

**THE IMPLICATIONS OF BEING DECLARED A NO FEE SCHOOL**

**by**

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## DECLARATION of ORIGINALITY

I, declare that this dissertation,

Full names of student: **Christopher Samuel Nkosi**

Student Number: **27413790**

### Declaration

1. I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the university's policy in this regard.
2. I declare that the thesis, "*The relationship between funding in education and quality education*" is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used, this has been acknowledged and referenced in accordance with Departmental requirements.
3. I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

SIGNATURE STUDENT: .....

SIGNATURE SUPERVISOR: .....



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# ABSTRACT

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DoE	Department of Education
EMIS	Education management Information System
HOD	Head of Department
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
FINCOM	Finance Committee
PDE	Provincial Department of Education
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
WSE	Whole School Evaluation
SWOT	Strength Weakness Opportunities Threats
MDE	Mpumalanga Department of Education
SDP	School Developmental Plan

# LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

# 1 CHAPTER 1

## 1.1 AN OVERVIEW OF STUDY

The dawn of the democratic dispensation in South Africa in 1994 brought along initiatives to redress the imbalances created by the Apartheid regime in education.. For forty eight years, under the leadership of the Nationalist Party, the South African education system was marked by inequalities in the allocation of resources in public schools. The allocation of resources in schools was influenced by racial lines. South Africa's smooth transition to democracy received international approval and recognition, which to this day, serves as a model for other countries undergoing difficult and expanded political transitions. The greatest struggle, since the early-post-apartheid days, has been the attempt to undo the economic legacy of the system of racial exclusivity (Sonn, 2008:182) The National Constitution, which is a product of multi-party negotiations, was finalized in 1996. The National Constitution sought to address two principles, which are equality and equity. As put by Van Rooyen (2008:26), a school allocation for public schools was established through the 1998 publication of the National Norms and Standards for school funding. These norms and standards for school funding were implemented in 2001 by Provincial Education Departments. This was a major innovation in South African schools in terms of financing systems and pro-poor resourcing.

During the period 2000 to 2003, the Government learned major lessons with respect to the pro-poor school allocation. The lessons learned were with regards to the required management training for schools, the required financial accounting systems and the importance of understanding how best to use the allocation in terms of school improvement and the support of curriculum. (Van Rooyen: 2008) Because of these challenges, it became clear that though the 1998 policy was fundamentally correct, certain policy improvements were needed. It was then that inter-provincial equity

emerged as key policy concern. The National Department of Education conducted two major assessments in 2001 and 2003 with a focus on school allocations.

The assessments conducted by the National Department of Education led to the 2003 Plan of Action. This plan of action sought to improve access to free and quality basic education for all. These were the documents that the State used to build a post-apartheid schooling system that advocates the principles of equality and equity in education provisioning in our country. In honouring its constitutional obligation to arrive at equality and equity, the National Government of South Africa introduced a distributional approach of resources in public schools in 2003. It is upon this approach that the former National Minister of Education, Mrs. Naledi Pandor, introduced the system of categorizing public schools into five quintiles. The poorest schools were ranked quintile one schools while the least poor schools were ranked quintile five schools.

The system of quintiles then gave birth to the declaration of certain public schools into no fee schools in 2006. In 2009 a review of the system of quintiles was done by the Government. In this review it was gazetted that quintile one to three schools were declared into no fee schools. According to Van Rooyen (2008), declaring schools into no fee schools was aimed at combating poverty through an increased access to quality education and to make sure that resources are distributed on an equitable basis in all public schools. This then meant that the School Governing Body of a public school that was declared a no fee school is not supposed to levy a compulsory school fee to households. The State declared quintile one to three schools into no fee schools in order to put the section 29(1) of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution into effect which reads:

*Everyone has the right*

*(a) to basic education, including adult basic education and*

*(b) to further education, which the State, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible*

As stated above, the Government introduced these reform initiatives in the post-democratic era in education in an effort to move towards equity and equality. In the past Apartheid regime, a big slice of educational resources were channeled towards white schools with the remaining portion to black schools. The quintilling of schools were done to ensure that households suffering the effects of poverty enjoy schooling that is adequately funded by the State. This is in line with the provisions of the Freedom Charter (1955:4) which clearly spelt out that: “Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal to all” The declaration of certain public schools into no fee schools was not a bed full of roses. It came with a number of pitfalls and flaws which continue to plague the education system of our country. On the other hand, the declaration of some public schools as no fee schools, also brought along a sigh of economic relief to households suffering the effects of poverty so that they enjoy free education. The implementation of the policy on no fee schools brought along some implications for the general management of public schools in our country.

According to the Sowetan, volume 2, (2008:12) the declaration of certain public schools as no fee schools has been marked with a massive decline of the general performance of a number of public schools. Some parents no longer feel responsible for the education of their children as they did before the declaration of certain schools into no fee schools came into effect. On the other hand certain communities have applauded the government for introducing free education. (Van Rooyen: 2008) The performance of schools is influenced by a number of factors, one being the adequate provisioning of financial resources. Another influential factor to the general performance of public schools is how best to use these allocations for curriculum improvement. The researcher has compared the systems of school funding between South Africa, the United States of America and India in order to establish the link between the schools’ performances and the socio-economic status where the school is located. According to Sadker and Sadker (1997:369), poor families in America, who live in marginalized economic existences, are particularly hurt by a high sales tax, a fraction which is used to fund schools. As put by Mackey and Taylor (2007:2), many states in the United States of America use federal funds to support the provisioning of services to eligible children, which includes children who are

physically and mentally challenged. The declaration of certain schools into no fee schools brought along tough economic pressures on the federal states. This is a factor that affected the delivery of quality education in terms of resource allocation.

The Indian government which also introduced free education is also suffering the effects of the policy on no fee schools. According to Tilak (1996:362), the inter-state variations and an unequal distribution of resources in the Indian education system have an impact on the quality of education in primary schools. The author argues against variations in the allocation of physical infrastructure like laboratories and libraries. As indicated by Hay (1995) geographical differences and inequalities are in some sense inequitable, unfair and unjust and that programmes should seek to eliminate these imbalances. This is also true of the South African education system even in the post-apartheid era. In some cases, schools in the same geographical location, with the same socio-economic status are still categorized differently in terms of quintiles. The paper budget allocations, which are a governmental grant, are still marked with inequalities. As indicated by Van Rooyen (2008), the poor rural and working class communities still suffer the legacy of large classes, deplorable physical conditions and the absence of learning resources. It is however commendable that the government of South Africa carries the plight of the poor at heart and embrace equality and equity as the cornerstones of our democratic constitution. Programmes such as the National School Nutrition have also added some value to the notion of free education.

## **1.2. AIMS OF THE RESEARCH**

This study seeks to:

- Investigate the implications of being declared a no fee school.
- Determine the implications of being declared a no fee school for professional management.
- Establish the implications of being declared a no fee school for governance.



- Investigate the implications of being declared a no fee school for curriculum management
- Investigate the implications of being declared a no fee school for financial management.
- Determine the implications of being declared a no fee school for parental involvement

### **1.3. RATIONALE**

As Bloch by Vithal and Jansen in Maree (2005), a rationale serve as a statement of how a researcher developed an interest in a particular topic and exactly why a researcher believes the research is worth conducting.

The reason why I developed a keen interest in the topic arises from my professional experience as a principal of a public primary school in Mpumalanag Province. I have come to realize over the years that there is a misconception on the notion of no fee school which results in the misinterpretation and misapplication of the policy on almost all the areas of school management. I have been confronted by a number of vital stakeholders who displayed an ignorance of what a no fee school is and what it implies for the general management of the school. The lack of an in-depth knowledge about free education by people that I interact with almost on a daily basis has prompted me to conduct a study on the implications of being declared a no fee school. As a manager of a public school myself, I have also learned of the suspension and even expulsion of some of my colleagues due to the misapplication of this policy. I have also realized that little is known by my colleagues on managerial level about the implications of being declared a no fee school.

As an educator and manager of a public primary school in a township, I have come to realize that, despite all its efforts to address equality and equity in education, the Government is still very far from the realization of these two cornerstones of our democracy, which is equity and equality. As defined by the World Book Dictionary

(2005:716), equality means the condition of being equal or an exact likeness in amount, size, number, value, degree or rank. On the other hand, equity is defined as justice and fairness (2005:717). As a official of the department who is directly involved with the management of the school in general and finances in particular, I have realized that disparities still exists in the allocation of resources, especially on the provincial; paper budgets. The paper budget is the official document that is issued by the Provincial Department of Education to indicate the amount of the allocation for a particular school in the next financial year. In some cases, two schools in the same geographical area, with the same socio-economic status, with almost the same enrollment get different allocations. Section 34 (1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 spells out clearly that the State must fund public schools from public revenue on an equitable basis in order to ensure the proper exercise of the right of learners to education and the redress of past inequalities in the education provision. As of now, it would be untrue to say that the declaration of certain schools into no fee schools has addressed equality and equity. It is ironic that schools from middle-class communities still get bigger financial allocations as compared to schools in poor working class communities. As a manager of a public primary school, I have noticed a confusing variation of my school's annual allocation in a scope of three years. I have noticed a cut in the school allocation when the school enrollment rises every year as a result of large number of people who migrate into South Africa in pursuit of jobs and a better life.

The fact that a large number of immigrants coming into South Africa makes it difficult for the State to make correct projections as for the following year as they are made on the statistics of the previous year. In some schools the opposite has occurred. Some schools, especially the quintile four and five schools suffer a massive drop of their enrollments as most parents take their children to no fee schools. The notion of free education has also attracted long ago drop-outs to register in public schools. I have also noticed that some parents are now reluctant to contribute anything financially to the school because of the misconception of free education. I have also witnessed a decline of parental involvement and accountability in the no fee schools. Some parents no longer feel obliged to supervise their children's homework, school attendance, and punctuality. It is frustrating, as

principal of a school to see parents shifting the ownership of the school squarely to the shoulders of the principal.

One other factor that has prompted me to conduct this study is the related literature that I have read on the topic. I have made a comparative study about the systems of funding public schools between America, India and South Africa. I paid a careful attention to the notion of free education in these countries. The literature that I read suggested further research on the topic, especially on the findings and recommendations of other authors before me. I am not replicating what others have said on the topic but wishes to conduct a study on the implications of being declared a no fee school from a purely South African context. I have realized that some of the recommendations do not relate to a South African context which is a young democracy with a growing economy and some political challenges with regards to policy formulation and implementation.

One other factor that has aroused my keen interest in this study has to do with my personal experience both as a learner, educator and parent in both the apartheid era and the post-apartheid era. As a high school learner in the mid-eighties, I have seen a decline on the quality of education in our township schools between now and then. The underperformance of our matriculants, the decline of the teacher morale, the overcrowding in most public schools in the townships, the backlog of textbooks and learner support material and a shortage physical infrastructure like libraries in our schools affect the quality of teaching and learning and all these factors are influenced by the resources allocated to public schools by the State. All these factors combined have provoked an interest in me to make an investigation into the policy on no fee schools and to make a study on the implications of being declared a no fee school which has been recently introduced in South African public schools. As indicated by McMillan and Schumacher (1993:76), within each research topic resides many specific research questions with implications for educational theory, knowledge and practice.

In conclusion, I have been prompted by my professional experience as a principal of a public primary school, my personal experience and insights both as parent, an educator,

and related literature on the topic as well as current political issues in education like the categorization of certain public schools into no fee schools, which has been recently introduced in South African public schools have provoked me to conduct such an investigation.

#### **1.4. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993:77), researchers use formal problem statements to guide their research. The problem statement introduces the reader to the importance of the problem, place the problem in an educational context, and provide the framework for reporting the results. The problem orients the reader to the significance of the study and the research questions or hypotheses to follow.

In this study, the aim is to investigate in depth the implications of being declared a no fee school in depth. The investigation aims at assessing the impact of the policy on no fee schools with special attention to the professional management of the school, financial management, governance, curriculum management and parental involvement. The policy on no fee schools, with its implications for the management and governance of the school is the main object of study. The study is conducted in the South African context, with special reference to quintile one, two and three schools. The research will be conducted in three public primary schools.

According to Vithal and Jansen (2004) as Bloch by Maree (2005:3) a statement of purpose in research should ensure that participants in the study are described to indicate who will be involved in the research. The participants in the study will involve the principal of each school identified as a research site. The assumption is that the school principal is knowledgeable with regards to curriculum matters as he or she is directly involved in the management of the school's instructional programme. The other participant is the chairperson of the school governing body who chairs all the proceedings of the school governance matters education. An educator who serves as a member of the school's finance committee will also participate in the study. Such an educator is likely to

be informed about the school's financial matters as he or she is directly involved in the administration of finances in the school. Another participant in the study is a parent from each of the schools identified as sites. The parent is assumed as fit to supply information about how parents feel about their school being declared a no fee school. The parent is likely to make an effective evaluation of the policy on no fee schools. Another participant in the study will be a member of the school management team who is likely to provide data about curricular issues and challenges commonly faced by the various departments of the school. The researcher assumes that this educator will be in a better position to supply data with regards to curriculum matters. The last participant in the study is an educator who is also a parent of a child in a no fee school. This educator has a potential to yield data about his or her perceptions on the implications of being declared a no fee school.

