.6% of them indicated that their topics are seldom simple to all learners. Some of the teachers (36.2%) believe that topics are sometimes simple. About 15.6% of them believe that all topics are always simple to their learners. Roughly 17.8% of the respondents indicated that all topics in their subjects are never simple to their learners.

4.6.3 Recovery Plans for QP Learners

Table 4.28 presents results showing the frequency of teachers in drawing plans to cover up for lost time.

Table 4.28 Recovery Plans for QP Learners

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	15	11.1
Seldom	8	5.9
Sometimes	43	31.9
Often	31	23.0
Always	38	28.1
Total	135	100

Phurutse (2005) asserted that the ideal formal contact hours for teaching is 25 hours per week. Any time lost when teachers and learners are not in class should be provided through mechanisms such as after school teaching to assist learners. The QP learners are viewed as having knowledge deficiencies. It becomes problematic if only a small percentage (28.1%) of the respondents say that they always draw a catch up plan for the QP learners to cover for time lost. Moreover, 23.0% of them indicated that they often draw up such a plan. This suggests that approximately 51.1% of the teachers have catch up programmes for their QP learners. Catch up programmes help progressed learners catch up with promoted ones. All the principals agreed that any teaching time lost during the year may affect the completion of the syllabi. It is, therefore, very essential for the schools to develop catch up programmes to cover up for the teaching time lost. The majority of the principals indicated that they have catch up programmes for the teaching time that might be lost during the year for all learners. Principal H confirmed that,

“Our catch-up programme focuses on all learners, but if we find that there is a group of the QP learners who are behind because of time lost during normal school hours, we do consider making provision to accommodate them”.

Principal J corroborated by adding that,

“We do develop a catch-up programme if we realise that there was teaching time lost due to some industrial actions or if there were some competing departmental

programmes that disrupted some of our lessons. We develop these catch-up programmes to cater for all learners irrespective of their status in each grade”.

With reference to the principals’ comments, it is clear that managing teaching and assessment in a class of learners with different cognitive level is very complex. It becomes a cause for concern if 11.1% of the respondents reveal that they never draw catch up plans for their QP learners to cover for time lost during the year. In some of the schools, there are teachers who are committed to cover up for the time lost during the year as confirmed by 31.9% who said that they sometimes draw up plans to this effect. Roughly 5.9% of the respondents said that they seldom draw catch up plans for their QP learners to cover up for time lost during the year.

The principals also felt that it is necessary to draw a catch-up plan, but did not affirm that they indeed do that at their respective schools. To this end, principal D said that it is a good idea to draw a catch-up programme, but they have programmes for extra classes for their QP learners. Principal G added that they have promoted learners who are not doing well, and on the other hand they have QP learners who do very well. That is why at their school they teach during weekends to recover time lost, and this cuts across all learners. Based on the above responses, it is very important for the school to agree on what should be done in case there are some activities that may disrupt lessons during normal working hours.

4.6.4 Monitoring of Catch up Programme by HODs

Table 4.29 reveals how the HOD monitors the QP learners’ catch up programmes.

Table 4.29 Monitoring of Catch up Programme by HODs

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	17	12.6
Seldom	9	6.7
Sometimes	47	34.8
Often	33	24.4
Always	29	21.5
Total	135	100

In Table 4.29, 21.5% of the respondents indicated that they are always monitored by their HODs in the selection of themes to teach the QP learners under the catch up programme. This is consistent with Grosser (2007) who said that for the effective teaching, the HODs should closely monitor each teacher when selecting themes to be taught, and when they actually teach those themes. This would enable them to provide teachers with feedback on their teaching performances, and hence valuable information to assess the impact of their teaching. However, with approximately 24.4% of the respondents saying that they are often monitored, this means that at least 45.9% of the respondents are monitored by their HODs here. Thus, a reasonable percentage of the respondents confirmed that monitoring by HODs in the selection of themes to be taught by teachers actually takes place in this circuit. This is supported by comments from the principals, where principal B said,

“At the beginning of the year, HODs for different subjects sit down with teachers and identify themes in their respective subjects where learners scored low marks so that those sections are prioritised for the learners’ improvement in their performance”.

Also, Table 4.29 reveals that 12.6% of the respondents are never monitored. The following are the principals’ remarks in this regard. Principal A stated that,

“Honestly speaking, we talk about the monitoring of sections to be taught in different subjects in our first meetings at the beginning of each year. We are not

consistent in this regard because as the year progresses we monitor teaching in general, not checking specific sections to be taught”.

About 34.8% indicate that they are sometimes monitored in the selection of the sections to be taught to the QP learners, while 6.7% are seldom monitored. These percentages reflect that teachers are not necessarily assisted and monitored on the selection of themes to be taught under special programmes meant to assist the QP learner improve their performance. Based on the remarks by some of the respondents, one would say that the QP learners at certain schools are cared for in terms of catch up programmes. The HODs are also involved in the selection of content to make that catch up programmes are more effective. The selection of themes in this way is reflective of Grosser’s (2007) assertion that it is imperative to ensure that the selected themes address the content gaps the QP learners need to close if they are to do well in their final examinations. It is also worth noting that if we are to realise improved results at the end of each year, HODs should monitor and supervise all teachers at school.

4.6.5 Previous Work

Table 4.30 shows the frequency with which help is provided to QP learners.

Table 4.30 Previous Work

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	13	9.6
Seldom	8	5.9
Sometimes	29	21.5
Often	39	28.9
Always	46	34.1
Total	135	100

Students who do not meet the required performance standards for their promotion to the next grade are to be provided with effective extra help to close the knowledge gap of the

previous year's work (DBE, 2016). Results in Table 4.30 show that teachers in some schools assist the progressed learners close the knowledge gaps. About 34.1% of them indicated that they always help progressed learners deal with the previous year's work. This agrees with Galbralth & Torrance (2004) who point out that at the end of every topic, revision based on the previous work is the best way teachers can use to ensure that the content covered is mastered. The teachers' responses show that almost 63% assist progressed learners in this aspect. Also, 28.9% confirmed that they often help progressed learners deal with the previous year's work. This is also what the principals said, with principal B stating that,

"We distribute different materials for revision, including question papers from previous examinations so that they test themselves to establish if they remember what they were previously taught".

Principal E added that,

"We give progressed learners previous examination question papers for revision because they help them identify their mistakes and what exactly they are supposed to do".

The comments by principals B and E suggest that learners should be shown how examination question papers are structured. Some of the learners fail because they sit for examinations without exposure to the examination structure. When learners have been familiarised with examination question papers, it becomes easy for them to correctly respond to similar questions. Only 9.6% of the respondents indicated that they never help progressed learners deal with the previous year's work. This is contrary to the DBE's Circular E22 of 2016 which stipulates that the progressed learners should be given remedial programmes, including revising previous question papers (DBE, 2016). With 21.5% and 5.9% of the respondents indicating that they sometimes or seldom help the progressed learners deal with the previous question papers, Principal H confirmed that at the

beginning of the lessons, some of his teachers recap to make sure that learners understand what was previously taught.

Principal H indicated that some of the teachers do not assist learners deal with the previous year's work. This is also confirmed by principal G who reiterated that,

"We encourage our teachers to use previous question papers when doing revision. Our challenge is that even though we have kept so many question papers from previous tests and examinations, some of our teachers do not fully utilise them".

This study revealed that schools use previous question papers when doing revision with learners to ensure that they improve their academic performance. The revisions are aimed at assisting the QP learners because they are academically challenged.

Table 4.31 indicates that the respondents support the QP learners by teaching all sections of the curriculum every year ($M = 4.61$, $MD = 5.00$, $SD = .75$). Furthermore, the respondents cover the curriculum as indicated in the pacesetters ($M = 4.59$, $MD = 5.00$, $SD = .75$).

Data in this table reveals that the support given to the QP learners is minimal because the majority of the items are below 4. This is confirmed by the fact that teachers indicated that they are sometimes workshopped on how to deliver content to the QP learners ($M = 3.25$, $MD = 4.00$, $SD = 1.55$). The HODs sometimes monitor their teachers while teaching ($M = 3.24$, $MD = 3.00$, $SD = 1.19$). Furthermore, teachers sometimes design lesson activities for the QP learners ($M = 3.32$, $MD = 3.00$, $SD = 1.27$). Last, teachers sometimes provide extra lessons to their QP learners ($M = 3.61$, $MD = 4.00$, $SD = 1.23$).

Table 4.31: Teaching Support

Support of teaching items		Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
C1	Progressed learners are profiled to identify challenging topics in order to give them support after analysis of each term's results.	3.90	4.00	1.07
C2	I am monitored in class teaching by my HOD	3.24	3.00	1.19
C3	I design lesson activities for QP learners in my subject.	3.32	3.00	1.27
C4	I provide extra lessons to my QP learners	3.61	4.00	1.23
C5	I control regular attendance of school by QP learners.	3.79	4.00	1.24
C6	I cover curriculum as indicated in the per pacesetters.	4.61	5.00	0.75
C7	I am workshopped on how to deliver content to QP learners.	3.25	4.00	1.55
C8	I teach all sections of the curriculum in my subject every year.	4.59	5.00	0.75
C9	All topics in my subject are simple to my learners.	3.01	3.00	1.28
C10	I draw up a catch up plan for my QP learners to cover for the time lost during the year.	3.51	4.00	1.27
C11	The HOD monitors the sections to be taught in the catch up programme for the QP learners	3.36	3.00	1.25
C12	I help progressed learners deal with previous year's work	3.72	4.00	1.26

4.7 MANAGEMENT OF ASSESSMENT

This section deals with the management of assessment of both progressed and promoted learners. The respondents indicated the rate at which they manage assessment.

4.7.1 Assessment of Learners during Lessons

Table 4.32 shows how learners are assessed during lessons.

Data in Table 4.32 reveals that 45.1% of the respondents always assess learners when they teach. This follows what Black and William (1998) observed, that assessing learners when presenting a lesson modifies teaching and learning activities to improve their level of understanding.

Table 4.32 Assessment of Learners during Lessons.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	2	1.5
Sometimes	19	14.1
Often	53	39.3
Always	61	45.1
Total	135	100

During the interviews, the principals supported the view that learners should be assessed when teachers present each lesson. Principal B made the following remarks in this regard,

“Normally, we do have what we call assessment plans, wherein we assess learners during lessons. If a teacher is allocated two periods a day, one period is for teaching and the other is for assessment, which is used for either class test or weekly test”.