## **1.5. THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

As indicated by Mouton (2001:48), the first phase of any research project involves transforming an interesting idea into a feasible, researchable research problem. This problem is then phrased in a form of question. Mertler (2005:61) defines a research question as the fundamental question inherent in the research topic under investigation. Its purpose is to guide the research study, for the goal is to be able to answer the research question at the end of the study. The main research question for this study is:

What are the implications of being declared a no fee school?

In pursuit of more facts and information regarding the phenomenon under investigation, five sub questions have been used in the study. According to Creswell (2007:109), an author typically presents a small number of questions. Sub questions address the major concerns and perplexities to be resolved. The following are sub questions that have been formulated to assist in the answering of the main research question:

- What are the implications of being declared a no fee school for its governance?
- What are the implications of being declared a no fee school for its professional management?
- What are the implications of being declared a no fee school for its financial management?
- What are the implications of being declared a no fee school for curriculum management?
- What are the implications of being declared a no fee school for parental involvement?

## ***1.6. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY***

The study is significant in the sense that it investigates a critical reform initiative by the Government of the Republic of South Africa to achieve equality and equity in education. Equality and equity are the cornerstones of our democracy, which are meant to safeguard the rights of the citizens of our country, as enshrined in the Bill of Rights. Our freedom is not complete without fairness which deals with equity and the placement of all citizens on an equal basis. Educational policies of the past Nationalist regime which promoted racial exclusivity in education. Although the government of the Republic of South Africa, under the leadership of the African National Congress is applauded for its policies to address the plight of the poor, especially in education, there is a need to measure the effect of educational policies in the democratic era. Central to this study are the distribution of resources to public schools on an equitable basis. It is the researcher's assumption that poverty in communities around schools has a bearing on the quality of education learners receive in public schools. As put by Sonn (2008:183), poverty is characterized by the inability of individuals, households or communities to command sufficient resources in order to satisfy socially acceptable minimum standards of living. The study examines the critical role of the policy on no fee schools to address the inequalities of the past. The study also explores the possible impact of the government's decision to declare certain public schools no fee schools.

The study is also significant because it addresses the declaration of certain public schools into no fee schools which is in line with the notion of free education as advocated by the Freedom Charter. The Freedom Charter is a document that guided the ruling party's reasoning in the drafting of the constitution. Free education is one factor that the African National Congress led government has been attempting to arrive at since 1994. As Psacharopoulos (1971; 69) puts it, the provision of free education at all levels is one of the most cherished political goals in modern society. In practically every country in the world, education, even when not absolutely free, is heavily subsidized by the state. Central to this study is an evaluation of the successes and failures of our reform policies in education. It investigates the implications for five areas of the school management which influence the schools general performance. The study also sheds some light on what it really implies to be declared a no fee school. The assumption of the researcher is that the policy on no fee school is likely to influence the quality of education in a public school. It is also noteworthy that the study investigates a current political issue which continues to provoke debates on the subject of funding public schools in South Africa. A study of this magnitude is not intended to criticize educational policies or to preach to the policy formulation processes but to contribute further to the already existing knowledge with regards to policy studies. The study is intended to investigate issues and practices that affect the quality of service delivery in our schools. The study also seeks to expose some factors that may have been overlooked in its implementation stage.

The study is also significant in the sense that it explores a link between resource allocation and the general performance of the public school. The availability of resources, both human and material, which enables educational institutions and programmes to function properly, such as adequately trained educators, school buildings, classrooms, furniture, teaching equipment, books and writing materials, as well as access to services like sanitation water and electricity. As Sonn (2008:187), explains it, there still are learners who go to school under trees, without the necessary resources to acquire skills to compete with those who come from more privileged backgrounds. It is ludicrous to expect of a child who learns under a tree, without running water, electricity, or sanitation,

which is cold and wet in winter and does not have one decent meal per day, to cope with school. All the factors Bloch above are attributed to the unequal allocation of resources which happened in the Apartheid era. We cannot continue to criticize the old apartheid government for its failure to generate policies that address the plight of the poor but have to undergo a paradigm shift and evaluate the policies that have continued to shape the educational landscape since 1994. Many public schools have been declared into no fee school since 2003 as attempt to relieve poor communities and households of the burden of paying school fees, but the question is: do the critical role players in school governance and management understand what it really implies for a school to be declared a no fee school. It is the researcher's assumption that this study will contribute to the understanding of the phenomenon under investigation by establishing its impact for the overall performance of the school.

The study also has got a potential to generate further research in the future. Literature suggests that much has been written about free education but to little have up to the time of writing about the implications of being declared a no fee school. A concern was raised by the Sowetan (2008:14) that some schools have had no access to this policy document or thoroughly trained on the implications of being declared a no fee school. Stakeholders in most schools have welcomed the implementation of the policy on no fee school with praise but have not gone further to explore the implications of this policy for the public school's professional management. The findings and recommendations from related literature as well as the findings and recommendations to be made later on in the study have a potential to generate a new research topic in the future.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.7.1. RESEARCH DESIGN**

The general aim of this study is to investigate the implications of being declared a no fee school. The implications under investigation covers five management areas which are



professional management, curriculum management, governance, financial management and the management of parental involvement in the school. The following section contains a summary of the methods the researcher used in collecting data for this particular study. The following are approaches that the researcher employed to collect data.

### **1.7.2. A LITERATURE STUDY**

The researcher made an extensive review of related literature from international and local sources. These sources comprised of theses, dissertations, journals, reports as well as discussion papers. The information obtained from these sources contributed to the stating of the significance of the study, the development of the research design, relating the results of the study to previous knowledge and suggesting further research (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:108)

### **1.7.3. A QUALITATIVE INQUIRY**

The researcher used the qualitative approach as the most appropriate for the investigation. The qualitative approach has been used because it best meets the aims of investigating the research problem in depth. According to Heinning (2008:34), the method a researcher uses should be compatible with and should aim at giving the optimal data required for the study. A qualitative approach best yield the results in terms of data collection Factors that have influenced the researcher's choice of the qualitative approach includes the researcher's understanding of the research problem, the field of study and the philosophical assumptions chosen as appropriate for the study. As indicated by Merriam in Mestry (2004:126), a qualitative research is primarily concerned with the views that individuals interacting with the social world construct about qualitative reality. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed in making sense of the world and the experiences they have in it.

The researcher also employed the following methods, within the context of a qualitative enquiry: action research and a case study. As indicated by Mouton (2001:150) researchers mainly use the qualitative approach to gain an understanding and insight into the life-worlds of research participants. The action research, if successfully used enhances the chances of high construct validity, low refusal rates and ownership of findings. The researcher assumes that the maximum participation of all the participants, a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and the guarantee of utmost confidentiality has the potential of lessening refusal rates and to assume ownership of the data yielded. A case study has also been employed in the investigation. Mertler defines a case study as a detailed examination of a single subject or particular event. A case study has been chosen because it has the hallmarks relevant to the answering of the research question. As Cohen, Manion and Morrison put it (2007:253), a case study concerns itself with rich and vivid descriptions of events relevant to the case. This has helped the researcher to gather information on the implications of being declared a no fee school more vividly, with clear events with regards to school governance, professional management, curriculum management, financial management and the management of parental involvement in the school. I have looked at the three schools sampled schools in order to evaluate the impact of the policy of no fee schools on the schools general performance. My samples are from poverty-stricken communities and from semi-urban and urban areas.

The sampling technique that the researcher has used in the study is a purposive sampling. The sampling population included the principal of each of the three schools, the chairperson of the school governing body from the three schools, an educator who is a member of the school's finance committee, an education specialist from the school management team, a parent that has served in the school governing body for a term of three years and a senior educator who has a minimum teaching experience of fifteen years. As expressed by Melville and Goddard (1997:29), the choice of a population or any group that is the subject of research interest. For this project, the researcher has chosen purposive sampling as the most appropriate technique. Babbie (2005:189) defines purposive sampling as a non-probability sampling in which the researcher selects the units of observation on the basis of his or her judgments about which will be useful or

representative. The sampled schools comprised of two public primary school and one public secondary school. The schools sampled are quintile one, two and three schools which are no fee schools. A justification of the choice of this methodology and the sampled schools is clearly explained in chapter three.

To collect data for the project the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews and an extensive analysis of documentary sources. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:340) define interviews as a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used, and non-verbal, spoken and heard. The researcher has conducted semi-structured interviews for the project. According to Hatchi (2002:94), semi-structured interviews are a type of interviews where the researcher uses guiding questions and yet stays open to follow the leads of the informants and probing into areas that arise during the interview interactions. Semi-structured interviews have been chosen by the researcher because they involve direct interactions between the researcher and the respondents. Respondents in the study were interviewed on the implications of being declared a no fee school for professional management, curriculum management, financial management, governance and the management of parental involvement. The semi-structured interviews have been used because they allow for probing individual responses as opposed to structured questions which only allow for limited responses. As expressed by Babbie (205:314), a qualitative interview is an interview between the interviewer and the respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry but not a specific set of questions that must be asked with particular words and a particular order. The researcher has asked questions that explore the respondents' perceptions of what the implications of being declared a no fee school are. Whilst engaging with every respondent, the researcher has tried to establish the direction of the conversation and pursued specific topics raised by the respondents. (Babbie, 2005:314). The researcher has made digital recordings of the interview in order to have an accurate grasp of data. The researcher has made sure that copies of the transcriptions have been made available to the respondents and also that they are duly signed.

The analysis of certain documentary sources was relevant in that it allowed the researcher an opportunity to peruse records like: the copy of the annual school budget for the past three years, audited financial statements for the past three years, records of the school improvement plan for the past three years, the minutes of the school governing body and the minutes of the school management team and minutes of the school finance committee. These documents were used to obtain data on the implications of being declared a no fee school.

#### **1.7.4. DATA ANALYSIS**

To analyze the data that the researcher has gathered through the data collection methods stated above, the researcher has transcribed (in the case of interviews), coded inductively and related in the identified themes to the primary research question. The identified themes are finance, governance, professional management, parental involvement and the management of the school's curriculum. Mouton (2006:108) describes the process of data coding as the breaking down of data into manageable themes, trends and relationships in order to understand the various constitutive elements. According to Nieuwnhuis (2007:99), the main purpose of the inductive analysis of qualitative data is to allow the research to allow the research findings to emerge from the frequent dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data. It is the researcher's assumption that the implications of being declared a no fee school will emerge from the findings of this study.

#### **1.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The schools that the researcher has identified as research sites fall under the Mpumalanga Department of Education in the Nkangala region. The researcher has made an application, seeking permission from the Mpumalanga Department of Education to have access to the three sampled schools, their documentary sources and their participants. Permission to conduct the study was given by the Mpumalanga Department of Education

and duly signed by the regional director and the circuit manager. The research was conducted in accordance with the statutes on ethical research of the University of Pretoria. The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the ethic committee of the Faculty of Education of the University of Pretoria before he commenced with the research project. The researcher has included the following in his application for permission to conduct the study: the purpose of the study, the nature the data that was requested, the data collection methods, an assurance of the confidentiality of the data, an assurance of the anonymity of the participants and lastly, an offer to make the results of the study available after its completion. Participants were informed in advance of their right of choice to participate, to withdraw at any given stage and were given enough time to make such a decision.

## ***1.9. DELINEATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY***

According to Regenys (2003:11) delineation, as a scope that sets the limit and defines the purpose area of study. The study was confined to three public schools in the Nkangal region of the Mpumalng Province of South Africa. The researcher has not generalized the findings of the study to a population. As put by Maree (2007: 115), the goal of qualitative research is not to generalize findings across a population. The researcher has done this to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings of the study. The researcher has come across one limiting factor to the investigation. Locke, Spirduso and Spiderman (2007:16) define limitations as limiting conditions or restrictive weaknesses which occur when all factors cannot be controlled as part of the study design. The limitation that the researcher came across was the reluctance of some participants to divulge information about their school's financial position.

## ***1.10. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS***

### **1.10.1. NATIONAL QUINTLES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Van Rooyen (2008:24) defines national quintiles for public schools as one of the five groups into which all South African public schools are placed, and where the grouping is according to the poverty index of the community around the school. Quintile one is the poorest quintile, quintile two is the second poorest, and so on. Each national quintile encompasses one-fifth of the learners enrolled in public ordinary schools in a given province.

### **1.10.2 EQUALITY**

Equality is defined by Kleyn and Viljoen (2002:258), as the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislation and other measures designed to protect or advance persons or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination have been put in place.

### **1.10.3 EQUITY**

According to the World Book dictionary (2005:717), equity is defined as justice and fairness. In an educational context, equity relates to the practice of fairness and justice in the handling of the human resources at school, non-discrimination in terms of gender and the equal distribution of state resources to schools.

### **1.10.4 POVERTY**

Sonn (2008:183) defines poverty as the inability of individuals, households or communities to command sufficient resources in order to satisfy a socially acceptable minimum standard of living.

### **1.10.5. SCHOOL ALLOCATION**

As defined by Van Rooyen (2008:24) a school allocation is an amount allocated by the state to each ordinary public school in the country on an annual basis in order to finance non-personnel and non-capital expenditure items.