Principal C mentioned that,

“The way in which our teachers assess learners when they teach differs from subject to subject. Some start by giving learners an assessment task before they teach, while others first teach and then assess later. Teachers engage in these different forms of assessment to check where the learners are in terms of content retention”.

In a classroom where formative assessment is practised, teachers are encouraged to make frequent and interactive assessments with learners to check on their progress (Black & William, 1998). With the addition of 39.3% of the respondents who often assess learners, this suggests that almost 84.4% of the teachers assess learners when they teach. This is confirmed by principal H who said that,

“Different subject policies are the same when it comes to learner assessment. All teachers resolved and agreed that they should give learners class excises while teaching. Towards the end of the lesson, they give short tests”.

Furthermore, data in Table 4.32 indicate that 14.1% of the respondents sometimes assess learners while teaching. Principal D remarked that,

“The assessment is done continuously throughout the whole lesson. Depending on the subject, assessment is sometimes done before or after lessons. Written assessment is sometimes done at the end of each lesson”.

Principal A admitted thus,

“We do not always give written exercises during lesson presentation. Our teachers normally give oral questions during lessons as an assessment technique, and written tasks are given after the lesson”.

The effective use of any strategy differs from one person to the other, depending on the teacher's orientation. A strategy may be effective with one teacher, but turn to be ineffective with the other. Based on objectives one and two, these respondents' comments reveal that learners are assessed in all schools. However, teachers in this

circuit apply different approaches when assessing learners during lessons. That is, some do not incorporate the formative assessment aspects (1.5%). It is imperative for teachers in their respective subjects to evaluate the effectiveness of their assessment strategies.

4.7.2 Homework Timetable

Table 4.33 shows how schools address the homework timetable issue.

Table 4.33 Homework Timetable.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	38	28.1
Seldom	15	11.1
Sometimes	16	11.9
Often	34	25.2
Always	32	23.7
Total	135	100

Homework is a vital part of a child's education. It provides learners with opportunities to further their understanding of work they have covered in class. It also enables them to develop important skills such as the ability to study and work independently. In Table 4.33, 23.7% of the respondents always provide homework time tables to their learners. This is in line with Tylor's (2008) position that children who frequently do homework and read at home have a performance advantage over those who do not. One of the principals, principal F, acknowledged that,

"We give all the grades homework timetables. We always encourage our teachers to follow the homework timetable when giving homework to avoid a situation where learners have a lot of homework to do without having enough time to read".

About 25.2% of the respondents indicated that they often have homework time tables for different grades. Roughly 48.9% of the respondents have home work time tables at their schools. However, 28.1% of them never give learners homework time tables. To this effect, principal H confirmed thus,

“We do not have homework timetables for different grades. Teachers give homework at their own time. However, what is given as homework to the QP learners is done after school during study time where they are supervised by teachers as they do their work”.

Roughly 11.1% of the respondents indicated that they seldom have homework time tables at school, while 11.9% of them sometimes give homework time tables. Phurutse (2005) contends that schools should make it easier for parents to assist their children by providing them with homework time tables.

4.7.4 Homework

Table 4.34 shows how teachers give homework to learners.

Corallo and McDonald (2002) suggested that learners should do a lot of school work at home where parents assist them. Homework glues learners to their books even after school in order to internalise information that was presented in class.

Table 4.34 Homework.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	1	0.7
Seldom	6	4.4
Sometimes	33	24.5
Often	46	34.1
Always	49	36.3
Total	135	100

Results in Table 4.34 show that 36.3% of the respondents always give learners homework after each lesson in their subjects. In support of the above, Principal E said,

“We always encourage each other to give learners some work to do at home after school. Every day, we make sure that our QP learners are given some projects or assignments to do at home. We do so to make sure that they catch-up with the promoted learners”.

Principal F agreed that they have home work timetables for their QP learners. That is, after each lesson, they are given short homework, where the same content that was done in class is repeated.

Principal I pointed out that,

“At our school, we target the QP learners for extra work to do at home. We designed a special homework timetable for all learners who are not doing well in certain subjects such as Mathematics and Life Sciences. The homework timetable is also given to parents who also sign the written work to confirm that indeed the homework was done under her/his supervision”.

About 34.1% of the respondents often give homework after each lesson in their subjects. In total, these two percentages make 70.4% of the teachers who give homework after each lesson. Principal F reiterated that,

“We do not normally give learners work to do at home as homework. What is supposed to be done at home is done in class. For an example, if the teacher has two periods per subject, he/she uses the first part of the lesson to teach and the second one is used by the learners to do what is supposed to be done at home. This is done to monitor how learners respond to questions on their own”.

The further analysis of data revealed that 24.5% of the respondents sometimes give homework after each lesson. A very small percentage (0.7%) of the respondents never gives homework after each lesson, whereas 4.4% of them seldom give home work. The respondents' comments above suggest that there is a general view that homework is vital

to the QP learners as it keeps them busy after school. The belief is that education is a societal issue; therefore, parents should assist learners as they do their assignments at home. The understanding is that the learners' performance improves if they are given extra work to do at home. Corallo and McDonald (2002) maintained that homework is the best strategy for the QP learners to internalise the content as presented in class.

4.7.5 School Assessment Plan

Table 4.35 shows how the School Assessment Plan is implemented at school.

Table 4.35 School Assessment Plan.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Seldom	2	1.5
Sometimes	13	9.6
Often	37	27.4
Always	83	61.5
Total	135	100

The School Assessment Plan (SAP) is a balanced assessment programme designed to provide the information necessary to make important instructional and programmatic decisions (DBE, 2011). In Table 4.35, 61.5% of the respondents assess their learners according to the SAP. Almost 27.4% of the respondents indicated that they often use the SAP. This suggests that 88.9% of the schools use the SAP. Principal B stressed that,

“To avoid clashes on the writing of weekly or monthly tests in different subjects, we drew an assessment plan for the whole year which specifies dates and time for each assessment”.

Principal C acknowledged that,

“At the beginning of the year, the Department of Education in the district, through its curriculum section, distributes assessment plans to all schools. These

assessment plans come in the form of assignments or projects in certain subjects, and they are mainly for School Based Assessment (SBA) marks”.

The DBE (2011) believes that a well-conceived assessment plan contributes towards effective learning in the sense that learners know before hand when and how assessment would be conducted, and are therefore able to plan ahead, thereby accepting some responsibilities for their learning.

About 9.6% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes use the SAP to assess learners, whereas 1.5% of them indicated that they seldom use it to assess learners. This was confirmed by Principal F who said,

“We developed our own SAP which we hardly follow, though. We depend on the assessment plan from the curriculum section. We rarely follow our assessment plan”.

Given the concerns raised by some of the respondents here, only a few teachers receive assessment plans from the department. However, while they appreciate the Curriculum Section’s efforts in this matter, they are not comfortable about the implementation of the plan, and this has caused clashes with their own internal SAP. The SAP from the district does not have assessment plan for the QP learners. It is clear that in some schools, teachers and the SMTs are keen to draw their own assessment plans that would have separate assessment strategies for the QP learners. This means that all schools assess learners according to a particular plan, either the one drawn by the school or that from the district. This fits in well with Van der Berg, Burger, de Vos, du Rand, Gustafson, Moses, Shepherd, Spaul, Tylor, van Broekhuizen and von Fintel’s (2011) argument that for the school to improve its learners’ performance, comprehensive policies that include the policy on assessment and computation of final examination marks must be attended to by the school principal.

4.7.6 Moderation of Tests by HODs

Table 4.36 shows how tests are moderated before they are given to learners. The majority of the HODs in different schools seem to moderate tests before they are given to the learners to write. This is revealed in Table 4.36 where 60.0% of the respondents indicated that their HODs always moderate their tests before they are given to the learners. With 17.8% of the respondents indicating that their HODs often moderate their tests, this suggests that almost 77.8% of the teachers' tests are moderated before they are given to the learners to write. This agrees with Elley's (2010) assertion that moderation ensures that learners are assessed accurately.

Table 4.36 Moderation of Tests by HODs.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	3	2.2
Seldom	3	2.2
Sometimes	24	17.8
Often	24	17.8
Always	81	60.0
Total	135	100

All the principals interviewed confirmed that the HODs moderate tests to ensure that they are up to standard. Principal C pointed out that,

“When teachers set weekly or monthly tests at school level, they are moderated before they are given to learners to write. This is done to check if they are up to the required standard”.

Principal G added that,

“HODs moderate question papers to verify if questions set are inclusive of learners with different cognitive levels. We try to accommodate both the promoted and QP learners. We even check if questions are according to Bloom’s Taxonomy”.

It is clear from these remarks that teachers set tests for learners with different cognitive levels in a mixed class. Moderation is done to check if the standard of a paper is suitable for both the QP and promoted learners. Looking at the high failure rate among the QP learners, it is evident that some of the assessment tools are given to the learners without moderation. The management of assessment is complex, especially in classes where learners with different cognitive levels are assessed together. It is the responsibility of the department, therefore, to train teachers on how standardised tests for all learner categories should be set. Elley (2010) agreed, maintaining that all tasks to be assessed should be moderated to ensure consistency with assessment standards to suit learners of different cognitive levels. Elley (2010) believes that moderators should ensure that all those who assess a particular unit standard or qualification use comparable assessment methods that are similar and consistent.

4.7.7 Feedback Provision

Table 4.37 is for feedback and how it is provided after assessment.

Table 4.37 Feedback Provision

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Seldom	1	0.7
Sometimes	18	13.4
Often	35	25.9
Always	81	60.0
Total	135	100

The level at which the SMT gives feedback to both learners and teachers gives them the opportunity to identify their weaknesses and areas where they need improvement (Earley,

Northcraft, Lee & Lituchy, 1990). Earley et al. (1990) believe that the outcome of a feedback could help identify the need to adjust the learners' performances. Table 4.37 shows that 60% of the respondents always give feedback after all assessments given to learners. Approximately 25.9% of the respondents indicated that they often give feedback after all assessments have been given to the learners. However, 13.4% of the respondents said that they sometimes give feedback after assessment. A very small percentage (0.7%) of the respondents revealed that they seldom give feedback. Principal G commented over this issue thus,

"After marking exercises, tests or examinations, we do revise with learners. Sometimes learners revise in groups on their own. We use this strategy to encourage them to work independently without any assistance from teachers because children learn better when they discover some of the issues on their own".

Principal E admitted that,

"After writing a test, a teacher photocopies the feedback memorandum and gives it to the QP learners. This has each and every question, showing them how they should have responded to them. Then, learners do revision by re-writing in their exercise books".

Principal J conceded that,

"Feedback is done in the midst of remedial work. In sections where the learners did not get the right answers, teachers give them the correct ones in the form of remedial work or corrections".

The interviewees indicated that they give feedback to all learners after every assessment. It should also be noted that teachers use different approaches when giving feedback. Also, the QP learners are encouraged to identify sections that seemed difficult after assessment so that teachers could draw a special timetable for extra lessons. Hattie and Gan (2011) asserted that positive feedback is the best strategy that could be used to improve the learner's marks.

4.7.8 Utilisation of Past Examination Papers

Table 4.38 shows how frequent previous examination papers are used.

Table 4.38 Utilisation of Past Examination Papers.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	1	0.7
Seldom	1	0.7
Sometimes	11	8.3
Often	30	22.2
Always	92	68.1
Total	135	100

The past question papers serve as key resources for revision purposes. They serve as one of many teaching and learning resources (DBE, 2016). DBE (2016) believes that the use of such question papers is pertinent to the gaining of broader insight into how questions are set, in preparation for the final examinations.

The results in Table 4.38 show that 68.1% of the respondents always use the past question papers to prepare for the final examinations. In addition to the 22.2% of those who indicated that they often use previous question papers, almost 90.3% of the teachers use past question papers to prepare for the final examinations.

There are some teachers who do not use previous question papers as was confirmed by 0.7% of the respondents. Another 0.7% indicated that they seldom use past question papers to prepare learners for their final examinations, while 8.3% said that they sometimes use such question papers.

4.7.9 Academic Performance Improvement Plan

Table 4.39 presents the learner performance analysis that assist in developing a plan for their academic improvement.

Table 4.39 Academic Performance Improvement Plan.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	2	1.5
Seldom	4	3.0
Sometimes	21	15.5
Often	44	32.6
Always	64	47.4
Total	135	100

The Academic Performance Improvement Plan (APIP) is developed to assist learners improve their academic performance. The analysis of learner performance is very important in identifying the real gaps in teaching and learning to ensure that teachers cover curricula and the full range of cognitive levels in their teaching and assessment strategies (DBE, 2016).

Results in Table 4.39 show that 47.4% of the respondents always analyse learner performance every term, and assist in the development of the APIP. This is in line with Leepo's (2015) narration that the APIP indicates the school's performance targets in different subjects, the overall benchmark the school is to achieve, specific challenges in different subjects, intervention strategies to improve learner performance and the timeframe in which all the challenges should be resolved.

The interviewees generally agreed that the APIP is useful in helping schools improve learner performance. All the ten principals indicated that APIP assists teachers to organise their work properly and plan well for the QP learners who lag behind. Principal D pointed out that,

“All teachers contribute in the development of APIP because each of them is expected to set targets regarding the overall learner performance he/she wants to achieve in his/her subject”.

However, with 32.6% of the respondents indicating that they often analyse learner performance every term, it should be noted that almost 80% of the teachers analyse results every term and this contributes to the APIP’s development. Teachers who do not analyse results every term are not many as indicated by the 1.5% figure. This is consistent with what principal B said,

“We no longer develop APIP because the department wants us to develop these documents for compliance. We develop APIP for our subjects’ improvement in each term. It is just unfortunate that the department does not even give us feedback on what to correct or improve in the plan or whether the plan meets their expectations or not”.

In short, the SMTs and teachers realise that they should no longer develop APIP as a document for compliance in the department, but as a document to track learner performance against set targets in different subjects. Some respondents confirmed that they are aware that the department does not bother to quality assure APIP. They have noted that APIPs are meant to strategise around concepts and topics that are somehow challenging to the QP learners. Leepo (2015) contends that APIPs are developed to identify learners who experience serious challenges, and such learners could be assisted through the development of intervention strategies.

The majority of the respondents view the plan as a record of the activities that need to be done by the teachers in order to improve results, especially if feedback is regularly given on the issues raised. We can conclude that the plan is useful even though certain respondents claimed that they develop it for compliance’s sake.

4.7.10 Peer Moderation

Table 4.40 shows peer moderation of tasks before they are given to learners.

Table 4.40 Peer Moderation

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	16	11.9
Seldom	10	7.4
Sometimes	35	25.9
Often	32	23.7
Always	42	31.1
Total	135	100

Moderation is very important in ensuring that assessment is fair, transparent, valid and reliable. Black and William (1998) believe that peer interaction leads to enhanced understanding and improved learning. Table 4.40 reveals that 31.1% of the respondents always peer moderate all assessment tasks before they are given to the learners. Almost 54.8% of them do peer moderation if we also take into account the 23.7% of the respondents who indicated that they often do peer moderate all assessment tasks before they are given to learners.

Nevertheless, 25.9% of the respondents indicated that they sometimes peer moderate all assessments before they are written. About 11.9% said that they never peer moderate assessments, while 7.4% indicated that they seldom have peer moderation.

4.7.11 Control of Exercises for Feedback

Table 4.41 shows how exercise books are marked for feedback purposes.

Formative feedback is diagnostic information given before the work is completed in order to help learners revise and improve their performance (DBE, 2016). Feedback on the performance is so important that Black and William (1998) maintained that feedback to learners on their assignments is the single most powerful influence on their performance.

Table 4.41 Control of Exercises for Feedback.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Seldom	7	5.2
Sometimes	19	14.1
Often	30	22.2
Always	79	58.5
Total	135	100

In Table 4.41 results shows that 58.5% of the respondents always mark the learners' exercise books and give feedback timeously. In so doing, these teachers are able to identify knowledge gaps that need special attention. About 22.2% of the respondents often mark the learners' exercises books and give feedback. This figure, when combined with 58.5% means that 80.7% of the teachers mark the learners' exercise books and give them feedback timeously. About 5.2% seldom mark the learners' exercise books, while 14.1% sometimes do so and give feedback timeously.

4.7.12 Pass Requirements and the Assessment Policy

Table 4.42 shows how pass requirements are explained to learners based on the assessment policy. These results show that 56.3% of the respondents always explain pass requirements to the learners as per the assessment policy. About 29.6% often explain these to the learners. This means that 74.9% of the teachers explain pass requirements as per the assessment policy. Nonetheless, 11.9% sometimes explain, while 0.7% seldom does so. Only 1.5% never explains these to their learners.

If learners know about the pass requirements, there is a chance that they might study hard in order to meet the said pass requirements.

Table 4.42 Pass Requirements and the Assessment Policy.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	2	1.5
Seldom	1	0.7
Sometimes	16	11.9
Often	40	29.6
Always	76	56.3
Total	135	100

With respect to the principal and teachers at school, the principal should explain all pass requirements as stipulated in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements and the policy documents, the National Protocol for Assessment, Grades R - 12, and the National Policy on the conduct, administration and management of the National Senior Certificate: A qualification at Level 4 on the National Qualification Framework (DBE, 2006). The pass requirements are presented to the learners so that they know beforehand when and how assessment would be conducted in order to plan accordingly.

4.7.13 Examination timetable

Table 4.43 indicates how schools handle the examination timetable.

Table 4.43 Examination timetable.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Sometimes	4	3.0
Often	22	16.3
Always	109	80.7
Total	135	100

The Limpopo Provincial Department of Education's policy on examination directs all the schools in the province to write examinations every term, and then report the learners' performance to parents at the end of each term. Thus, the Provincial Department of Education issues out time-tables for all grades in order to monitor examinations. Table 4.43 indicates that 80.7% of the respondents receive examination time-tables for all the grades every term. About 16.3% often receive them. This is an indication that 97% of the schools receive the examination time-tables for all grades, and 3% do not have them.

Results in Table 4.44 show that the assessment is managed through examination time-tables for all grades ($M = 4.78$, $MD = 5.00$, $SD = 0.48$), the use of past question papers to prepare learners for the final examination ($M = 4.56$, $MD = 5.00$, $SD = .74$) and the assessment of learners according to the SAP ($M = 4.49$, $MD = 5.00$, $SD = .73$).

Also, the table discloses that homework timetables ($M = 3.05$, $MD = 3.00$, $SD = 1.57$) and peer moderation of assessment tasks ($M = 3.55$, $MD = 4.00$, $SD = 1.32$) are least used to manage the assessment of the QP learners.

Table 4.44: Assessment Management.

Management of assessment items		Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
D1	I assess learners when I present each and every lesson	4.27	4.00	0.81
D2	My school has homework time tables for different grades	3.05	3.00	1.57
D3	I give homework after each lesson in my subject	4.01	4.00	0.93
D4	I assess my learners according to the School Assessment Plan	4.49	5.00	0.73
D5	My HOD moderates my tests before they are given to the learners to write	4.31	5.00	0.99
D6	I give feedback to learners after all assessment given to learners	4.45	5.00	0.75
D7	I use previous question papers to prepare learners for the final examination	4.56	5.00	0.74
D8	I analyse learner performance every Term and assist in the development of Academic Performance Improvement Plan	4.21	4.00	0.92
D9	There is peer moderation of all assessment tasks before given to the learners	3.55	4.00	1.32
D10	I control learners exercises books and give feedback timeously	4.34	5.00	0.91
D11	I explain pass requirements to learners as per assessment policy	4.39	5.00	0.84
D12	My school has examination time-table for all the grades	4.78	5.00	0.48

4.8 ASSESSMENT SUPPORT

This section deals with the assessment support of both progressed and promoted learners. Teachers indicated the extent to which they support assessment.

4.8.1 Grouping of Learners

Table 4.45 indicates how teachers group learners in class.

Table 4.45 Grouping of Learners.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	14	10.4
Seldom	11	8.1
Sometimes	34	25.2
Often	35	25.9
Always	41	30.4
Total	135	100

Learners are actively engaged in the learning process when they listen to one another in an authentic discussion (Dupriez, 2010). Thus, Table 4.45 suggests that teachers in certain schools group learners according to their different cognitive levels as reflected by 30.4% of the respondents who always group them in this way. About 25.9% often group learners according to their different cognitive levels. This means that 56% of the teachers group learners according to their different cognitive levels. About 10.4% never group learners according to their cognitive levels. All ten principals indicated that they group learners at their schools. Their responses differed in terms of how these groupings are done. That is, some group learners based on the same cognitive level, while others mix them. Principal J stressed the following in his response,

“Sometimes we group them after school during extra studies. We group the QP learners in one group. The promoted ones assist in dealing with the content or topics which the QP learners find difficult”.