### **1.10.6 A NO FEE SCHOOL**

As explained by Van Rooyen (2008: 43), a no fee school is a public school in which school governing body cannot levy compulsory school fees. According to section 39(7) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, to be declared a no fee school, the school should satisfy two criteria which are: The school should have been placed in a national quintile that has been identified by the Minister, in terms of section 39(7), paragraph 158 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 and as being in need of a total prohibition on compulsory school fees. Secondly, the school receives as per learner, school allocation, as defined in paragraph 87 and 113 of section 39 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 that is greater than or equal to the no fee threshold for the year in question.

### **1.10.7. SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY**

According to Mbatsane (2006:17), a school governing body is a body of parents, educator representatives, the principal, learner representatives (in case of secondary school) and representatives of the non-teaching staff. The School Governing Body is democratically elected to perform governance functions for a school as contemplated in section 1(6) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. Section 23 of South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, provides for the co-option of community members to assist in discharging its functions, who also become School Governing Body members. This body also determines the policies and rules by which a school is organized and controlled.

### **1.10.8. CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT**

Kruger in Squelch and Lemmer (2002:103) defines curriculum management as the co-ordination and structuring of different departments and subjects in the school and activities in a school in such a way as to accomplish educative teaching.

### **1.10.9. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Kruger as Bloch by Squelch and Lemmer (2002:46) defines parental involvement as the activity and willing participation of parents in a wide range of school-based and home-based activities which may be educational or non-educational. It extends from supporting and upholding the school ethos to supervising children's homework at home.

### **1.10.10. FINANCIAL YEAR**

According to section 1 of South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, a financial year can be defined as a year ending 31 March: or in relation to a public entity that existed when the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 took effect and that has a different financial year in terms of other legislation, means that financial year, provided the National Treasury has approved that other financial year.

### **1.10.11 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

According to Van Rooyen (2008:5), a financial statement can be defined as a balanced sheet, an income statement, a cash-flow statement, any other statements that may be prescribed; and any notes to these statements.

### **1.10.12 PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT**

Glatter in (Bush and Coleman, 2004:4) explain the professional management of a school as being concerned with the internal operation of educational institutions, and also with their relationships with their environment, that is, their communities



## **1.11 CONCLUSION**

An in-depth understanding of educational policies by all stakeholders of a school remains a serious challenge in the education system of our country. National policies are debated at parliament level, drafted as papers and developed as legislations and then sent to schools through district and regional offices to schools where they are supposed to be implemented. The provincial departments do not give any support to the people who have to implement policy at school level correctly. In some cases, access to these policy documents remains a big challenge. The lack of knowledge, with regards to the implementation of policy leads to the misinterpretation and misapplication of educational policies in public schools. One current legislation in education that has been both been praised and criticized is the policy on no fee schools. A critical factor in the successful implementation of the policy on no fee schools lies with the correct understanding of the implications of being declared a no fee school.

The discussion in this chapter outlines the problem under investigation, presents the aims and rationale of the study, its significance, research design and ethical considerations. The study was conducted in three schools, one secondary school and two primary schools. All the schools sampled in the investigation have been declared as no fee schools by the Minister. In this chapter, the researcher has also acknowledged limitations in the study.

## 2 CHAPTER TWO

### 2.1 *Introduction*

According to Mertler (2005:51), by reviewing literature, a researcher can identify a topic, narrow its focus and gather information for developing a research design. As indicated by Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2008:38), prospective researchers should acquaint themselves with previous research on a particular topic before they start planning their research. The researcher has done an extensive review of literature that has been published and related to the research problem in order to in order to be aware of inconsistencies and gaps that may justify further research. The researcher has also reviewed related literature in order to identify flaws in the research which may range from methodical weaknesses, contextual weaknesses as well as conceptual weaknesses. (Maree and Westhuizen, 2007: 3) The review of literature has enabled the researcher to indicate where the research fit in. The researcher has also reviewed literature in order to establish the connections between the study and what other researchers have said, done and discovered before the researcher. The literature that the researcher has reviewed covers literature from South Africa and other parts of the world. The literature that the researcher has reviewed includes journals, dissertations, theses, articles, reports, books and legislation related to the policy on no fee schools in general and the implications of being declared a no fee school.

As indicated by Bell (2005:100), the review of literature should involve questioning the assumptions, querying claims made for which no evidence has been provided, considering the findings of one researcher, compared to those of others and evaluating them. This is exactly what the researcher has done in his review of literature related to the research topic. The researcher has attempted to establish whether the previous researchers have selected, organized and classified their findings in a coherent pattern. The researcher has also gone further to establish whether the previous researchers have produced concepts or built a theoretical structure that could explain facts and the relationship between them. The literature that the researcher has review has been structured by the

researcher to critique the status of knowledge of other researchers on the topic in a coherent and systematic manner that befits an academic enquiry.

## 2.2. The implementation and impact of the no fee and school exemption policies

Giese, Zide, Koch and Hall (2009) conducted a study that sought to review the South African National Norms and Standards for school funding and the regulations related to the exemption of parents to the payment of school fees in public schools. The study also investigated mechanisms at national, provincial and local levels to support and monitor the implementation of these policies. The study also documented the experiences of school leadership in the implementation of the policies. The study also investigated the intended and unintended impact of the funding norms of schools. The researcher argues in favour of clearly stipulated objectives of the research. The researchers have managed to give a clear indication of what they intended to cover in the study through specific, unambiguous and clear objectives.

With regards to methodology and research design, Giese, Zide and Hall used both the qualitative and quantitative approaches to the study. In-depth interviews were conducted with principals and members of the school governing bodies from 22 schools. The sampled schools came from Western Cape, Limpop and Eastern Cape. The researcher argues for the use of such a sample with different demographic and geographical economic backgrounds. As Thomas (2004:105) puts it, given our limited resources, we cannot study the whole world but only parts of it. The researcher contends for the uses of a variety of research methods in the study, which id in-depths interview scrutiny of related documents. It is the researcher' assumption that the use of other research methods like the use of surveys could have yielded optimal data in terms of whether the schools are challenged or not by the implementation of the policy on school fees exemptions as well as the impact of the declaration of certain schools into no fee schools. The author has picked the omission of a theoretical framework that guided the researchers reasoning in the conduct of the study. It has been difficult for the author to establish the lens through which the study was conducted. Giese, Zide and Hall are commended for a clear development of a conceptual framework in the study.

The findings documented in the study included that the introduction of no fee schools were not done in a manner that addressed the principle of equity, a matter which led to the introduction of conditional grants. Psacharopoulos (1971:75) believes that educational allocations are only beneficial to politicians in terms of votes and popularity but the allocations have adverse severe efficiency and equity effects. Andrew and Taylor (2007:2) also believe that the declaration of elementary schools into no fee schools brought along a lot of dilemmas with regards to the allocation of state resources. This viewpoint is opposed by Chisholm (2003:176), who maintains that a major priority of the State and the Department of Education is the achievement of equity in educational spending. Chisholm (2003:176, validates her argument by citing that, within the education budget, increased spending mostly goes to redressing imbalances and inequalities in primary and secondary schooling. This viewpoint is reiterated by Carter (2008). As Carter (2008:20) puts it, the government's approach was to ensure that a total financial "pie" of resources was kept with a predetermined size and shared equitably across the provinces based on the criteria of equitable share.

I argue in favor of the method that Giese, Zide and Hall have used to arrive at this finding, which is the scrutiny of documentary sources at school level. As indicated by Nieuwenhuis (2007:82), when a researcher has used the scrutiny of documents as a data gathering technique, he or she will focus on all types of written communications that may shed light on the phenomena he or she is investigating. Written sources may include published and unpublished documents, company reports, memoranda, agendas, administrative documents, letters, reports emails, messages, faxes, newspaper articles or any other document that is connected to the investigation. The authors have managed to substantiate the use of documentary sources through quantitative statistics provide in the study. One other documented finding was that the lack of capacity building amongst school governing bodies in financial management by the provincial departments. The lack of basic knowledge on the National Norms and Standards for School Funding by officials involved in financial management led to serious financial irregularities which affected the performance of schools. The study also documented that the exemption of parents from the payment of school fees was not properly addressed at school level across the twenty schools in the three provinces which are Western Cape, Eastern Cape and

Limpopo. The authors contend for the fact that parents were not given a proper explanation about their right to be exempted from the payment of school fees. It is also documented in the study that between 2005 and 2007 large increase were made to the poorest quintiles. As a result, teaching and learning resources were efficiently and effectively delivered to these schools in the poorest quintiles.

Another documented finding in the study is that system of no fee schools has attracted a number of drop-outs back to the secondary schools of the three provinces which are Limpopo, Eastern Cape and Western Cape. It is also documented as a finding that the increased enrollments affected the teacher-pupil ratio. As a result of overcrowding in these schools the teacher pupil-ratio became 1:70 in Limpopo, 1:65 in the Western Cape and 1:65 in the Eastern Cape. The study also found out that lawlessness increased in the Limpopo Province and the Western Cape as a result of overcrowding. Sporadic incidents of violence were reported in the Sekhukhune district of the Limpopo Province. The study also found out that similar cases of violence were reported around many high schools in the Cape Flats, a suburb notorious for crime and bloodshed in the Western Province. The study also documented that the introduction of no fee schools brought an economic sigh of relief to households plagued by poverty. The study addressed the implications of being declared a no fee school for curriculum and financial management. The researcher has picked an omission of the implications of being declared a no fee school for governance, parental involvement and professional management. These are some of the gaps that the researcher intends filling in this research.

## ***2.2 How equitable is free education?***

A study was conducted by Psacharopoulos in 1977 to investigate whether free education was equitable or not. The primary research question was: How equitable is free education. The study was conducted in the United States of America after the introduction of free education. Psacharopoulos used a sample of 32 countries in the study. The sampled countries in the study included Brazil, Chile, England, France, Greece, India, Iran, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, Pakistan, Senegal, Vietnam, Argentina,

Venezuela, Ceylon, Malaysia, Syria, Malawi, United States of America, Nigeria, Ghana, Athens, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Britain, Italy and Canada. The approach used in the study is both qualitative and quantitative. To collect data for the study, Psacharopoulos used surveys in all the 32 sampled countries. The objectives of the study were to determine whether the allocation of educational resources was distributed equitably in countries who have introduced free education. The population of the study was drawn from politicians as lawmakers, managers of institutions of higher learning, tutors, students, senior state officials in the education departments of the sampled countries and parents of learners enrolled at institutions of higher learning. The study was contextualized to institutions of higher learning only.

Psacharopoulos' thesis is that in reality, free education is likely to have the opposite effects to the ones advocated by politicians, namely, that it may aggravate rather than alleviate social disparities. According to Psacharopoulos (1977:1), although education is free of charge at university level, enrolments are rationed by non-price means which favours well to do families and constrain programmes of distributing resources on an equal basis for everyone. The author's main contention is that education is never free unless it benefits politicians and their children, especially in higher education. Sayed (2008: agrees with Psacharopoulos by saying that more importantly, inequalities between the rich and the poor are more manifest and exacerbate at higher levels of education. These are some of the reasons why effective poverty reduction in and through education requires investments in all levels of education and not merely a narrow focus on primary and basic education. Van Rooyen believes that increased funding in education does not benefit politicians per se, but enhances the provisioning of quality education in public schools. According to Van Rooyen (2006:3), the quest for the improvement of educational quality has been recognized as the most critical challenge facing the most developed and developing nations. This was reaffirmed at the 2000 World Conference on Education for All in Dakar, which conclude that good quality education is essential for supporting economic development and addressing poverty, equipping learners with requisite skills and knowledge, supporting people to transform their lives and the society in which they live, and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Psacharopoulos sees things differently. According to Psacharopoulos (1977:75), education subsidies

towards higher education in America were beneficial to politicians in terms of votes and popularity, but have adverse efficiency, equity and employment effects. Psacharopoulos argues against the unequal distribution of school resources across the states of America which practices free education.

The findings documented in the study are that the distribution of resources in schools that are declared as no fee schools is not done on a manner that addresses equality and equity. Supporting the argument, (Hay 1995 :), states that geographical differences and inequalities are in some sense, inequitable, unfair and unjust and that educational policies should seek to eliminate such imbalances. It is also documented in the study that students from elite schools still get a bigger slice meant for the economic relief of households who cannot afford decent education. This is true also of the education system in South Africa. Van Rooyen (2008 :) believes that inequalities still exist in the allocation of resources in ordinary public schools. According to Van Rooyen (2008: ), the poor rural and working class communities still suffer the legacy of large classes, deplorable physical conditions and the absence of learning resources.

When doing a review of the study, the researcher has identified claims which do not have a base or documented evidence. To say that free education may aggravate social disparities needs to be empirically verified. The author does not mention this claim as his own assumption. In reality, the international world sees free education as the main strategy for the alleviation of poverty. The researcher's assumption is that the study was conducted in way back in 1977 and does not reflect modern political reforms in education. The review of this study has also indicated that the author used the critical theory as the only paradigm that guided his reasoning. The researcher assumes that the functionalist paradigm would have added some flesh to the reasoning of the author as it unpacks the roles of the various constitutive components of an organization, a factor that would have brought under investigation the impact of the inequalities Bloch in the study to school governance, financial management, curriculum management and the professional management of the school as an organization.