Principal G professed her support of the system, adding that,

“We believe in grouping for the effective teaching and learning. We do not group learners of the same cognitive level alone. We mix them (promoted and progressed) so that they assist each other. It works for us”.

Dupriez (2010) argued that learners learn well when different skills and cognitive levels are mixed. If progressed learners who are viewed as weak are mixed with those seen as intelligent, the former might improve their performance (Dupriez, 2010). Principal I showed his excitement with grouping thus,

“I tell you, it is so exciting to see learners working in groups. I was very impressed to see a promoted learner performing well in Physical Science, teaching QP learners and others who are not performing well. The participation of learners was so good”.

Grouping both the QP and promoted learners for the proper management of teaching and assessment is valued and supported by most teachers as one of the best strategies to engage them in a mixed class. This suggests that even though teachers may differ on how groups should be constituted, the most important issue is the improved learner performance outcomes. Dupriez (2010) added that learners’ participation in a mixed group work is a key ingredient in their learning.

4.8.2 Individual Support to QP Learners

Table 4.46 shows how the QP learners are given individual support after assessment.

The results in Table 4.46 indicate that 29.6% of the respondents always provide individual support to the QP learners after assessment, while 23.8% sometimes do so, and 4.4% never provide such support to them.

Table 4.46 Individual Support to QP Learners.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	6	4.4
Seldom	15	11.1
Sometimes	32	23.8
Often	42	31.1
Always	40	29.6
Total	135	100

This means that there is no individual support given to the QP learners in most schools here. Thus, the QP learners continue to underperform because they are not sufficiently supported. This was confirmed by certain principals who indicated that they firmly believe that the QP learners could be assisted better if they are given individual support. However, the majority of them, especially those who manage small schools, complained about the teachers' workload. To them, teachers are overloaded with teaching many periods a day, and that makes it difficult for them to give the QP learners individual attention.

Irrespective of the fact that teachers are overloaded with teaching, and consequently, teachers cannot give the QP learners individual support in class, one should acknowledge that at least there is a lot which they do to make these learners improve their performance. Principal D reiterated that,

“Individual support is impossible because we are in a small school, and we teach many periods a day. What we do is, we select tasks that the QP learners did not quite understand in the previous grade and make them write at their own

convenient time. After marking those tasks, we are in a position to monitor their performance”.

Principal G stated that,

“This progression policy is not fair. We are loaded with a lot and are expected to attend to individual learners. What we try to do here is to teach and assess them with other learners. Thereafter, we sit down to show them where they went wrong”.

These remarks show the teachers’ willingness to assist the QP learners individually. However, it is upon the DBE to review its policy on the allocation of posts to schools in order to make provisions for extra teachers to be hired. This would ensure that all learners, irrespective of their promotion status, receive individual assistance after assessment. Sternberg (1990) stated that learners become more motivated and perform better when they are supported individually after assessment. To improve the learners’ performance, it is important for teachers to be aware of each individual QP learner’s challenges in order to provide him/her with relevant support.

4.8.3 Learners’ Peer Support

Table 4.47 shows how promoted learners assist progressed ones through remedial work. Table 4.47’s results show that 33.3% of the respondents indicated that promoted learners always assist progressed ones with remedial work, whereas 23.8% do so sometimes, and 5.9% never assist. This means that in some schools, learners help each other with remedial work. This was confirmed by the principals who indicated that after assessment, they mix promoted learners with the QP ones so that they do remedial work on their own.

Table 4.47 Learners' Peer Support.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	8	5.9
Seldom	8	5.9
Sometimes	32	23.8
Often	42	31.1
Always	45	33.3
Total	135	100

The principals believe that learners learn a great deal when they explain ideas to each other and participating in activities in which they learn from their peers. Principal D stated that,

“After marking the test, I mix learners in one group. Promoted ones are given leadership roles in each group to facilitate discussions when doing remedial work. What I observe as they discuss is that when they are on their own, they participate a lot”.

Principal I provided the following views,

“There are promoted learners who are very bright. We give them the memorandum so that they help the QP learners who are weak. It is not only in remedial work, the promoted learners also do other themes so that teachers find them ahead of the syllabus”.

The above reveal that the grouping of learners is a strategy that is employed by teachers in the majority of schools. The emphasis here is that the QP learners tend to participate in the learning activities when they are mixed in different groups with bright learners. This suggest that if this strategy is properly managed, the QP learners are likely to improve their performance. Boud (2001) argued that learning is mutually beneficial when learners of different learning abilities share knowledge, ideas and experience. Teachers should be encouraged to group promoted learners with the QP ones to ensure that they engage with their peers in dealing

with remedial work. The study also revealed that QP learners actively participate if they are assisted by their peers, and this helps improve their academic performance.

4.8.4 Remedial Work after Assessment

Table 4.48 indicates how teachers do remedial work to assist the QP learners.

Table 4.48 Remedial Work after Assessment.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	5	3.7
Seldom	13	9.6
Sometimes	25	18.5
Often	41	30.4
Always	51	37.8
Total	135	100

Results in Table 4.48 show that 37.8% of the respondents always do remedial work with their learners. There are QP learners who are not assisted with remedial work after assessment. This was confirmed by 18.5% of the respondents who indicated that they sometimes assist QP learners with remedial work after assessment. With less than half of the respondents not doing remedial work with the QP learners, this suggests that the majority of learners are just given tasks in the form of assessment without knowing whether they are responding well to the questions asked or not. The results confirm that teachers are not doing enough to assist the QP learners in responding to questions in the assessment. This implies that unless teachers engage with the QP learners in remedial work, they will continue to underperform in different forms of assessment.

Rajkumar and Hema (2017) regard remedial teaching as an alternative approach in which a teacher engages with weak learners (progressed learners) in activities, techniques and practices to eliminate their weaknesses or deficiencies they are known to have. The principals revealed that little is being done in helping the QP learners do remedial work after assessment. Principal E remarked that,

“After writing each test, a teacher gives the QP learners a copy of the memorandum for that particular test and checks correct answers with them. Sometimes they are just given a memorandum to use as a reference when writing corrections in their answer books”.

Given the manner in which teachers do remedial work with the QP as alluded to by principal E, the QP learners in the majority of the schools are not encouraged to work independently. They are just given answers for writing corrections. As such, they may not be able to prepare for their examinations effectively. Principal J confirmed thus,

“After marking the test, feedback is done during remedial work. Where the learner did not get the right answer, the teacher just takes the memorandum and learners write the correct answers in their books. After some of the assessment, teachers just give oral feedback without giving learners a memorandum”.

It can be argued that assessment without constructive feedback can be a futile exercise. On the issue of giving learners verbal feedback or memorandum to write corrections, Gamlem and Smith (2013) noted that some of the feedback that teachers give learners verbally or to write as corrections after assessment are so negative that they can affect their performance. Thus, the SMTs should encourage teachers to use feedback as a strategy that can contribute to the improvement of the QP learners' performance.

4.8.5 Examinations

Table 4.49 shows teachers who assist QP learners with examination questions.

Table 4.49 Examinations.

Scale	Frequency	Percent
Never	1	0.7
Seldom	7	5.2
Sometimes	22	16.3
Often	44	32.6
Always	61	45.2
Total	135	100

The results in Table 4.49 show that 45.2% of the respondents always assist the QP learners on how to answer examination questions, whereas 16.3% sometimes do so, and 0.7% do not assist them at all. This shows that more than half of the respondents are not able to assist their QP learners on how they should answer examination questions. This may result with them performing poorly in their final examinations. The principals emphasised that at the beginning of the year, they encourage teachers to use examination guidelines when they assess learners. However, some teachers do not adhere to these examinations guidelines. In support of their complaints, principal I said,

“I do influence teachers to show learners the examination structure in their different subjects. I provide them with examination guidelines so that learners know how marks are allocated in different sections. I also give them previous examination question papers. It is worrying because some teachers delay showing learners examination guidelines until September when they are about to sit for their final examinations”.

The concern raised by principal I is an indication that it is not that teachers are not provided with the resources to assist the QP learners. His remarks suggest that even though the DBE assist teachers with strategies to manage the teaching and assessment of the QP learners, it is also upon the teachers themselves to take full responsibility in this regard.

Clearly, all the schools have examination guidelines and past examination papers they could use as references when assessing learners throughout the year. For instance, in agreement with Black and William (1998), the examination guidelines should be made available to the learners from the outset so that they would know how examination questions are structured. But, when examination guidelines are not made available to all learners, they tend to perform poorly in their final examinations.

Table 4.50: Assessment Support

Support of assessment items		Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
E1	I have grouped learners together according to their different cognitive levels	3.58	4.00	1.28
E2	I provide individual support to QP learners after assessment	3.71	4.00	1.14
E3	Promoted learners assist progressed learners in dealing with remedial work	3.80	4.00	1.14
E4	I do remedial work with QP learners who perform poorly in an assessment	3.89	4.00	1.13
E5	I assist QP learners on how to respond to questions in the examination	4.16	4.00	0.93

Table 4.50 indicates that the QP learners are provided with minimal assessment support. Teachers often assist them on how to respond to questions in the examination ($M = 4.16$, $MD = 4.00$, $SD = 0.93$). It should be noted that teachers sometimes provide individual support to the QP learners after assessment ($M = 3.71$, $MD = 4.00$, $SD = 1.28$). Data in this table suggest that teachers do not give special attention to the QP learners when it comes to assessment matters.

4.9 PRINCIPALS' VIEWS CONCERNING THE FIFTH OBJECTIVE

Objective 5: To find out how the QP policy is implemented.

4.9.1 Policy Implementation in Secondary Schools?

The majority of the teachers and principals indicated that they implement the progression policy. It is evident from the principals' responses that they understand the progression policy. They were all able to reflect on the criteria used to implement the policy if a learner is progressed from either Grade 10 to 11, or from Grade 11 to 12 as set out by the DBE (DBE, 2016). The criteria is as given below.

- The learner must have failed to satisfy the promotion requirements of either Grade 10 or Grade 11, and repeated either Grade 10 or Grade 11. This is a learner who might have failed Grade 10 or Grade 11 in the first year and repeated that grade and failed it for the second time.
- The learner must pass four of the seven subjects and one of the four subjects must be the Language of Learning and Teaching, which is the key determinant of the success from one grade to the other. The Language of Learning and Teaching could either be English or Afrikaans. In case where a learner's Language of Learning and Teaching is the Home Language, the learner must obtain 30% to ensure the equivalence with the pass requirements for the First Additional Languages. This implies that the learner could pass the three other subjects and Life Orientation.
- Regular School Attendance: A learner must have attended school on a regular basis to ensure that she/he has had an exposure to the school curricula. The learner would have been able to comply with the School Based Assessment which is also a confirmation of commitment for all the subjects, including the subjects that the learner might have failed. The learner should not have been absent for 20 days and more without valid reasons.

- The general behaviour and attitude of each learner towards school work is evaluated with supporting documents collected by teachers throughout the school year. This is done to enable the principal to find out if there might have been any psychological problem that might have contributed to the learner's low levels of motivation and subsequent poor performance in either Grade 10 or 11. This enables the SMT to advice the parent comprehensively on the retention or progression of the learner concerned (DBE, 2016).

The literature reviewed confirm that through the progression policy, learners are often passed from grade to grade regardless of whether they have mastered the required subject content and are academically prepared to do the work at the next level. Social promotion is generally viewed and understood to be the practice of allowing learners who have failed to meet the performance standards and academic requirements to pass to the next grade with their peers instead of completing or satisfying the pass requirements (Westbury, 1994). This social promotion practice pushes learners to be progressed with others of their same age group. It has consequences as these progressed learners fall behind and leave school ill equipped for university or other institutions of higher learning, and thus lacking in employment skills.

The majority of the respondents support this policy. In this case, the principals revealed that some teachers support the progression policy. The feeling was that they want the DBE to continue with its implementation. However, there were some mixed reactions when the principals responded to the question of how the policy is being implemented, especially their views on whether the policy should be continued. Principal G said of the issue,

“According to me, this policy should continue to be implemented because it assists some learners to exit the schooling system with Grade 12. It should continue as it allows learners to reach Grade 12 and get certificated”.

Her sentiments were echoed by principal J who indicated that,

“We implement the policy according to the guidelines. The progression policy should be continued because some of the QP learners do well when they are in the next grade. Last year, for example, we had 11 progressed from Grade 11, and four of them got a Bachelor’s pass in the Grade 12 final examinations. Therefore, this policy must be continued because it assists such learners to achieve more”.

Given the above comments, some of the teachers and their SMT believe that the policy may yield positive results if properly managed, especially if the DBE assists schools in developing strategies that will assist the QP learners improve their performance. Thus, they are able to refer some of the progressed learners who after being given the necessary support, were able to achieve more than what was expected.

At present, the progression policy is being implemented without taking into account the standard for the increased learner achievement. There are concerns around this learner progression policy as pointed out by this principal. Principals A commented that,

“The policy itself, I think it has to be revised in one way or the other because when a learner has been progressed to the next grade, he/she no longer works hard to cover for the knowledge gap so created”.

This view was echoed by Principal I, who even though he supports the continuation of the policy, complained about the behaviour of some of the QP learners. He quipped that,

“We progress these learners to the next grade without enough subject content background. The problem is that when they are in the new grade, they continue to be lazy instead of working hard to close the knowledge gap from the previous grade”.

Looking at the concerns raised by principal A, one would say that he is not completely condemning the progression policy *per se*, but is concerned with the way it is managed. This concern was also raised by Johnson and Rudolph (2001) who argued that learners who are promoted without meeting the required standards send a message to others that they do not warrant time and effort to help them succeed at school.

Teachers and the SMTs agreed that the DBE should continue implementing this policy provided schools are assisted in the development of strategies that assist in the management of teaching and assessment for quality teaching and learning. In order to make the progression policy more productive, meaningful and beneficial to the learners, communities and the South Africans in general, schools must be encouraged to adequately prepare each learner to meet the required standards before being moved to the next grade. In the early grades, learners should be assisted to acquire a solid foundation that enables them to be competent in subjects under the FET phase. This should be done to ensure that more learners are prepared to meet the challenges of the FET's academic standards.

4.10 SUMMARY

In this Chapter, I first presented the quantitative data in this research's first phase. The second phase dealt with the contextual analysis of the qualitative data. From the data analysed in this Chapter, it is clear that the management of the teaching and assessment of "the qualified to be progressed" learners for quality teaching and learning is very complex. Planning lessons to cater for learners with different cognitive levels is challenging because the QP learners have content knowledge gaps. This Chapter revealed that workshops are needed to capacitate teachers on the management of teaching and assessment in a mixed class. During interviews, the respondents indicated that learners should be profiled for the early identification of those at risk so that appropriate intervention strategies are put in place to assist them. The next Chapter concludes this study. Its findings and recommendations are outlined as well.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Five concludes this study. Here, the researcher outlines this study's findings, after which a concluding section ties up the whole study. Recommendations come last as they provide the way forward now that this study is done. This study investigated the management of the teaching and assessment complexities of the qualified to be progressed learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools. It is necessary to recapitulate briefly on the statement of the problem, research questions and on this study's overview in order to enhance the understanding of its fundamental objectives.

The units of analysis here were teachers employed by the DBE, who have been teaching in the FET phase for the past five years. The study excluded teachers teaching in primary schools and those teaching in General Education and Training phase (GET). Data collection consisted of two phases because of the methodology used here. First, a survey questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data, followed by the qualitative aspect (semi-structured interviews) of the adopted methodology.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Chapter One introduced this research study whereby the background, the statement of the problem and the aim of the study were clearly outlined to indicate what the study aimed to achieve regarding the management of teaching and assessment of "the qualified to be progressed" learners for quality learning and teaching in South Africa. The aim was followed by the study objectives and the research questions. The mixed methodology and other concepts such as target population, sample, data collection and data analysis were

explicitly described so that the reader is made to understand how these are applied in this study.

Chapter 2 focused on the literature review on the management of teaching and assessment complexities of “the qualified to be progressed” learners for quality teaching and learning in South Africa. The main thrust of the literature was to examine how management of teaching and assessment of QP learners is being done globally as compared to the current situation in South Africa

Chapter 3 expanded on the research design and methodology as summarised in paragraph 1 herein before

Chapter 4 presented the quantitative results from the survey questionnaire and qualitative semi-structured interviews with principals of secondary schools in Vhumbedzi Circuit

Chapter 5 focused on the discussion, the research findings, recommendations and concludes this study

5.3 THE STUDY’S MAIN FINDINGS

Through literature review, this study revealed that managing the teaching and assessment of the QP learners is very complex because these learners are taught the same content with the promoted ones who are academically superior to them. Van der Berg, Tylor, Gustafson, Spaul and Armstrong (2011) claim that with the introduction of learner progression policy, the QP learners reach Grade 12 insufficiently prepared for their final examinations. The QP learners are moved from Grade 10 to 11 and then progressed from 11 to 12 irrespective of their academic potential. The majority of the respondents confirmed that it is difficult to teach the QP learners the same content at the same pace with the fast learners. The investigation of the management of teaching and assessment of QP for quality learning and teaching was to find out how “the qualified to be progressed” learners should be assisted in acquiring the necessary content knowledge they lack in the new grade.

Evidence revealed that the teaching and assessment of learners with different cognitive levels (progressed and promoted) is very complex. A plan of approach and methods, with adequate resources are needed so that teachers would effectively teach and assess these learners. Reddy (2016) argues that in planning for the lesson presentation, teachers should be able to carefully select the relevant content materials that learners with different learning abilities need to learn within the curriculum. The respondents agreed that as teachers, they should be able to provide content and activities that motivate and interest of all learners in their classes. Their fear is that the content or lesson activities might be too easy for the promoted learners, yet too difficult for the progressed ones.

Simanova (2010) declared that more advanced learners tend to participate more actively than weaker ones. In this study, the promoted learners were found to participate more actively than the progressed ones because of the content knowledge gap. Reddy (2016) argued that teachers should ask themselves how they can present content in a way that is accessible to learners with different cognitive levels. Thus, teachers need to plan differently and use a variety of content delivery methods in order to effectively present the content to the class as a whole. This would cater for both the promoted and progressed learners. The content delivery methods should speak to each level of learning that is obtained in each class.

The respondents also indicated that teachers need to develop timetables for extra classes to cater for the QP learners. The majority of them believe that with the provision of special teaching timetables after school hours, teachers are able to give the QP learners individual support in their small study groups. Thus, when given special teaching time, the QP learners should be able to cope with the content in the new grade despite having been progressed with content knowledge gap. As a result, the class as a whole would maintain a sense of unity as no particular learner is singled out for good or bad achievement or left out to catch up on their own. This study revealed that there is a need for teachers, SMTs and principals to be trained on curricula differentiation, SIAS policy and different forms of assessment. This would help in tracking the QP learners' performance before they reach Grade 12. Curricula differentiation is a very important key strategy for responding to the needs of learners with different cognitive levels. This

strategy involves modifying, changing, adapting, extending and varying teaching methodologies, teaching and assessment strategies, and curriculum content.

5.6.1 How is teaching and assessment in a class of learners with different cognitive levels (progressed and promoted) managed?

This study answered the following main research question.

- How are the teaching and assessment complexities associated with the QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools managed?

In order to fully answer the above main question, this studied answered the subsidiary questions below.

- How is teaching and assessment in a mixed class of learners (progressed and promoted) managed in secondary schools?
- What are the strategies used to support QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools?
- How effective are the strategies used to support the QP learners?
- What are the challenges faced by the SMT in managing the QP learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools?
- How is the QP policy implemented in the Vhumbedzi Circuit secondary schools?

The management of teaching and assessment in a mixed class of learners with different cognitive levels remains very complex for the quality teaching and learning of learners in the Vhumbedzi Circuit. Dorgue (2015) claims that it is very difficult to find activities that involve learners of different cognitive levels without some getting bored and being confused or insecure. Bingham et al (1995) asserted that once one has a class of learners with different cognitive levels, they should accordingly plan curriculum and course of activities which are to cater for their diverse needs and interests. The effective

management of teaching and assessment is likely to occur if learners and teachers are provided with sufficient resources and support.

5.6.1.1 The use of library for assignments and project activities

The respondents indicated that they do not have libraries in their schools to enrich teaching and learning programmes. Even though 14.6% indicated that they give learners assignments and projects in which they use libraries, the majority of them referred to classrooms which are used to assist learners with additional books. The principals interviewed raised their frustrations regarding the lack of such important facilities. Without any library, learners remain dependent on what is taught in class, without individually searching for additional information from other relevant sources.