The author did not say any thing on the implications of being declared a no fee school, a factor that strengthens the investigation of a study of this magnitude. He concentrated only on the inequalities of resource distribution and omitted the impact or the effect of these inequalities in the education provision of America. Lastly, Psacharopoulos (1977) has confined his study to institutions of higher learning and said nothing about the inequitable distribution of state resources in basic education. The study under investigation fits in that identified gap.

### ***2.3 The relationship between increased funding and the quality of education***

The debate on who exactly should fund education in South Africa currently continues across almost all the political parties everyday. The impact of increase funding in the quality of education is also a current issue dominating the media charts in South Africa in the post-apartheid era. A study on the relationship between increased funding and the quality of education was conducted by Van Rooyen in 2006. The objectives of the study were to determine the link between increased funding and the quality of education at school level. Van Rooyen (2006:4) used a case study design which comprised of the European Commission and the South African education system with regards to the perceptions of quality education. The study on the relationship between increased funding and the quality of education followed a qualitative research design with the scrutiny of documentary sources as the main data collection tool.

Van Rooyen (2006:5) believes that quality education is influenced by four factors which are: the adequacy of state allocations to schools, the translation of monetary inputs into school resources, the translation of school resources into learner performance and lastly, school fees and other private inputs demanded by schools. This viewpoint is shared by Giese, Zide, Koch and Hall (2009:14) and Gustafson (2006) According to Gustafson (2006), as Bloch by Carter (2008:27), there is a link between the quality of the school's physical infrastructure and performance. As put by these authors, no fee schools continue to operate on budgets that do not allow for the delivery of quality in education, or the



provision of school infrastructure that is conducive to learning. Sayed (2008), has a different view on strategies that school can use to attain quality in education, especially with the view to improve learning in impoverished communities. According to Sayed (2008:60), the improvement of quality involves six inter-related factors which are, creating an inclusive and responsive learning environment so that schools are safe and healthy, ensuring that there is effective teaching and learning in schools, the provision of effective learning resources to ensure a quality learning environment, the presence of qualified, motivated and committed teachers, developing robust monitoring and assessment systems to monitor student performance and improving institutional capacity.

On the other hand, Van der Berg and Louw (2006) as Bloch by Carter (2008:26), believes that there is a positive logical link between household resources and performance at school. In a household with more resources, the child is transported to school, given good nutrition, its health is invested in, and he/ she is given education material and supplemented with private tuition. Carter argues against this claim. According to Carter (2008:26), the link between the socio-economic status of the household stated by Van den Berg and Louw applies only to the wealthiest quintiles, which are four and five and not quintile one, two and three which are poor quintiles.

Maile (2008:158) views the link between educational attainment and the level of poverty from an employment perspective with regards to the parent. According to Maile (2008:158), there is a close link between educational attainment, the type of work an individual is engaged in and his or her associated earning potential. The researcher argues against this notion on the grounds that the performance or attainment stated in the study does not have anything to do with the child at the centre of the learning activity. Maile's focal point is on the parent of the learner who has to support the learning of the child financially to enhance quality education. The researcher also contends the fact that although the central theme of the author's study relates to attainment in education, it totally removes the child from the picture. Fedderke and Luiz (2002) on the other hand perceive things in a different light. These authors convincingly argue for the important role that parental involvement can play towards qualitative learning. Parental

involvement can help force decision makers to be effective (Fedderke and Luiz 2002:184) the findings documented in the study indicate that quality performance at school level is influenced by the resource allocated to the school.

On the other hand, Chisholm (2003) links the provision of quality education with a fresh redistribution of state resources to schools from communities that are poverty-challenged. As Chisholm (2003:187) puts it, on the whole, quality improvement in education and training can be enhanced through the redistribution of state resources on an equitable basis, which will enable the removal of the backlog of classrooms, the improvement of pupil-teacher ratios, the reduction of repetition and drop-out rates in black schools, the introduction of change in governance, curriculum development and the enhancement of the professional skills of educators.

The review of this particular literature indicates that nothing has been researched on the implications of being declared a no fee school for financial management, governance, professional management and curriculum management. It is upon this gap, that I have conducted a study on the implications of being declared a no fee school.

## **2.4 To fee or not to fee**

The issue of whether it is parents or the state that is liable for the funding of schools is a matter that still dominates public debates, opinion polls and in the media. Politicians rush to the media to make statements about free education in order to communicate their political agendas. According to section 34(1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, *the State must fund public schools from public revenue on an equitable basis in order to ensure the proper exercise of the right of learners to education and the redress of past inequalities* A study on whether to fee or not to fee education was conducted by Andrews and Taylor. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 squarely places the responsibility of the funding of public schools on the shoulders of the State which collects money from public revenue. This funding of public schools continues to spark

debates about the responsibility of the State and the responsibility of parents of learners in public schools.

The study on to fee or not to fee aimed at establishing who should pay for the education of a child in a public school? The study interrogated federal and state budgets in the United States of America. The study also interrogates the effective and efficient access to and utilization of a variety of state resources for education. Opinion polls and surveys were used as data collection tools in the study. A summary of the documented findings in the study is that family participation in the American education is viewed as the payment of school fees for those children that have been disqualified by the eligibility criteria. According to Mackey and Andrew (2007:14, not all citizens in the various states of America benefit from free education. Physically handicapped learners and learners from poor households are given first preference. I contend the fact that households are responsible for the payment of their children's tuition needs. I argue against the shifting of the responsibility of the United States of America to other households who are called participants. As Mackey and Andrew (2007:14) put it, school administrators are increasingly forced to respond to the challenges of increased enrollment, increased costs and the potential for decreased revenue from a different perspective. Oketch and Rolleston (2007: 140) also cite that the introduction of no fee schools in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania resulted in increased enrollments which in turn impacted negatively on the distribution of resources like textbooks, furniture and other support materials like teaching aids.

Van Rooyen (2006) agrees that it is the responsibility of the state to fund education in public schools but goes on to add other sources that have to pay a part in the funding of education in public schools. According to Van Rooyen (2006:12), the funding of public schools (from a South African perspective) is the responsibility of the state, the parent community of the school and other stakeholders involved in education. This view is also supported by the South African Schools Act 84 Of 1996. According to section 34(1) of SASA, the state must fund public schools from public revenue on an equitable basis in order to ensure the proper exercise of the rights of learners to education and the redress of

past inequalities. Van Rooyen's role of other stakeholders in the funding of public education is also supported by the South African Schools Act 84 with specific reference to the School Governing Body. As stipulated in section 36(1), a governing body of a public school must take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the state in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school to all learners at the school.

The researcher's argument about who should fund education in public schools can also be understood in the context of the Bill of Rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. According to section 29(1) of the Constitution Act 108 of 1996, everyone has the right to basic education, including adult basic education; and to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available, and accessible. The right to education can be actualized when the state make all resources progressively available for public school to utilize effectively.

Nzekwe (2006) has a different viewpoint with regards to the role of other stakeholders in the alleviation of poverty which also affect educational provisioning in South Africa. According to Nzekwe (2006:214), business has a prominent role to play in addressing the wrongs of the past apartheid regime in South Africa. Public and private in corporate social investments continued to give an impetus to the change being forged through public policy. Nzekwe (2006:216) argues against the nature of funding education by the South African business community and the desired objectives of such business fraternities. Nzekwu contends the fact that business is reluctant to contribute to Early Childhood Development despite its impact on education and the alleviation of poverty in the long term. The author's main thesis is that stakeholders like the business fraternity should play a role in the funding of education which in the long term will benefit the broader society. According to a finding documented by Wolhuter, Lemmer and deWet (2007), pres-school education in Botswana is mostly provided for by private enterprises, individual or community based organizations and non-governmental organizations. Communities raise up funds to put up infrastructure and the government provides funding

for the purchase of educational materials. The private-owned schools are financed from funds generated from tuition fees and development levies.

## ***2.5 Policies on free primary and secondary education in East Africa***

In recent years several countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa re-introduced free primary education policies in line with both Education for All and Millennium Development Goals international agendas. The access to free quality education was the driving force behind the successful implementation of free education in Africa. (Oketoch and Rolleston: 2007). As a result of globalization, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania developed policies on free primary and secondary education.

A study on policies on free primary and secondary education in East Africa was conducted by Oketch and Rollestone in 2007. The primary objective of this investigation was to examine how countries from East Africa fund their education systems. The secondary objective of the study on policies on free primary and secondary education in East Africa was to review the evolution of policies in the East African region in a historical context. The main point of focus by the Oketch and Rollestone was the formulation of policies for access to primary and secondary education in three countries from East Africa. Oketch and Rollestone also evaluated whether policies on free education changed over time or not and the reasons for such changes over time. The three sampled countries included Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The sampling technique used in the study was the purposive sampling. The main criteria for the selection of these sampled sites were countries that had attained independence from colonial rule in the early 1960's. The countries sampled in the study were chosen because they have had success stories in the implementation of free education policies which successfully paved the way for policies on free education.

As indicated by Oketoch and Rolleston (2007:131), Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania have made efforts to expand access to free education since their independence. Sharing

common borders the three countries which are Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania came together to form the East Africa Community, a loose federation to pursue common goals with regards to the formulation of policies on free education. The research methodology employed in the study was surveys conducted in the various regions of the three countries. Coupled with this research methodology were structured interviews with a specific reference to the impact of free education in the three countries. The sampling population was drawn from politicians, interest groups, education planners and parent statutory bodies.

The findings documented in the study are common in all the three countries and only differ in statistics. The main findings relate to the challenges that the three countries faced after the introduction of free education in their countries. According to Oketch and Rolleston (2007: 131-153) the main documented findings in the study are that the introduction of free education in East Africa made parents of learners from the three sampled states, which are Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania to fetch their children from farms where they served as child laborers and enrolled them in public schools. As Oketch and Rolleston (2007:135) indicate it, policies on no fee schools produced a broad skill base. The skills produced at the no fee schools improved the lives of the people in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The policies on free education also contributed to the upliftment of the economies of the three East African states mentioned in the study. According to Oketch and Rolleston (2007:131), the findings of the study on policies on free primary and secondary education in the three sample countries which are Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The main findings in the study relate to the challenges that Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania faced after their introduction of free education in primary and secondary schools.

The first key conclusion in the study indicated an improved access to education for Africans who have been deprived the right to learn by colonialism. Carter (2008), Maile (2008) and Chisholm (2007) supports this argument by citing that racial segregation, colonialism, poverty and the unequal distribution of resources by the states have contributed to the high levels of illiteracy in African children. On the other hand, Ziddy

(2008:221) thinks that the high levels of illiteracy in African children cannot be attributed to poverty alone, but to the early marriage of girls and the lack of policies by African states on the prioritization of education for African children. The fact that young girls are engaged in domestic reproduction, child-bearing, family rearing, various economic services are factors that have contributed to the high level of illiteracy to girls in Africa and in particular to Zanzibar.

It was documented in the study that the governments of the three countries which are Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, restricted the expansion of resources which negatively impacted the distribution of resources in schools. Govender, Greenstein, Mokgalane, Samson and Vally (1997) do not allude to this viewpoint. According to Govender, Greenstein, Mokgalane, Samson and Vally (1997:349), there is a significant expansion of the systems of modern education which is essential to meet the imperatives of equity, redress and development, through growth, most occurring within a planned framework, linked to capacity, availability of resources, enhanced quality and national human resource needs.

It was also found that Government corruption constrained the equitable distribution of educational resources which was characterized by inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Teflo (2008) believes that government corruption derails Africa from its mandate to provide basic services to the poor which includes education, housing, health and the fight against poverty. As Teflo (2008:69) puts it, after several attempts, interventions and experiments, foreign aid to Africa has failed to ignite sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation. This could be due to mismanagement or sheer greed and corruption, which are endemic to the continent. On the other hand, Maile (2009:2) believes that the challenge faced by Africa is to sustain coherence and the overall balance of policies with democratic principles. This partly defines the role of government in setting rules for the provision of public services, both in the sense of defining freedoms and also in imposing constraints in the way services are provided.

Another challenge brought about by the introduction of free education is that the drop-out rates increased by 37% and the survival rates fell from 59% to 37% in public school. Ziddy (2008:222) and Mackey and Taylor (2007:14), believe that enrollments in public schools, especially at primary level have risen massively resulting into backlogs in the supply of resources to public schools. The researcher contends the fact that no fee education has contributed to drop-outs in public schools. In actual fact, the opposite is true. From a South African context, the introduction of policies that advocate poverty-based funding in public schools have attracted learners who had dropped from school for many years, both in the primary and secondary schools to register for formal tuition. Poverty-based funding in South Africa has come with programmes like the National School Nutrition Programme which has attracted parents from poor households to register their children in such schools. At the present moment, schools that have been categorized as poor quintiles and consequently declared no fee schools battle with overcrowding and serious financial constraints which has a negative impact in the quality of education to be rendered under those circumstances. As substantiated by Bloch (2008:129), classroom challenges like overcrowding, subject knowledge, time on task, teaching methods and the availability of resources are central to the enhancement of quality in no fee schools.