5.6.1.2. The use of laboratory for science experiments

The school science laboratory is a unique resource that enhances the learners' interests, knowledge of science concepts and procedures, and knowledge of important tools and skills that can develop new understanding (Lunetta & Hofstein, 2005). The majority of the respondents indicated that they do not have laboratories to supplement what is in the textbooks through experiments. Only one school principal out of ten indicated that they have a science laboratory at their school. The respondents also indicated that there is a need for science laboratories to be established at their schools to assist the QP learners cope with content in science subjects. Laboratory practical sessions bring to life what was explained in theory. The study found out that learners who are interested in taking science subjects are forced to drop them due to such shortages. Learners are, therefore, denied the opportunity to study science. Learners may not improve their performance in science if they only rely on theory instead of merging it with practice.

5.6.1.3 The use of computer laboratory for projects

The majority of the respondents indicated that they do not give learners projects in which they should use internet to access information. The principals confirmed that learners do not have access to internet for additional information to enrich their projects as given in class. According to them, the Department of Education does not care about allocating resources to schools to assist teachers to support teaching and learning. The principals also showed their collective worries that even emailed projects on curriculum from the Department of Education are retrieved using their own laptops.

5.6.1.4 Control of period and class attendance registers

The learner attendance at school helps teachers improve learner performance. In monitoring the learner attendance, almost 71.8% of the respondents indicated that they mark both the period and class attendance registers before they teach. This is consistence with Roby (2004) who asserted that one of the most important aspects which a child should do to achieve academic success is to go to school every day. Even though the analysis shows that 2.2% do not mark the attendance register before they teach, the majority of the respondents said that they follow the DBE's directive on the learner attendance policy which stipulates that all learners must attend school every day.

The principals also confirmed that they mark both class and period attendance registers before they start with their lessons. They also agreed that it must be a common practice for teachers in all public schools to mark both class and period attendance registers when they go to different classes. The marking of class and period attendance registers as shown by these remarks and comments are an indication that the majority of schools are committed to the use of both class and period attendance registers. The respondents believe that the proper control of attendance registers would assist them in the implementation of the progression policy.

5.6.1.5 The use of school timetables to support teaching

The school master timetable is an essential part of the school's administrative mechanism. It shows the daily allotment of time among several subjects and activities in different classes (Ellen, 1986). The majority of the respondents (83.7%) confirmed that they follow the school master timetable when they teach. According to the principals, the school master timetable helps the SMT adjust school work according to the learners' needs. They believe that when developing such a timetable, they have the opportunity to allocate more time to the most challenging subjects such as Mathematics, Life Sciences and Geography to cater for the QP learners who are viewed as slow learners. The school master time table ensures that there is no confusion at school because it indicates exactly what is to be done at what time. The school master timetable directs the attention of both learners and their teachers to one issue at a time.

5.6.1.6 Study and homework timetables

Although not all schools indicated their commitment to the development of study timetables, it was established that 54% of the respondents always develop them and 11.9% never developed them at all. With less than 50% of the respondents indicating that they never, sometimes, often or seldom develop study timetables, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents use study timetables as a plan or guide to assist learners work hard on their own.

Homework is a vital part of a child's education because it provides opportunities for learners to do their work with the assistance of their parents (Ellen, 1986). It also enables learners to develop self-discipline and personal skills such as the ability to study and work independently. In order to effectively manage their time when doing homework from different subjects, learners need the homework timetable. Thus, schools in this circuit provide their learners with such an important study tool.

5.6.2 Strategies used to support progressed learners

Teachers in different schools face the formidable task of implementing practices that might result with satisfactory learning outcomes for all learners regardless of their cognitive abilities, personalities, circumstances or backgrounds. Teachers should use various strategies to help struggling learners perform well at school.

5.6.2.1 Lesson planning and preparation

According to Scrivener (2017) a well-planned lesson should cater for learners with different cognitive levels. This study revealed that the majority of teachers plan before they teach, although it is not easy with a mixed class of learners. This study also established that when planning is done, teachers always prepare finer details to address the needs of all learners in the class. It was also noted that in order to address the learners' diversified abilities, teachers take into account the QP learners as these require special attention.

5.6.2.2 Use of learning media

The teaching and learning media should always be available each time a teacher delivers his/her lesson (Stosic, 2015). However, this study found out that in this circuit, only a few teachers prepare or make use of such media in their lessons. This implies that learners taught by teachers who do not use media when teaching are hardly motivated at all. The argument provided for the lack of media use when teaching was that schools cannot afford to purchase these as they are expensive. Given the dire financial situation faced by these schools, innovative teachers resort to using pictures or cartoons in their lessons. Thus, the teaching and learning media is not effectively used in the majority of schools in this circuit.

5.6.2.3 Lesson observations

Observing teachers teaching helps the SMTs to identify areas where learners and teachers need assistance to improve performance. That is, during lesson observations, the HODs are able to pick out whether teachers use proper teaching methods that benefit all in his/her class or not. This study established that lesson observations are done in most schools. The idea behind this is to help teachers improve their teaching methods, lesson presentations, class management and the teacher – learner engagements. But, due to the shortage of manpower, this study noted that there is a need for additional HOD posts in small schools. The mood among the respondents was that everyone is overloaded with work. It is with such in mind that this study found out that some HODs do not carry out their lesson observation duties. Instead, they circumvent the process by moving around and peeping through windows instead of getting into the class to observe teachers teaching.

5.6.2.4 Teacher subject content knowledge

The teachers' subject knowledge plays an important role because high quality teaching rests on their understanding of the subjects they teach. According to Onwu (1999) teachers who have depth of the subject matter are able to select appropriate content or topics for different categories of their learners. Thus, this study discovered that teachers are given subjects they specialised in at university. However, due to manpower shortage, teachers are requested to teach subjects they are not knowledgeable in, but interested in teaching. This phenomenon is prevalent in small schools with fewer members of staff. In other words, this is done to save a rather dire situation. Thus, the shortage of teachers in the scarce skills category is the reason teachers are allocated other subjects besides those they specialised in.

5.6.2.5 Application of different teaching approaches or methods

Vikoo (2003) believes that learners learn at different speeds because of their different levels of prior knowledge and different environment. In this regard, this study discovered that teachers apply different teaching methods in their teaching of different themes. It is with this in mind that schools seem to encourage their teachers to use different methods when they teach because the learners they teach have different backgrounds, varied experiences and levels of understanding. Dorgue (2015) asserted that when using different teaching approaches, teachers help a variety of interests. However, the question is whether the approaches used are effective or not because learners continue to fail, and hence are progressed. In the final analysis though, teachers use different methods when teaching learners with different cognitive levels.

5.6.3 Strategies and their effectiveness

The main objective of using different teaching strategies is to facilitate the creation of an environment for effective teaching, learning and assessment in order to provide an opportunity for both teachers and learners to achieve educational outcomes as expected (DBE, 2011). According to Hattie (2009), teaching strategies are multidimensional, and not a single one of them guarantees better outcomes.

5.6.3.1 Learners profiling

The learners' profiles are important sources of information that reveal their learning abilities (Park *et al.*, 2015). This study found out that teachers' profile learners to facilitate the selection of suitable teaching approaches. Tomlison (2001) argued that profiling learners assist teachers identify the appropriate teaching approaches for all learners, irrespective of their cognitive levels. When the teachers discover their learners' qualities, they are in a position to fix the problems associated with their poor performances. Also, this study found out that some teachers are unable to master their learners'

characteristics that inform their cognitive abilities that influence their learning. Thus, profiling helps teachers discover and unearth the QP learners' hidden potential.

5.6.3.2 Multi-level teaching strategy

The multi-level teaching strategy is based on the premise that one lesson is taught for the whole class. This is the strategy used to teach all learners regardless of their levels of understanding. When planning for a class of both promoted and QP learners, the teacher includes different methods. This study discovered that teaching a mixed class in these schools has one prevalent problem, that of overcrowding. As such, most learners, particularly the slow ones, lack the teacher's individual attention. This multi-level strategy appears not to be effective because respondents indicated that promoted learners get bored when some of the topics taught are repeated to accommodate the QP learners. According to the respondents, such attitude also applies to the QP learners because when teachers are too fast, QP learners become frustrated and lost.

5.6.3.3 Workshop on curriculum management

Reddy (2016) argues that planning and selecting subject materials could help teachers present their subject matter that engages all learners. At school level, the SMTs are expected to ensure that teachers are able to select the curriculum content and strategy that respond to the needs of all learners. Thus, some teachers are workshopped by their SMTs on curriculum management, while others are not. This shows that there is no uniformity on how schools conduct curriculum management. On this issue, the study revealed that the principals place the blame squarely on the DBE's shoulders. Their cry is that as schools, they are on their own because the department introduced this policy without guiding them on how to handle the management of curriculum in order to help both the promoted and QP learners.

5.6.4 Challenges facing the SMT in managing the QP learners

Progression policy was introduced in an attempt to deal with legitimate schooling challenges such as grade repetition and dropout by learners from school. In Vhumbedzi Circuit Secondary Schools some of the progression challenges outlined below were identified.

5.6.4.1 Overcrowding in Grade 12

The respondents agreed that the progression policy's intent is to minimise unnecessary dropout in the schooling system. As such, this has created a fundamental problem in that Grade 12 classes are now overcrowded because perpetual failures opt to repeat several times instead of trying other routes in life. Thus, the management of teaching and assessment in big classes where the majority of the learners are QP, has become a nightmare and very complicated. There were complaints that in overcrowded classrooms, learners do not get individual support. Complaints were also directed at the QP learners themselves in that they are said to contribute to the decrease in the schools' pass rates at the NSC Grade 12 level.

5.6.4.2 Lack of parental support

One of the conditions of the progression policy is that in the new grade, the parents should attend the schools' regular meetings to establish whether the learner responds positively to the curriculum intervention and support strategies provided by the school or not. This study found out that parents only attend the first meetings when the programme to support QP learners is presented. Thereafter, they do not honour other meetings to check their children's progress. Learners always commit themselves to their studies if they are supported and monitored by both parents and teachers.

5.6.4.3 Learners' general behaviour and attitudes towards school work

One of the conditions in the DBE (2016) progression policy is that the school should seek for the services of the psychologist who will evaluate the QP learners to find out if they have psychological problems that might contribute to their poor performance. This study found out that many schools do not have such services. The learners' behaviour and attitude evaluation enable the principal to come up with suitable strategies to help those found to have psychological problems in life.