Another documented conclusion was that the gender gap in East Africa closed considerably and girls accounted for 49% of the enrollment at primary school level. Before the introduction of policies on free education, girls in East Africa had to work in the fields and rear children and were not afforded opportunities to attend schools.

The last key conclusion in the study on policies on free primary and secondary education in East Africa is that there is also evidence of the rise of the teacher: pupil ratio and a high rate of the examination failures at the end of the primary school phase. In the light of the main findings of the study the researcher can deduce that the introduction of free education in these three countries, namely Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania did not yield the intended results. Dekker and Van Schalkwyk (1989) share the same viewpoint. According to Dekker and Van Schalkwyk (1989:395), the recent history of the provision



of education in Kenya did not meet the objectives of free education that was enthusiastically and confidentially set. Despite attempts to make education accessible to more children, the system has remained fairly selective and elitist (Dekker and Van Schalkwyk: 396) Wolhuter, Lemmer and de Wet maintains that the provision of free education in South Africa is still challenged. As indicated by Wolhuter, Lemmer and Van Schalkwyk (2007:43), examples of challenges that the South African education system currently face include: the dismantling of the structure and legacies of the previously unfair and unequal provisioning system; poverty especially in the rural areas of the country and among the previously disadvantaged groups, the multilingual education system; and the manifold demand of maintaining and provisioning schools and other resources

The study, as contextualized to Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania indicates some gaps on the implications that these no fee schools had the governance of the school. Scantly, mention is made of its impact for curriculum management, only with regards to enrollments, teacher/ pupil ratio and the high failure rates at the end of the primary phase. Nothing has been touched on financial management except for the corrupt practices of certain officials at government level and nothing about the school level. The authors are also silent about whether or not the management of school finances impact on the quality of education provided. It is exactly, one of the gaps that the researcher's investigation looks into the implications of being declared a no fee school.

## ***2.6 Can eliminating school fees in poor districts boost enrollment?***

The charging of school fees is a much debated issue in developing countries, including South Africa. Criticisms have been leveled against the ruling party in the government which is the Africa National Congress by other politicians and interest groups. A report issued by the Sunday Times newspaper (9 July 2009) indicated that the abolishment of school fees in public schools have been met with a lot of controversy. According to the

Sunday Times (2009:13), some principals in Limpopo complained that the elimination of school fees was not efficiently and effectively carried out. At the same time the total elimination of school fees was welcomed with gladness and cheer, especially poor household who have been relieved from the pangs of high educational costs. The question is now: has the abolition of school fees affected enrollments at school level, if so, how?

A study was conducted by Borkman in 2009 to evaluate the impact of South Africa's fee elimination programme that was targeted at the two poorest quintiles of schools based on a community poverty score. With regards to methodology, the study indicates the incorporation of two empirical methods to collect data. The first method used to analyze data was the fixed effect (FE). The FE estimator took advantage of the panel structure of the data to identify the treatment effect. The second empirical approach used by the author in the study was the regression discontinuity. (RD). According to Borkman (2009:3), the RD was feasible because data on the exact poverty scores awarded to each school were obtained for a single large province.

The conclusions drawn from this empirical study are that the overall abolition of school fees has been reasonably effective in increasing secondary school enrollments in particularly poor communities. Govender, Greenstein and Kgobe (2003:220), think differently about enrolment dilemmas in the South African context, unlike the situation in other developing countries in their post-independence period, no massive expansion of the education system is expected in South Africa. The out of school population is estimated at 85 000 (about 10% of the relevant group) and the annual rate of growth of the pupil population are 341 903 teachers, 61% of whom are at the primary level. These figures translated into a pupil/ teacher ratio of 34:1, across the board, with racial, provincial and regional variations: the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal show the least favourable ratios, especially for African and primary education.

Documented as finding in the study, is that schools in the wealthiest quintiles, which are quintile four and five, were no hit by high enrollment rates at secondary school level. The study also concluded that, households from middle-class income earners resorted to

enroll their children at no fee schools as a result of credit constraints and other personally financial dilemmas. Oketcho and Roleston (2007) also allude to the fact that the elimination of school fees in public schools contributed to the massive increase in enrollments at both primary and secondary school but also indicate that the declaration of certain schools into no fee schools in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya also contributed to some learner drop-outs. According to Oketch and Rollestone (2007:144), drop-out rates increase and survival rates fell from 59% to 37%. Wiczorek (2008) and Carter (2008) believe that the abolition of school fees increased accessibility to education by children from poor households, a factor that also had a negative impact on education because of overcrowding which resulted in other schools being under-resourced.

The study only indicated one challenge faced by public schools as a result of the abolition of school fees, namely, the rise in school enrollments which affect the quality of education in these schools. The author is silent about the impact of the massive enrollment rises with regards to resource allocation by the state and the level of parental involvement at the school as a result of the policy on no fee school. The author is silent about the impact of the phenomenon on the school's general performance, discipline and professional management. The author has made an omission of the impact of the policy on no fee school for its governance, a factor that is crucial in modern education systems today.

## ***2.7 The financial accountability of school governing bodies***

Prior to 1994, the South African education system can be traced to racist policies that were developed by the old apartheid regime to promote racial exclusivity and the supremacy of certain racial groups in education provisioning. Schools were governed by statutory bodies like the parent-teacher association and school committees. This structure had little influence on the school's critical governance issues. At the center of management lied the principal who led the school unilaterally and bureaucratically. Teachers and other support staff had to take instructions without questioning. A dominant feature of the school's management was the "top down" approach used by principals.

They promoted whoever they liked, demoted whoever they liked, formulated rules that enhanced the fear of the principal and also took unilateral decisions in using the school's financial resources.

The dawn of the democratic era in 1994 brought about legislation in education to democratize school governance in South Africa. This led to the development of the South African Schools Act 84 in 1996. It is the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 that brought school governing bodies in the picture of school governance. The purpose of the new legislation in South Africa was to provide for a uniform system for the organization, governance and funding of schools; to amend and repeal certain laws relating to schools and to provide for matters connected there with. The new democratic dispensation necessitated a transformation of the past education system which was based on racial inequality and segregation. South Africa needed a new national system for schools which would redress past injustices and in educational provision, providing an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities. This new national system of education had to advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance. The new national legislation in the democratic dispensation in South Africa had to promote and advance the cultural and language diversity of all people and also uphold the rights of learners, parents and educators. The new national legislation sought to promote uniform standards for the organization, governance and funding of schools throughout the Republic of South Africa.

A study was conducted on the financial accountability of school governing body members with regards to school finance in South Africa by Mbatsane in 2006. The purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which school governing bodies of section 21 schools in Mpumalanga's Ehlanzeni region were able to account for the school fund they managed. Another documented purpose of the study was to investigate what the school governing body perceives in the area of accountability, which includes the state, parents and the public. The focal point of the study was to determine the parties to

account for the management of the school's fund and to hold such parties responsible for something done or not done in their management of school finances. Particularly the School Governing Body, also known as the SGB. The study also sought to investigate the knowledge, understanding and skills in financial management that school governing bodies require to improve the culture of accountability.

The approach used in the study was qualitative. Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The main research question of the study is:

What does the SGB understand about accountability in the school's financial management?

The sample of the study was drawn from members of the school governing body in three schools. One school was from a rural area which is a quintile 1 school. This means that the school cannot levy compulsory school fees to parents as it was categorized by the Mpumalanga Provincial Department of Education. The second sampled school is one from a semi-urban area and falls under quintile two. This school cannot levy compulsory school fees to parents as it had been declared a no fee school. The last school came from a deep-rural area and is a quintile one school which means that the school cannot levy compulsory school fees to parents. All the three sampled schools in the study were chosen because all of them had been declared into no fee schools by the Mpumalanga Department of Education. The study indicates the use of the purposive sampling technique which set specific criteria justifying the choice of the three sampled schools. The type of interviews used in the study were semi-structured interviews and the documentary sources scrutinized included minutes of the school's finance committee, records on the approval of requisitions, minutes of the SGB meetings, the finance policy of the school, the budget and minutes of parents' meetings.

One of the main findings documented in the study is that school governing bodies lack accountability with regards to school funds. The dilemma picked here related here to whom exactly is accountable for missing funds and for inaccurate financial records and

the overall reporting to the general council of parents on school funds. A misconception of this nature pointed to the principal as the final accounting officer of the Department of education. As indicated by Giese, Zide, Koch and Hall (2009:12), the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 requires that school governing bodies maintain records of all funds received and spent by the school, and of assets, liabilities and financial transactions. Schools must submit an audited financial statement to the provincial education department for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31 December each year, by 30 June of the following year.

According to section 37 of the South African Schools Act 84, allocated functions of the school governing body are spelt out in detail. The Act uses the term ‘school governing body’ and not one particular individual as responsible for the school account. The researcher argues against the notion that the principal of a public school is the final accounting officer of the department. According to the Schoonbe case as Bloch by Van Rooyen (2007) the accountability of the school fund is a collective responsibility of the entire school governing body. If funds go missing from the school account, then the entire school governing body shall have to account for those funds. According to judge Moseneke as Bloch by Van Rooyen, in the Schoonbee case, the principal of a school cannot be held liable for the misappropriation of funds at school. According to section 1(a) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the principal must-in undertaking the professional management of a public school must carry out duties which include but are limited to:

(i) The implementation of all the educational programmes and curriculum activities. The researcher argues against the condemnation of the school principal, either by parents, the authorities or any interest group when the public school’s financial boat hit the rocks. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 does not indicate a specific financial responsibility attached to the school principal.

Another documented finding in the study is that school lack the capacity to compile accurate and clear financial statements, a factor which compromises their accounting

standards. Data was found to be wrongly captured which indicates a strong challenge to the knowledge base of the schools' accounting officers. This led to unwise decisions to be taken by the school governing body. According to Spiro (1988:13), financial decisions are usually formulated on the basis of information generated by the accounting system. The proper interpretation of data requires an understanding of the assumptions underlying such systems, the convention adopted in recording information and the limitations inherent in the information presented.

The researcher argues against the non-availability programmes to train school governing body in the area of accounting and financial management in general. As indicated by Mokgalane, Vally and Greenstein (1996:243), while the equity school-based formula approach was favoured on the grounds of equity, transparency and flexibility, its implementation would require a management information system, a school index of needs and considerable skills in financial management, all of which are not in existence, at the time of the print. This argument validates the researcher's assumption that reasonable financial skills are needed by school government bodies to render an efficient and effective financial function in public schools. Bloch (2008:127) also believes that South Africa is a country on the brink of expanded growth and the current production of high-level skills is insufficient to meet the stresses and demands of growth in education. Furthermore, in a country with great expectations of equity, education is falling in a way that particularly impacts on poor, rural and township school.

Another documented finding in the study is that the low level of literacy among the parent component of the school governing body challenges their understanding and interpretation of financial reports. As Mbatsane (2006:89) puts it, although the school governing body provides both the written financial reports to the parents and also take pains to explain the report in detail, this seems to be a self-serving exercise as parents, due to low levels of literacy, cannot engage with the report or understand the financial information. As cautioned by Mokgalane, Vally and Greenstein (1996:246), it must be taken into account that parents are volunteers expected to take on significant administrative tasks for the department of education without pay. The researcher argues

against the fact that the South African Schools Act does not specify the level of literacy for members elected in to school governing bodies. According to section 23(1) of SASA, subject to this Act, the membership of the governing body of an ordinary public school comprises of elected members, the principal, in his or her official capacity and co-opted members. In exclusion of the principal in his or her official capacity, section 2 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 spells out clearly that elected members of the governing body shall comprise members of each of the following categories, namely, parents of learners at the school, educators at the school, members of staff at the school who are non-educators and learners in the eight grade or higher at the school. The researcher's argument is that no level of literacy is specified by SASA as criteria for membership into the school governing body.

The last main documented finding in the study relates to the support given to school governing body members by the Mpumalanag Provincial Department of Education. According to Mbatsane (2006:90) the level of support given by the department to school governing body members is only limited to basic knowledge on financial management. It is documented in the study as a conclusion that the people who train school governing bodies on how to manage school funds, are themselves challenged with accounting and auditing skills. As a result, they cannot offer effective training to the school governing body. This viewpoint is substantiated by the South African Schools Act. According to section 19 (1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, out of funds appropriated for this purposes by the provincial legislature, the Head of Department must establish a programme to provide introductory training for newly elected governing bodies to enable them to perform their functions. According to section 19(b) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 the introductory training programe should provide continuing training to school governing bodies to promote the effective performance of their functions or to enable them to assume additional functions.

According to section 19(2) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the support role that the school principal and other officials should give to school governing bodies to enhance their capacity and the effective performance of their allocated functions as



contemplated in section 21 of SASA. According to section 19(2) of SASA, The Head of Department must ensure that principals and other officers of the education department render all the necessary assistance to governing bodies in the performance of their functions in terms of SASA. The researcher argues for and against this provision in SASA. The researcher's argument is based on the fact that some school principals and other officials of the department of education might have not had any training in the field of financial management which makes it difficult to assist the school governing bodies in drawing accurate financial statements and procedures to be followed when drawing the income and expenditure journals, for example. Some principals and officials of the department have not done economics and accounting both at matriculation and teacher training levels. The researcher commends, on the very same note, the efforts by the department of education to provide elementary courses for newly appointed school governing bodies to enhance their capacity.