5.6.5 The QP policy's implementation at secondary school level

It was discovered that all schools here implement the progression policy as directed by the DBE. Through this policy, the school authorities often move learners from one grade to the next regardless of their performance. That is, they progress learners to assist them progress with other learners. Some schools have School Based Support Teams (SBST) tasked to promote and progress learners. It was evident that all those concerned with the policy know everything about it as they could cite any clause in the policy document.

5.7 SYNTHESIS OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

As this study investigated the said phenomenon, it found out that schools just implement the progression policy without the adequate skills and capacity required for the effective implementation and sustenance of the policy on the management of the teaching and assessment of a class with learners of different cognitive levels. Thus, it is imperative for the DBE to provide training to teachers on how they should manage the teaching and assessment of both promoted and progressed learners.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

By 2030, South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes. The performance of South African learners in internationally standardised tests should be comparable to the performance of learners from countries with similar levels of development, and with similar levels of access (UNESCO, 2017). Looking at the current situation in which some of the learners are moved to the next grade through progression, the following Model is recommended:

5.8.1 Inclusion of services of psychologists

The DBE should hire psychologists to evaluate the learners' behaviour and attitudes so that the principals would find out whether a learner has any psychological problem.

5.8.2 Control of learner attendance registers

It is recommended that schools should make sure that each class has a class register that is marked during the first period every day. It is further recommended that the school should keep the learner attendance registers in an electronic administrative system where hard copies are generated. These should be signed by the principals and filed for audit purposes.

5.8.3 Profiling of learners to support teaching and assessment

At the end of each academic year, learners write examinations. After summative assessment, learners are promoted or progressed to the next grade based on their academic achievements. This study recommends that in a new grade, teachers should profile learners based on their performance in different subjects, and compile check lists

based on the learners' content knowledge gaps. Checklists with identified content, topics or sections with gaps should be shared and become well known to the learners to enable them to prepare before they are taught.

5.8.4 Planning to manage teaching and assessment

The teacher should prepare supplementary materials for teaching and learning such as handout notes given to learners before a lesson starts. The teacher should also clarify to learners on what will be tested in different types of assessment, taking into account model answers expected from them. Reasonable adjustments should be made to all types of assessments to make them user-friendly to both promoted and progressed learners.

5.8.5 Provision of extra classes for QP learners

In a class of both the QP and promoted learners, a teacher should organise extra classes for the QP learners as they might perform poorly due to content knowledge gaps from previous grades. After formative assessment, the teacher would know where the QPs lack and which themes would they need extra work. With the formulation of study routines, methodology, more dedication and additional teaching hours, the performance of the progressed learners may improve.

5.8.6 Provision of feedback

Giving specific feedback is always supportive and helpful in a student's learning process. After assessment, teachers are encouraged to provide learners with constructive feedback based on their performance. Constructive feedback creates opportunities for learners to discover their strengths and weaknesses.

5.8.7 Grouping of learners for peer assessment

A class is a mixture of learners with different cognitive levels. In a class of promoted and progressed learners, it is necessary to group them, encouraging the stronger (promoted) to mix with the weaker learners (progressed). Practicing this form of grouping so often would make the brighter learners (promoted) ones help the weaker learners (QPs).

5.8.8 Teacher content knowledge

Teacher content knowledge is crucial in the improvement of teaching and learning. The DBE should appoint teachers who are specialists in their subject. The appointment of such teachers is important because almost all schools have QP learners with content knowledge gaps from the previous grades. Teachers with in-depth knowledge in the subjects they teach may be able to handle a class of learners with different cognitive levels.

5.8.9 Error and item analysis

After assessment, teachers should be encouraged to do item and error analysis in identifying errors committed by learners. Teachers would then be able to develop strategies to ensure that learners master the concepts taught. Understanding errors can help teachers develop teaching strategies to help improve the teaching and learning process.

5.8.10 Diagnostic reports and past examination question papers

Teachers are encouraged to use diagnostic reports when planning for lessons and assessment tasks because these provide them with strategies to deal with areas of weaknesses and information that can be used to compile subject improvement plans. It is recommended that teachers use diagnostic reports when they prepare for lessons. Diagnostic reports may also contribute towards improving the learner's performance

when integrated with subject improvement plans and consistently used when preparing different tasks.

5.8.11 Curriculum differentiation

Teachers, SMTs and principals must be trained on curriculum differentiation, SIAS policy and different forms of assessment. This would help in tracking the performance of the QP learners. Curriculum differentiation is a very important key strategy for responding to the needs of learners with different cognitive levels.

5.8.12 Balanced assessment

When teachers prepare and plan for tasks, tests and internal examinations as forms of assessment, they should ensure that every form of assessment informs instructional planning. All forms of assessment must be used to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching learners with different cognitive levels. The district curriculum head should ensure that teachers in different schools are trained on assessment to enable them develop multiple intervention strategies.

5.8.13 Recommendations on policy implementation

The policy on promotion and progression needs to be well managed in all the grades, taking into account that it may promote laziness on the part of learners. Schools should ensure that a parent or a guardian is included in the decision making process. In order to make progression become productive, meaningful and beneficial to the learners, schools must be encouraged to adequately prepare each learner to meet the required standard before being moved to the next grade.

5.9 CONTRIBUTION TO THE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

The Model described above will add value to the body of knowledge in the diverse spectrum of education at all levels in order to awaken and strengthen the energy and zeal on teaching and learner assessment. This Model will assist SMTs as they develop and craft intervention support programmes and strategies that include an early identification of low achievers or learners at risk. Schools, circuits, districts and the province could develop and implement extra learning opportunities through meaningful and relevant extended programmes to address their learners' learning deficits.

5.9 CONCLUSION

This study's findings revealed that learners are often passed from grade to grade regardless of their academic performance. The findings also reveal that social promotion practice has ultimate consequences because progressed learners fall behind and leave school ill equipped for university or other institutions of higher learning. This study is of the view that to manage the teaching and assessment of the QP learners, teachers should plan and prepare lessons according to what they want to achieve. In planning, teachers need to carefully select the subject content appropriate for learners' different abilities. This would ensure their maximum involvement and participation. This study agrees that adequate facilities such as libraries and laboratories should be provided by the government through the DBE. The department should ensure that the SMTs are workshopped on the implementation of its progression policy. The Model developed, if applied, may assist in situations where learners have been promoted even when they do not qualify and are being taught in the same classes as those promoted based on their academic performance.

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ANNEXURE A: QUESTIONNAIRE

MANAGING THE TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT COMPLEXITIES OF QP QUESTIONNAIRE

- How is teaching and assessment in a class of learners with different cognitive levels (progressed and promoted) being managed?
- What are the strategies being used to support learners who were progressed without academically qualifying?
- What are the challenges facing SMT in managing the Qualified to be Progressed learners?
- How is QP policy being implemented in the secondary schools?

The purpose of this questionnaire is to establish the management of the teaching and assessment complexities of the qualified to be progressed learners for quality teaching and learning in secondary schools.

SECTION A

A1: Gender

Male	1
Female	2

A2: Qualifications (M stands for matric + number of years in professional training)

M+ 2 years	1
M+ 3 years	2
M+ 4 years	3
M+ 5 years	4

A3: Teaching experience in Grade 12

0-10 years	1
11-20	2
21-30	3
30 years and above	4

A4: Your position at school

Principal	1
Deputy Principal	2
HOD	3
PL 1 Educator	4

SECTION B: MANAGEMENT OF TEACHING

For each of the following statements, indicate the rate at which you manage teaching of both the progressed and promoted learners about the administration and implementation processes related to QP policy by making a mark in the appropriate block.

Management of teaching	Never	Seldom	Sometime	Often	Always
B1. I give QP learners assignments and projects activities in which they use the library	1	2	3	4	5
B2. My QP and promoted learners do Science experiments in laboratory	1	2	3	4	5
B3. I give QP and promoted learners projects that enable them to use computer laboratory	1	2	3	4	5
B4. I control attendance register before I present my lessons	1	2	3	4	5

B5. I control period attendance register whenever I go to different classes	1	2	3	4	5
B6. In my school we follow the general time-table when we teach	1	2	3	4	5
B7. Our school develops study time tables for all the grades	1	2	3	4	5
B8. I plan each lesson before I teach	1	2	3	4	5
B9. I do daily lesson preparations	1	2	3	4	5
B10. I organize educational media for each lesson I teach	1	2	3	4	5
B11. There is monitoring of teachers in class teaching in my school	1	2	3	4	5
B12. I am allocated the subjects I have content knowledge of	1	2	3	4	5
B13. I apply different teaching methods when handling different sections in my subject	1	2	3	4	5
B14. My HOD monitors my work to ensure that I complete the syllabus every year	1	2	3	4	5
B15.I am work shopped on curriculum management	1	2	3	4	5
B16. My HOD observes me in class when I teach	1	2	3	4	5
B17. My school has developed intervention strategies and programme to assist progressed learners to catch up with promoted learners	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: SUPPORT OF TEACHING

By making a cross (X) indicate in the appropriate box the extent in which you support teaching of QP learners

Support teaching of QP learners	Never	Seldom	Sometime	Often	Always
C1. Progressed learners are profiled to identify challenging topics in order to give them support after analysis of each term's results.	1	2	3	4	5
C2. I am monitored in class teaching by my HOD	1	2	3	4	5
C3. I design lesson activities for QP learners in my subject	1	2	3	4	5
C4. I provide extra lessons to my QP learners	1	2	3	4	5
C5. I control regular attendance of school by QP learners	1	2	3	4	5
C6. I cover curriculum as indicated in the per pacesetters	1	2	3	4	5
C7. I am workshopped on how to deliver content to QP learners	1	2	3	4	5
C8. I teach all sections of the curriculum in my subject every year	1	2	3	4	5
C9.All topics in my subject are simple to my learners	1	2	3	4	5
C10. I draw up a catch up plan for my QP learners to cover for the time lost during the year	1	2	3	4	5
C11.	1	2	3	4	5

The HOD monitors the sections to be taught in the catch up programme for the QP learners					
C12. I help progressed learners to deal with previous years' work	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: MANAGEMENT OF ASSESSMENT

This section deals with the management of assessment of both progressed and promoted. Indicate by making a cross the rate in which you manage assessment.

Assessment Management	Never	Seldom	Someti	Often	Always
D1. I assess learners when I present each and every lesson	1	2	3	4	5
D2. My school has homework time tables for different grades	1	2	3	4	5
D3. I give homework after each lesson in my subject	1	2	3	4	5
D4. I assess my learners according to the School Assessment Plan	1	2	3	4	5
D5. My HOD moderates my tests before they are given to the learners to write	1	2	3	4	5
D6. I give feedback to learners after all assessment given to learners	1	2	3	4	5
D7. I use previous question papers to prepare learners for the final examination	1	2	3	4	5
D8.					

I analyse learner performance every Term and assist in the development of Academic Performance Improvement Plan	1	2	3	4	5
D9. There is peer moderation of all assessment tasks before given to the learners	1	2	3	4	5
D10. I control learners exercises books and give feedback timeously	1	2	3	4	5
D11. I explain pass requirements to learners as per assessment policy	1	2	3	4	5
D12. My school has examination time-table for all the grades	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION E: SUPPORT FOR ASSESSMENT

By making a cross (X) indicate in the appropriate box the extent in which you support assessment of QP learners

Assessment Support	Never	Seldo	Some	Often	Alwa
E1.I have grouped learners together according to their different cognitive levels	1	2	3	4	5
E2.I provide individual support to QP learners after assessment	1	2	3	4	5
E3.Promoted learners assist progressed learners in dealing with remedial work	1	2	3	4	5
E4.I do remedial work with QP learners who perform poorly in an assessment	1	2	3	4	5
E5.I assist QP learners on how to respond to questions in the examination	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your participation

ANNEXURE B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Context

Permission was obtained prior to conducting an interview with each respondent to get their co-operation and willingness to participate in the discussion relating to managing teaching and assessment complexities of “the qualified to be progressed learners” for quality teaching and learning. Interviews were conducted with ten principals in Vhumbedzi Circuit to gather in-depth information. Recordings were made as they responded orally.

The in-depth interviews were guided by the following questions:

1. How is teaching in a class of learners with different cognitive levels (progressed and promoted) being managed? Elaborate by giving the type of approaches used for effective management of teaching
2. How is assessment in a class of learners with different cognitive levels (progressed and promoted) being managed?
3. How is teaching of QP learners supported in your school? Mention kinds of support provided
4. How is assessment of QP learners handled in your school? Substantiate your answer
5. What are the strategies being used to support learners who were progressed without academically qualifying? Briefly explain why you these strategies are effective
6. What are the challenges facing SMT in managing the Qualified to be Progressed learners? Substantiate your answer
7. How is QP policy being implemented in the secondary schools? Elaborate

ANNEXURE C: REQUEST TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

P.O. BOX 380

Vhufuli

0971

22 January 2018

The District Director

Vhembe District

Dear sir/Madam

REQUEST TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH: MUEDI F.P. - STUDENT
NO: 201760006 (UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND).

1. The above matter refers.
2. I hereby request permission to conduct an educational research at schools in Vhumbedzi Circuit within your Vhembe District.
3. My research topic is: Managing teaching and assessment complexities of “the qualified to be progressed” learners for quality teaching and learning in South Africa
4. Confidentiality of school information will be taken into account during the process of interviews.

I hope your office will find this request in order.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Muedi F.P.

ANNEXURE D: A sample of a letter to request for permission to complete questionnaire

P.O. BOX 380

Vhufuli

0971

22 January 2018

Dear sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE: MUEDI F.P. - STUDENT NO: 201760006 (UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND).

1. The above matter refers.
5. I hereby request few minutes of your time in completing my questionnaire on my research Topic: Managing teaching and assessment complexities of “the qualified to be progressed” learners for quality teaching and learning in South Africa
2. Your response to questions will only be used for the study purposes, anonymity of personal information and confidentiality of information provided will be taken into account during the process of completion of questionnaire.
3. Permission for conducting this research has already been granted by Vhembe District Director

I hope you will find this request in order.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Muedi F.P

ANNEXURE E: Request to Conduct Research



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

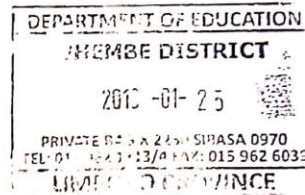
VHEMBE EAST DISTRICT

CONFIDENTIAL

REF: 14/7/R
ENG: MATIBE M.S
TEL: 015 962 1029

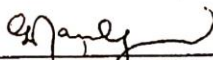
MR MUEDI F.P
P O BOX 380
VHUFULI
0971

25 JANUARY 2018



REQUEST TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH: MUEDI F.P. – STUDENT
NO: 201760006 (UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND)

1. The above matter refers.
2. This serves to inform you that your request for permission to conduct research on the topic: *"Managing the teaching and assessment complexities of the qualified to be progressed" learners in south Africa for quality teaching and learning* has been granted.
3. You are expected to observe ethical considerations particularly those relating to confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary participation by research subjects.
4. Kindly inform the circuit manager and the principal(s) of selected Schools prior to your interactions with your research subjects.
5. Wishing you the best in your study.


DISTRICT DIRECTOR

25/01/2018
DATE

Thohoyandou Government Building, Old Parliament Block D Private Bag X2250, SIBASA 0970
Tel (015) 962 1313 or (015) 962 1331 Fax (015) 962 6039 or (015) 962 2288

REQUEST TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH: MUEDI F.P. – STUDENT NO: 201760006 (UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND)

The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people

ANNEXURE F: Ethical Clearance

**UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**
(Reg No: UZREC 171110-030)



RESEARCH & INNOVATION

Website: <http://www.unizulu.ac.za>
Private Bag X1001
KwaDlangezwa 3886
Tel: 035 902 6731
Fax: 035 902 6222
Email: DlaminiA@unizulu.ac.za

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Certificate Number	UZREC 171110-030 PGM 2018/490						
Project Title	MANAGING THE TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT COMPLEXITIES OF “THE QUALIFIED TO BE PROGRESSED” LEARNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING						
Principal Researcher/ Investigator	FP Muedi						
Supervisor and Co-supervisor	Prof AP Kutame				Dr TZ Ngidi		
Department	Education Foundations and Management						
Faculty	Education						
Type of Risk	Med risk: Data collection from people						
Nature of Project	Honours/4 th Year		Master's	x	Doctoral		Departmental

The University of Zululand's Research Ethics Committee (UZREC) hereby gives ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project. The Researcher may therefore commence with data collection as from the date of this Certificate, using the certificate number indicated above.

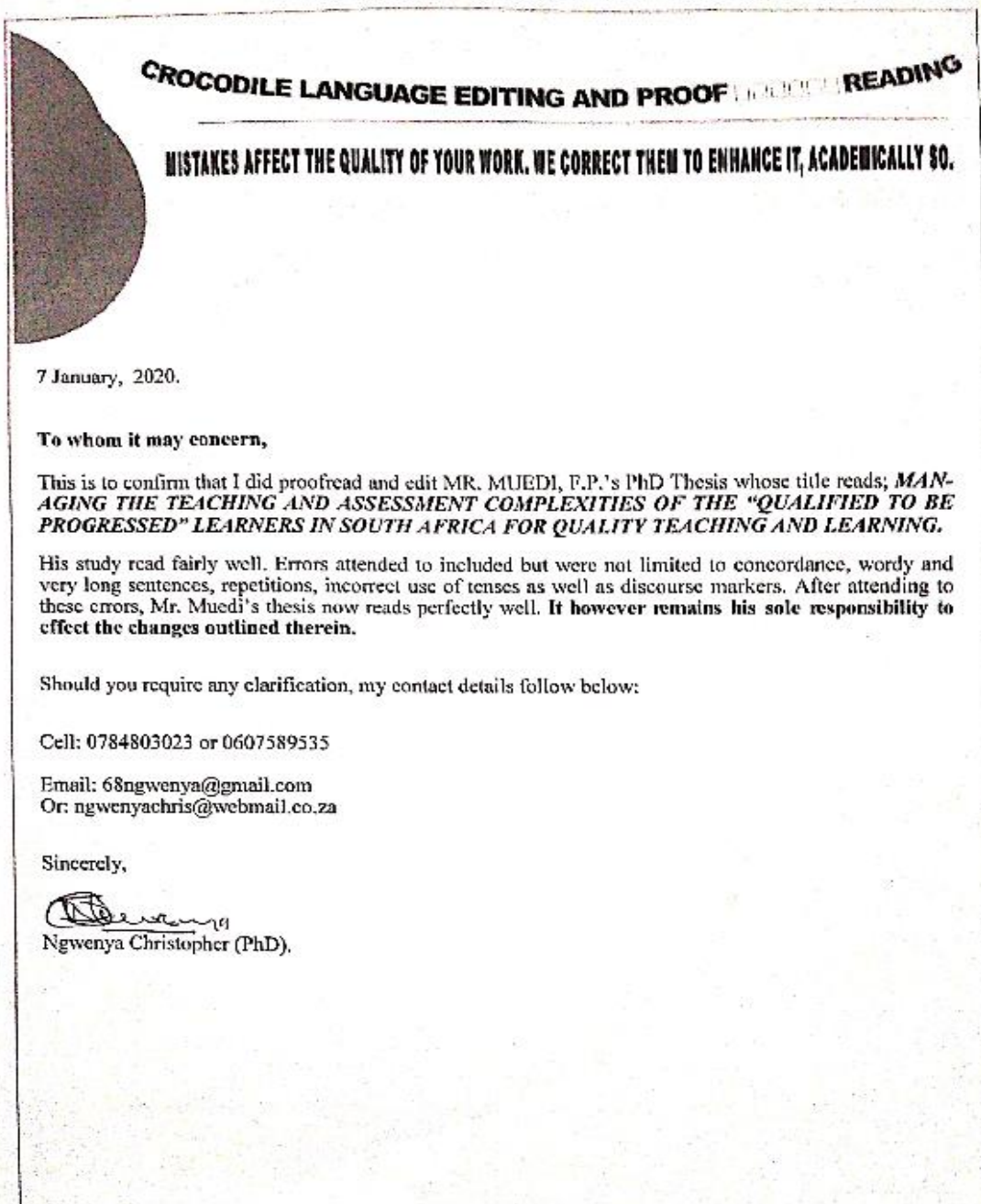
- Special conditions:
- (1) This certificate is valid for 2 years from the date of issue.
 - (2) Principal researcher must provide an annual report to the UZREC in the prescribed format [due date-15 May 2019]
 - (3) Principal researcher must submit a report at the end of project in respect of ethical compliance.
 - (4) The UZREC must be informed immediately of any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the documents that were presented to the meeting.

The UZREC wishes the researcher well in conducting research.


Professor Gideon De Wet
Chairperson: University Research Ethics Committee
Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research & Innovation
17 July 2018



ANNEXURE G: EDITOR'S REPORT



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