## ***2.8 The colour of money: school funding and the commodification of black children***

Equality and equity are two main objectives that the South African government wants to achieve in the provision of education. These objectives are also the two cornerstones of the South African national constitution in its efforts to address the inequalities that prevailed under the old apartheid government. A study was conducted in the United States of America by Vaught in 2008 to explore the roles of racism and whiteness in the decentralized government structure and practice of weighted student formula funding policy in an urban West Coast district. The analysis of the struggle of racism in the allocation of school resources in the study was informed by the Critical Race theory.

The main research question in the study was: To what extent does the system of funding involves white supremacy in the West Coast district of the United States of America? Other philosophical assumptions that influenced this investigation included the critical theory, feminist methodologies that work to critique larger sociocultural systems, privilege local and nondominant knowledge. Epistemologies and counter stories disrupt positivist and normative discourses (Vaught, 2008:549). Methods of data collection in the

study included interviews and observations which were framed by an effort to formulate a qualitative understanding of the policies, processes, practices and relationships that reproduced a racialized gap characterized by trends not dissimilar from those in other urban districts of the United States of America. The population sample in the study was drawn from teachers, principals of schools, central office leadership, community leaders, teacher union representatives, school board members and students.

The study documented the following findings which have been summarized by the researcher. The learners in the white race, who received a large budget for their school, couple with a sizeable allocation of learner support material, a good physical infrastructure and sophisticated ‘state of the art’ learning equipments performed well as compared to those learners who came from predominantly black schools who rendered a dismal academic performance. Van Rooyen (2006:21) believes that the dumping of extra resources into a school does not necessarily improve the school’s performance. According to Van Rooyen (2006:21) the United States of America increase funding in public schools without a significant change. As Van Rooyen (2006:22) puts it, it is usually not whether to spend more or less on school resources, but how to get the most out of marginal expenditures. The researcher argues in favour of the views of Van Rooyen. For so many years, the National Department of Education in South Africa brought incentives to motivate educators to perform better in schools. Such incentives included the introduction of the National Teacher Awards which saw the winning educator receiving a floating trophy. No efforts have been made to motivate learners to perform better even at the exit level of the schooling year. The researcher argues against the notion that a well resourced school performs better. Performance statistics released by the Department of Education in 2009 indicated that a poorly resourced high school in Limpopo Province got a 75% pass in grade twelve.

Bischoff (1997) sees things in a different light. According to Bischoff (1997: 132), the lack of funds in education undermines the delivery of quality education in South Africa. Furthermore schools are forced to make changes, to ensure that the decrease in resources does not lower overall educational standards. This view is also supported by Mackey and

Taylor (2007). According to Mackey and Taylor (2007:2), the economic down turns at the state and federal level in the United States of America have resulted in budget cuts, reductions and required priority changes in many programmes and service in their state. It is anticipated that these budget reductions will have an equal effect upon federal resources allocated to support state contributions to education. Chisholm (2003) views the impact of budgetary constrains from the human resource perspective. According to Chisholm (2003:420), budget constrains impact on how departments operate, what programmes they should mount and continuing strategies to redeploy and reduce the number of employed educators.

The researcher argues against the reduction of resources to public ordinary schools by the state. To justify the reduction of allocations to schools, some provincial departments introduced the notion of “ cost-curtailing ” which implies the reduction of teaching staff in schools, cuts in the state allocation to schools in terms of the paper budget, the halt in the building of new schools and classrooms as well as the provision of adequate furniture for public schools. This has contributed to the quality of service delivery in education. In some deep-rural schools, the boot of the principal’s car is the principal’s office, the trees are classrooms for learners and the forest is the natural sanitation facility for both educators and learners in deep-rural schools.

The same sentiment was echoed by the former Minister of Education in South Africa, Mrs. Naledi Pandor. As reported by the Democratic Alliance (2006:9), in an address in 2005, the Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, stated that thousands of learners school under trees, over 25% of the schools do not have water facilities, some 15% of schools do not have sanitation facilities and over 75% do not have libraries. It is the researcher’s argument that the availability and non-availability of school resources have an impact on the quality of service delivery in our country. As indicated by the Democratic Alliance in its report ( 2006:10), as of February 2005, the total estimated shortage of classrooms nationally, stood at 31 254 with the province of Limpopo requiring 8150, followed by the Eastern Cape with 8953 and KwaZulu- Natal with 7180. All other provinces also indicated a need for classrooms : Free State (237), Gauteng (454), Mpumalanga ( 3053),

Northern Cape ( 492)North West (750) and Western Cape( 1976) These infrastructural backlogs directly and indirectly impact on the quality of service delivery in public schools.

The second documented finding in the study is that racism is in part, contributing to the inequitable distribution of resource in some of the public schools of the West Coast district of the United States of America. Letseka (1997) as Bloch by Letseka and Breier (2008:87) give a documented evidence to suggest racism influenced resource allocation in South Africa in the pre-democratic era. In 1993, a year just before South Africa's transition to democracy, provision of educational funding was racially skewed and unequal. The apartheid regime allocated R4504 per year for the education of a white pupil, R3625 per one Indian pupil, R2855 per coloured pupil and R1532 per black pupil (Letseke and Breier, 2008:87) The author's main argument is that the unequal distribution of resources in America stems from the racial preferences practiced by senior officials who have to implement policy at school level as well as the policy makers themselves who promote racial segregation. Psacharopoulos (1971:69) share the same viewpoint. According to Psacharopoulos (1971), the allocation of educational resources in America is inequitable because it favours students from "well to do "families who can afford the direct costs of tuition charges. This has now changed in the South African context. As Wilson (2003:2) puts it, the government is however committed to the realization of socio-economic rights as laid down in the constitution, its stated goals behind equality in educational output between learners and the realization of the right to free quality basic education. The Democratic Alliance which is the official opposition party in the Parliament of the South African Republic also alludes to the views of Wilson (2003 and Psacaharopoulos (1971). According to a report issued by the Democratic Alliance (2006: 9), resource deficiencies and infrastructural backlogs undermine the right of learners to a basic education.

The influence of race, class distinctions and other differences continue to plague education internationally. As indicated by Dekker and Van Schalkwyk (1999:265), one

challenge faced by the Russian government is the transition to a new high quality and diversified schooling system. To validate the claim that modern education systems face challenges with regards to the area of governance, Mokgalane, Vally and Greenstein used a case study in one formerly ‘white only’ school in South Africa. As indicated by Mokgalana, Vally and Greenstein (1996:242), in Potgietersrus, in South Africa, a white parent had sought the use of ambiguous areas in the constitution of the school to prevent the school from changing its white character.

The study has indicated the influence of racism, especially white supremacy in the allocation of state resources. The study has however not touched on the implications for the unequal distribution of resources for governance, curriculum management and the management of parental involvement and their role in the funding of the school. These are areas that are central to the phenomenon under investigation, namely, the implications of being declared a no fee school. The study on the implications of being declared a no fee schools purposes to cover those gaps that have been identified in previous research.

## ***2.9 State poverty-based education funding: a survey of current programmes and options for improvement***

The state and federal policy makers of the United States of America have increased their focus on academic achievement for all students over the years. According to Carey (2002: 1), schools that have large numbers of low-income students face particular challenges in meeting these standards. As a result, a number of states have implemented education funding policies that direct additional resources to local school district on the basis of poverty. The researcher’s assumption is that the study bears a significant relevance to the phenomenon under study, which are the implications of being declared a no fee school. The researcher believes that the successful implementation of poverty-based funding have implications for the professional management, financial management, curriculum management, the management of parental involvement in the education of their children as well as the governance of the school.

A study was conducted in the United States of America by Carey in 2002 on state poverty-based funding programmes. The main objective of the study was to explore policy options for policymakers working to implement or expand programmes designed to improve educational funding for low-income children. As a data collection tool, the study incorporated the use of surveys. The sample in the study was drawn from 38 states known to have high levels of poverty. The study documented key findings which have been summarized by the researcher. One key finding in the study is that state poverty-based education funding varies significantly in terms of size, focus and method of funding. The researcher believes that this is true in the South African context. According to section 35(1) of the South African Schools Act, subject to the constitution and this Act, the Minister must determine national quintiles for public schools and national norms and minimum standards for the funding of public schools. According to section 35(2) of SASA, the norms and standards for school funding contemplated in subsection 1 must:

- a. Set out criteria for the distribution of state funding to all public schools in a fair and equitable manner.*
- b. Provide for a system of terms of which learners at all public schools can be placed into quintiles, referred to as national quintiles for learners, according to financial means;*
- c. Provide for a system in terms of which all public schools in the Republic can be placed into quintiles referred to as national quintiles for public schools, according to the distribution of learners in the national quintiles for learners and*
- d. Determine the procedure in terms of which the Member of the Executive Council must apply the criteria contemplated in paragraph (a).*

According to section 35(1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, school funding was implemented so that equity and equality can be achieved in South Africa. As indicated by Chisholm (2003:176), a major priority of the Government of National Unity and the new national department of education is the achievement of equity in educational spending. The criteria used in the allocation of state funding in the United States of

America bears some similarities to the system of school funding used by South Africa, especially with regards to purpose and focus.

Another key finding in the study relates to the success of the poverty-based programmes in the United States of America. According to Carey (2002:2), thirteen states provided additional funding by adjusting the parameters of the basic state aid formulas, which are large distributions of state funds that form the backbone of public support for education in almost every state. This view is in conflict with what Mackey and Taylor (2007) say with regards to the American system of funding schools. These authors bring into picture the failures of the American system to fund public schools effectively. As a result, parental intervention was re-introduced. As put by Mackey and Taylor (2007:7), several federal and state partner resources have requirements for family cost participation.

The study also documented the following recommendations with regards to the improvement of programmes to enhance state poverty-base funding in the public schools of America:

- The state should provide funding that reflects the real cost of educating low income children.
- The state should target funding to high- poverty school districts.
- The state should increase accuracy of poverty-based distributions by using multiple data sources.
- The state should address other education funding policies that reduce the effectiveness of funding programmes.

The researcher argues for the four recommendations to be translated into a South African context. As of now, the funding of no fee schools is marked by inconsistencies and inaccuracies with regards to budget projections for public schools categorized as poor quintiles. The budget is developed according to statistics of the previous year which does not reflect accuracy. Public schools are hit by high enrollment rates as foreigners from other parts of Africa migrate into South Africa in search of better jobs and a better life.

The researcher also argues for the recommendation that the state should target funding to high-poverty districts. The reality in our country now is that some schools, especially in deep-rural settings, with high poverty levels are still suffering the legacy of the unjust and unequal distribution of resources in schools. As put by Van Rooyen (2008:10), the poor rural and working class communities still suffer the legacy of large classes, deplorable physical conditions and the absence of learning resources. The researcher argues in support of the recommendation that the state should increase accuracy of poverty-based distributions by using multiple data sources. The researcher's argument is based on the fact that inaccurate statistics are used to determine school allocations. In some cases, two schools in the same geographical area, with the same poverty levels are allocated different resources even though the enrollments are more or less the same. With regards to the last recommendation, the researcher believes that the government should conduct a study to determine factors which contribute to the reduction of the effectiveness of policies that have been aimed at addressing equity and equality in the distribution of resources in public schools.

Vally (1998) has different mechanisms in mind about how the government should improve its programmes on the distribution of state resources so that equity and equality can be achieved. These recommendations are in line with the poverty and inequality report. According to the poverty and inequality report, as Bloch by Vally (1998:468), the government should develop accurate mechanisms for targeting under-resourced schools. The government should also affect decreases in resources allocated to the more advantaged in the form of subsidies to expensive urban schools and much tighter controls of allocation to sectors such as tertiary education. The government needs to play a stronger leadership and monitoring role at the provincial level of government. Lastly, the government has to urgently consider the need for an analysis of government expenditure through procedures such as State expenditure review, disaggregated by gender, social class, income and colour (Vally, 1998:468)

The researcher is under the assumption that the study bears some relevance to the phenomenon under investigation which is the implications of being declared a no fee



school. The researcher argues however, that the study is intended for policymakers and not implementers of the policy on no fee schools at school level. This is a gap that the researcher endeavours to fill in his study.

### ***2.10 School fees exemption: a panacea or financial distress for schools?***

The pre-1994 education system created huge imbalances among public schools in South Africa, in terms of resource allocation. The pronouncement by the Minister of Education, Mrs. Naledi Pandor, to declare some schools into no fee schools generated a mixed bag of reactions within the entire education fraternity. Some sections gave this declaration their full support whilst others argued that the new regulation will lead to the dropping of standards. Notwithstanding these contrasting views, an overwhelming support was given to the declaration of certain schools into no fee schools.

A study was conducted by M.N.Naong (2009) to explore the possible impact of the declaration of certain public schools into no fee schools on the overall performance of such schools as perceived by principals of South African public schools. The main research question in the study was: Is school fees exemption a panacea or a financial distress for schools? The methodology used in the study followed mainly a qualitative approach, in a form of a self-administered questionnaire consisting of both closed ended and open-ended questions. Verbal and telephonic discussions were held with the principals concerned in the study. Formal questionnaires were then handed out to the principals, used as participants in the study. Services of five field workers together with help from some teachers at some of sampled schools was solicited. A total of 85 questionnaires were given to the participating principals.

The type of sample used in the study consisted of 78 principals from local schools consisting of 45 primary schools and 33 secondary schools found within the Greater Mangaung area. The rationale for targeting and selecting the 78 principals was based on factors such as time constraints, accessibility and readily available data from the financial

clerks of the sampled schools. All the respondents were 45 years and older, with 68% of them having ten years experience as principals. The sampled schools came from all racial groups in the area.

The researcher identified the following findings in the study which were documented in the study. The researcher has tried to summarize the key findings of the study. The first key finding in the study was that the introduction of no fee schools was found not to be malicious by most principals in the study. According to Naong (2009:70), the policy on the declaration of certain schools into no fee schools came as a reprieve for the poverty-stricken sector of society, as well as to eliminate constant headaches for school governing bodies regarding fruitless attempts to address gross abnormalities of trying to collect school fees from parents. Sayed (2008:61), on the other hand believes that it is not the application of school fee exemptions that can relieve poorer households from the burden of high tuition fees, but for the poor to benefit from the availability of quality schooling, it is necessary to lower the cost of ( both direct and opportunity cost) for poorer households

The second main finding documented in the study related to departmental challenges of efficiency and effectiveness in the allocation of funds to school. It was documented as a finding that the department of Education in the Free State did not allocate funds to schools on time, a matter found to be of serious concern to schools. This viewpoint is alluded to by Greenstein blame the government for its efficiencies in terms of allocating funds to public schools. Greenstein contends the fact that budget increases in education were not spent on an equitable basis. As Greenstein (1995:205) sees it, budget increases in education have been distributed unevenly and have not kept with the needs of an expanding system. The fact is that the gap between needed and available is even greater than the requirements of restructuring, clearing backlogs and achieving greater equity are of consideration.

The third main finding related to the criteria applied by schools to exempt certain parents from the payment of school fees. The study indicated that some principals never made efforts to explain to parents about the policy on these exemptions, which really contributed to the full payment of school fees by other parents. The last documented key finding in the study was that some school governing bodies, as Bloch by the principals lacked the capacity to correctly implement the exemption of certain parents from the payment of school funds. As documented in the study, this was caused by a low level of literacy among some SGB members especially in the deep-rural areas of the Greater Mangaung area. The researcher argues against the absence of programmes by the Department of Education to develop vital stakeholders such as the school governing bodies about current school policies. Giese, Zide, Koch and Hall (2009:7), cites challenges that affect the effective implementation of policies by stakeholders such as the school governing body which also includes the principal, namely, the lack of the basic understanding of terminology used in the policy documents, poor access to policy documents, poor distribution systems for important correspondences and poorly planned workshops. According to Walters as Bloch by Van Wyk (1999:1), it is critical that any information policy adheres to both the spirit and letter of the Constitution and ensure that such a situation (the withholding of vital information) never recurs, by the determined creation of a culture of education

Information.

The researcher argues against the ignorance of policy implementers in matters stipulated in these policies. The researcher's argument is based on the fact that some school principals do not hand out policy documents to school governing bodies and take them step by step on what the policy entails its objectives and its scope of application. Most of the departmental workshops aimed at developing stakeholders such as the SGB are sometimes conducted by the office-based staff in the districts that do not fully comprehend policies but merely read from the policy document. No consideration is made that some of the trainees have a serious challenge with the language of training, namely, English.

According to the regulations on the exemption of parents from payment of school fees in public school as contemplated in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, it is stated that public schools should introduce a checklist which parents have to complete to show that the school has informed the parent of their right to an exemption. According to Naong (2009:186) schools should also introduce a standardized fee exemption application forms and means to test formula. According to the section 39(4) of the South African Schools Act 84 Of 1996 (as amended), there are specific children who qualify for automatic exemption from the payment of school fees. These include: children in foster care, youth care centers, places of safety and orphanages, children living with relatives because they are orphans or because they have been abandoned by their biological parents and are without any visible means of support, children who receive social grants and children living in child-headed households.

The researcher also argues against some methodological weaknesses in the study. The argument is based on the population sampled for the study. The researcher argues against the sole use of school principals as sources of information in the study with such a large sample. It is the researcher's argument that rich, key informants such as the school governing bodies or their representatives should have been used to yield more data. The researcher is of the opinion that parents, who are directly affected by the policy on school fees exemption, should also have been interviewed so that they could voice out their concerns, frustrations and comments on the policy. The fact that the findings of the study reflect the perceptions of principals only is arguable. The researcher is of the opinion that , the analysis of certain documentary sources like the school policy on school fees exemptions should have been used to scrutinize the criteria that the schools used to exempt a parent from the payment of school fees or not. If it was found that the schools did not have such policies, then such information should have been documented as a conclusion in the study.

The study conducted by Naong (2009) concentrated on the exemption criteria and the challenges as well as the successes of the implementation of this policy. No where in the study is anything mentioned about the implications of being declared a no fee school.

This is an area of focus in this study. The study that the researcher is conducting aims at addressing such a gap by tackling specific issues such as financial management, curriculum management, governance, the management of parental involvement and the professional management of the school. The study also covers the methodological weaknesses or gaps identified in the reviewed literature.

### ***2.11 The state and the right to basic education***

The Democratic Alliance, which is the main opposition party in the democratic parliament of the Republic of South Africa produced a paper that sought to assess the state's compliance with its constitutional duty to ensure that everyone has a right to education. The purpose of the paper was twofold: on one hand it served as an issue paper or briefing document. The paper set out in detail the nature of the socio-economic rights enshrined in the Constitution's Bill of Rights and on the other hand spells out the state's constitutional obligation in terms of respecting, promoting and fulfilling these rights and attempted to unpack the meaning, scope and content of basic education. The paper also sought to expose challenges facing the provision of education in the post-apartheid era.

The key findings documented in the paper were summarized by the researcher and amount to the following: the government still battles with the addressing of a wide range of resources which enables the educational institutions and programmes to function properly such as adequately trained educators, school buildings, classrooms, furniture, teaching equipment, books and writing materials, as well as access to sanitation facilities, water and electricity. It was documented in the study that 25% of schools did not have water facilities, 15% did not have sanitation as of February 2005, the total estimated classrooms stood at 31 254 and that some 21 000 teachers left the profession annually. The study found that 16% of teachers were underqualified in 2002 and that textbooks were frequently not delivered on time. Maile thinks differently from the Democratic Alliance. Maile thinks that the government has developed policies and programmes that are effective to address inequalities in education. As Maile (2009:1) puts it, in 2008 the

new policy framework is guided by the need for transformation and major steps are being taken to address inequalities in health, education, welfare and the economy.

The researcher also argues in favour of the views of Maile (2009) to say that, the government is trying hard to address backlogs in the provision of classrooms, learner-support material, textbooks, equipments and other resources to enhance the quality of education in South Africa. It cannot take a short span to address inequalities of the forty eight years of apartheid rule, hence the saying “Rome was not built in one day”. To strengthen the argument, it is the researcher’s assumption that citizens of South Africa can allude to the fact that much has been done already to address some of the inequalities of the apartheid system, namely, the introduction of the scholar transport, the National School Nutrition Programme and the declaration of certain schools into no fee schools. The difference between the views of Maile is that Maile theorizes service delivery in education while the Democratic Alliance wants practical service delivery and not mere promises written on paper.

With regard to the accessibility of education , the paper concluded that between 1995 and 2003, enrollments in primary schools declined by 7% from 8060 to 7470 .It was also documented that physical access to schools in rural areas is difficult, with some learners having to walk up to thirty kilometers each day to school. Despite the introduction of no fee schools, the poor still had to borrow R2, 7billion a year to spend on education. This point strengthens the Democratic Alliance’s viewpoint, to say that not much has been to improve the quality of education in the post-apartheid era. The Democratic Alliance (1995:23) attributes non-delivery of educational services to corruption and fraud by the ruling party in the government, namely the African National Congress.

The paper, entitled “The state and the right to basic education” also documented the declining literacy and numeracy standards in public schools, poor levels of competency in mathematics and science. South African students came last out of 50 countries in that trend. This viewpoint is supported by Bloch (2008:128), when he said that South Africa’s basic reading scores, and mathematics and science literacy are consistently among the

world's worst; data based on a 2005 report issued by the Democratic Alliance and made public in 2006 showed that only 20% of learners in grade six could do mathematics at the appropriate grade level and that the average score stood at 40% in the language of instruction. The paper also documented a lack of safety in schools, with an unacceptable number of reported rapes in particular. In 2005 there were 498 assaults on pupils in Mpumalanga, Western Cape and Northern Cape, including 187 sexual assaults. This view, as presented by the democratic alliance is also shared by Hoadley (2006). According to Hoadley (2006:144), schools in South Africa are struggling to meet their current educational mandates in their three core functions: teaching, learning and management.

With regards to adaptability, the paper documented that the Department of Education was not doing enough to alleviate the skills shortage in South Africa. It was also concluded in the paper that the Department of Education was not doing enough to accommodate specific needs learners: only 14, 8% of disabled children of school going age were attending school. Also documented in the study was that the Department of Education was not doing enough to educate learners about HIV/AIDS and to manage the impact of the pandemic on schooling generally. Hoadley (2006) believes that educators have a central role to play in the fight against HIV and aids. As Hoadley ( 2006:140), sees it, one of the roles required of teachers is the community citizenship and the pastoral role which includes the competence of being able to respond to current social and educational problems , with particular emphasis on the issues of violence , drug abuse, poverty, HIV/AIDS, and environmental degradation. This role also includes assessing and working in partnership with professional services to deal with these social issues. The teacher's role also includes the demonstration of a caring, committed and ethical professional behaviour and the understanding of education as dealing with the protection of children and lastly, educators have to understand key community problems, with particular emphasis on poverty, health, environment and political democracy.

The paper concluded by arguing that the right to basic education ha been violated because of poor policies decisions, ineffective financial management and inadequate capacity in

the provinces. Bloch (2006:127) agrees that South African education is in a crisis. As Bloch( 2006:127) puts it, it is absolutely true a host of achievements-such as the merging of racially divide education systems, the re-orientation and high priority given to education in national and provincial budgets and arrange of day to day services from textbook supply to education support and the facilitation of the matriculation exams-are no mean source of pride. The researcher is also under the assumption that much still needs to be done to ensure that public schools in South Africa are equitably resourced and that the educational resources of the State are channeled towards alleviating South Africans from poverty and illiteracy.

## ***2.12 Corporate social investment in education: The paradox of poverty alleviation in South Africa***

The business community has played a major role in the South African education system for many years. The role of the business sector as a key partner in South Africa's pre-1994 political negotiations has led to the continued expectation that business has a role to play in addressing the wrongs of the past. The corporate social investment has grown over the past decade and still continues to give an impetus to change being forged through public policy. The corporate social investment is a private business entity that is involved in the distribution of resources to tackle poverty while offering access to opportunities for wealth. According to Nzekwe (2006:214) the corporate social investment can be defined as the humanitarian element in capitalism. The corporate social investment, also known as the CSI, is also recognized by the Department of Trade and Industry and strongly advances the objectives of the Black Economic Empowerment. As indicated by Nzekwe (2006:215), CSI in education is imperative to the transformation efforts and poverty alleviation objectives.

A study was conducted by Nzekwe in 2006 on the role that the business community plays in education. The main research question in the study was: How does the CSI contribute to the funding of education in South Africa? The main objective of the study was to expose the part played by the business sector in the provision of education in South



Africa. The study also interrogates the principles of equity and inequality in the distribution of resources to schools by the Corporate Social Investment. The study also sought to expose the strengths and the weaknesses of the Corporate Social Investment in the allocation of resources to schools. The study also brings to light how public policy conflict with the business agenda in the alleviation of poverty in South Africa. The study also sought to bring to light the failure of the government to support business initiatives in the funding of education in South Africa

The study is in a form of an article with no research methodology and sampling techniques and scientific standards of research. The study's rationale indicates that the author's interest in the phenomenon was prompted by a high level of dissatisfaction with regards to the role that the present government plays in the alleviation of poverty through education. The author interrogates the role played by the government in the rising levels of poverty and illiteracy in South Africa. Nzekwe (2006:210) contends the paradoxical stance of the government with regards to private funding in education. The main argument presented by Nzekwe (2006:215), is that class distinctions and inequalities still exist in the funding of education in South Africa by the private sector. As Nzekwe indicates it, education can obliterate the distinction between social groups, just as it can amplify social inequalities. This is the hypothesis presented in the study. The study documented its key findings which are summarized by the researcher.

The first conclusion drawn by the Nzekwe (2006) in the study is that the level of illiteracy in South Africa is very high. As indicated by Nzekwe ( 2006:215), South Africa's current illiteracy level remains high-there are currently six to eight million functionally illiterate adults over 15 years of age-and the potential for employment for many black students remains low while the poverty level rises. The democratic Alliance (2005:2) supports the notion of high levels of illiteracy in South Africa. According to the Democratic Alliance (2005:4), the high levels of illiteracy in the country has to do with the system of funding public schools which was the brain child of the African National Congress which is the ruling party in the government of South Africa. As indicated by the Democratic Alliance (2005: 4), poor policies on school funding have violated the citizens

of South Africa's right to a decent education system. Carter (2008), Maile (2008) and Kiti (2006) believe that the education system of South Africa is in the right direction, giving its total commitment to eradicate poverty through the provision of good quality education for all. As Kiti (2006:106), explains it, in line with the Development Millennium Goal and the Dakar goals, focus in the South African education system is placed on education as the vehicle through which the socio-economic development is pursued. Sonn (2008:182), on the other hand believes that a sure way of achieving the improvement of material welfare and the quality of life is through high quality economic growth, which ensures that an increasing number of workers are gainfully employed. The central idea here is that modern societies realize that poverty alleviation can be realized through an education system that has good and well-researched policies on school funding. This brings the policy on no fee schools into the picture as seen by the global world.

Secondly, it was documented as a conclusion in the study that the number of schools and pupil enrollment figures has steadily raised over recent years but historical backlogs make the national budget insufficient to provide for the needs of the school. Borkman (2009), the Democratic Alliance (2005) and Mackey and Taylor (2007) all allude to the fact that free education has contributed to the high enrollment figures in public schools but attribute such a response to basic education to the Millennium Development Goals which strongly sensitized and called nations to prioritize education for all. The researcher argues against the notion that the declaration of certain schools into no fee schools has contributed to the rise in enrollments in public ordinary schools. The researcher is of the view that certain factors have contributed to the rise of enrollments. Like the introduction of the National School Nutrition Programme in primary schools, the reduction of school fees, the provision of a free scholar transport and the free supply of textbooks and learner-support material, even to fee charging schools. The researcher is of the view that the African National Congress led government of the Republic of South Africa has put in place programmes that enhances access to education in a cost-effective manner.

Another key finding in the study was that the early childhood development is not a favourite space for investment by business and governments. Jolly (2007) as Bloch by

Kiti (2008), believes that the private sector that injects incentives and funds to public schools do not see the investments to early childhood development as investment in itself for the long term. The author argues against the belief that the private sector and the business community have relegated the value of private funding to a nearby oblivion. There is evidence that Eskom continues to fund public schools in the elementary phases of education like the foundation phase, intermediate and senior phase by sponsoring literacy promoting material. The Eskom foundation also develops educators in the Early Childhood Development by organizing capacity-building workshops for educators in grade one. The “Funda Africa” is one initiative by the private sector to capacitate educators on learning barriers and inclusive education in the foundation phase of public primary schools.

Another documented finding in the study is that very little has changed in class exclusion in the Corporate Social Investment. As Nzekwe (2006:216), puts it, the process remains selective with the majority of beneficiaries falling within the strata of the privileged who attend well-resourced schools, most of which are located in the urban or semi-urban areas. Tilak (1996), Psacharopoulos (1971) and Vaught (2009) believe that racial exclusivity continue to plague the distribution and allocation of resources to public schools. Their main argument is that children from the privileged classes and races continue to benefit more in terms of resources as compared to children from rural areas and poor communities with marginalized economic existences. Nzekwe (2006:216) also believe that the private sector allocate funds to certain public schools on the grounds of functionality which they measure through infrastructural facilities and performance. This factor makes it impossible for poor schools in rural areas, with dilapidated infrastructural facilities and high failure rates to be out of the picture, for funding considerations by the private sector. As Nzekwe (2006:216) sees it, private sector support is often dependent on the functionality of the school and functionality is reliant on multi-faceted factors such as infrastructure, teaching facilities, governance, and district government support systems.

Although the study touched on the funding of education by the private sector, it still did not address the implications of being declared a no fee school, a subject of study in this

investigation. Funding challenges were Bloch but not in relation to school governance, financial management, the management of parental involvement in a no fee school as well as its professional governance. The study attempts to fill these gaps by investigating the implications of being declared a no fee school with a particular reference to the five management areas mentioned in the study.

### ***2.13 The impact of no fee policies on the school's enrollment***

Many developing countries continue to charge fees to students attending public schools. A considerable concern has been expressed that such fees may represent a barrier to school enrollment, lowering investment in human capital and reducing economic growth. School fees may be especially damaging to for poor households which are more likely to be credit-constrained and to fall into an intergenerational poverty trap due to the high cost of schooling. (Barham et al: 1995) as Bloch by Borkman (2009:1).

Borkman conducted a correlation study in 2009 to determine the impact of no fee programmes on the school enrolment. Borkman (2009) 's main objectives in the study was to determine whether the policy on no fee schools in South Africa does have a correlation with the rise of enrollments in public schools. The following are key documented findings of the study and are put in a summary form by the researcher:

Firstly, it was documented as a finding in the study that the fee elimination programmers have led to sudden and dramatic increases in enrollment, albeit at the cost of overcrowding and reduced quality. Borkman (2009), Oketch and Rolleston (2007) and Chisholm (2007) all share the same sentiment with regards to the impact of no fee schools on the school's professional management by citing challenges such as overcrowding, increased acts of lawlessness in the school campuses, shortages in the distribution of learner-support material like textbooks and the difficulty of managing large classrooms.. Borman (2009), Oketch and Rolleston (2007) and Chisholm (2007) agree that one of the hard-felt impacts of no fee schools is the sudden rise of enrollments in public schools. The researcher assumes that the challenges raised by Borkman (2009)

and Oketch and Rolleston (2007) do have a bearing on the professional management of the school. The researcher has a different view with regards to the sudden rise of enrollments in public schools. The researcher's argument is that not all public schools have witnessed a rise in their enrollments as a result of being declared into no fee schools. Based on practical experiences as principal of a public primary school, there is a growing outcry by many school principals in Mpumalanga that enrollments in semi-urban schools have dropped tremendously irrespective of their declarations into no fee schools. There is a growing trend among parents in the townships to register their children in urban schools where there are better infrastructural facilities, equipments and safety-enhancing mechanisms in these schools. (The Lowvelder, 2005:9). On the same note, the researcher attributes the rise of enrollments in public schools to programmes such as the School Nutrition Programme and the introduction of the scholar transport. The researcher is under the assumption that learners from poor households benefit from the provision of free nutrition.

Secondly, it was documented as a finding that there was a lack of well identified evidence on the impact of fee-elimination programmes in middle-income countries with regards to increased enrollments in public schools. . This view is in conflict with the realities in countries that are considered as “super powers” and “economic giants”. These countries include the United States of America, Germany, France, Britain and other economically developed countries. Tilak (1996), Mackey and Taylor (2007), Vaught (2009) and Carey (2002) have documented evidence on the impact of fee-elimination challenges in Japan, America, Russia and Britain. The argument of these authors Bloch above with regards to fee-elimination programmes or the declaration of some schools into no fee schools does not have anything to do with the status of these countries' economic levels but with the mechanisms used that lead to the unequal distribution of resources in state schools. The bone of contention as Bloch by Tilak (1996) and Vaught (2009) is the unequal and inequitable manner in which resources are distributed to schools especially schools from rural settings with marginalized economic existences. Oketch and Rolleston ( 2007) have presented a well documented evidence that no fee schools in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania were established in the post –independence era which dates back to the early

fifties. The researcher argues against the idea by Nzekwe (2007) that fee-elimination programmes were meant for middle-income countries. The researcher 's main argument on the issue is that countries with growing economies like South Africa have started to declare certain schools into no fee school for the sole purpose of addressing the plight of poverty and its influence on the quality of education that the public school should provide.

Lastly, it was documented as a finding that the increase in secondary school enrollments is attributed to the decrease in fees as a result of the fee-elimination programmes. Literature review suggests other wise with regards to the impact of decreased tuition fees on learner enrollments in public schools. Chisholm (2007), Maile (2008) and Letseke and Breier (2007) believe that school fees are still high especially for the poor households who are confronted with high mortality rates as a result of social challenges like HIV/AIDS, the high unemployment rate and the growing social dilemma of child-headed homes. These authors Bloch above, argue that tuition fees have tremendously risen in public schools and worse in institutions of higher learning. Mbatsane (2006) maintains that it is the fee exemption criterion that has attracted parents to register their learners in public schools.

In conclusion, the researcher maintains that the phenomena under study which is the implications of being declared a no fee school, has not been tremendously addressed in this literature except for its impact on the school's professional management. Areas of focus in the study which relate to financial management, curriculum management, parental involvement and school governance are not addressed. The study's main focal point and objectives is to investigate the impact of the policy on no fee schools on these areas of school management.

## ***2.14 The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (as amended)***

### **2.14.1 Background on school fees in South Africa**

Schooling in South Africa, under the old apartheid regime demanded that the parent of a learner pay some school fees to the school attended by the child so that the school could meet its day to day operational costs. The biggest slice allocated to schools was channeled to the white section of the South African society by the policymakers of the past apartheid regime. Second in the line followed the Indian group, the coloured group and the least allocation went to blacks. The education policies, promulgated into law by the apartheid regime did not take into account poverty-rankings when allocating and distributing educational resources. The colour of the skin either advantaged or disadvantaged the learner in terms of resource allocation. The dawn of the democratic era in 1994 brought along initiatives to address the imbalances of the past created by the racial exclusivity and segregation policies of the apartheid rule. One major breakthrough in the transformation endeavours of the African National Congress led government was the promulgation of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996.

The fundamental piece of education-related legislation in the post-apartheid era is the South African Schools Act (SASA), Act 84 of 1996. The clearly formulated aim of this piece of education legislation is to provide for a uniform system for the organization, governance and financing of schools. The researcher has unpacked various sections of the South African Schools Act that are relevant to the implications of being declared a no fee school which is the main subject of the study. The researchers' aims are not to reproduce South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 but to critique the provisions of the Act scientifically so.

### **2.14.2 The responsibility of the state with regards to school funding**

Who is really responsible for the funding of education in South African public schools? This question has dominated the charts of talk shows in radio, television and the newspapers. It still remains one widely debated issue in social and political circles.

According to section 34(1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the state must fund public schools from public revenue on an equitable basis in order to ensure the proper exercise of the right of learners to education and the redress of past inequalities. According to Section 36(1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the school governing body's role is to take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the state in order to improve the quality of education provided by the school. According to section 36(1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the state is obliged to fund schools from the public revenue. The researcher assumes that the school governing body of a public school is to supplement the financial resources provided by the state through fundraising projects

The rights of children to education have been scrutinized by the researcher to validate the fact that the state is responsible for the funding of public schools. According to the Bill of Rights, in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, rights to education are established in these terms:

*Everyone has the right-*

- a) To basic education, including adult basic education; and*
- b) To further education, which the state through reasonable measures must make progressively available and accessible ( Section 29(1))*

According to section 3 (1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, subject to the Act and any applicable provincial law, *every parent must cause every learner for whom he or she is responsible to attend school from the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of seven years until the last school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade, whichever comes first.* The right of the child to learn is enshrined in the Bill of Rights in the national constitution of the Republic of South Africa as well as in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. The researcher argues in favor of the provisions of the Bill of Rights and the South African Schools Act, where learning is enshrined as a right.



### 2.14.3 School poverty scores

The Education Law Amendment Act of 2005 laid the foundation for the quintile-based declaration of no fee schools in South Africa. (Borkman, 2007:7). The Department then went on to publish guidelines clarifying the procedures to be followed to categorize schools according to poverty-based rankings. This meant that schools were to be given scores with regards to the economic status of the communities around them. As indicted by Van Rooyen (2008:25), the school allocation is intended to finance key inputs other than personnel and buildings in the education process. Key examples of inputs for which the school allocation is intended are textbooks, stationery and non-educational items such as cleaning material and electricity. These are some essential factors that enhance the functionality of public ordinary schools. It was a common practice for South African schools in the past apartheid regime to charge school fees so that the basic necessities of the school as well as its operational costs could be met. According to Van Rooyen (2008:25), the government of South Africa regarded school allocations that are adequate for at least the poor, as a key lever for ensuring that households suffering the effects of poverty that is adequately funded by the state.

The government of the Republic of South Africa, through the National Department of Education devised a distributional approach that favoured the poor. According to section 90 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 ( as amended), government sees the allocation as key means of empowering school communities and realizing democracy at the level of the school. It is important for the local level to participate in decision making relating to what non-personnel inputs to purchase for particular schools. For this reason, the government supports the gradual the transfer to the school level of decision making powers relating to the school allocation. This must obviously occur in a controlled manner, in accordance with the important Sections 19 to 21 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 and in such a way that public funds are not squandered and are spent in a manner that fully supports the national curriculum.

The government of South Africa set specific criteria to be used in the allocation of resources to schools and to ensure that these resources are distributed on an equitable basis. According to section 91 of SASA, government will determine the level of the school allocation and optimize the translation of the school allocation into resources that schools can utilize on the basis of five considerations which are:

- a) The right of learners with regards to schooling.
- b) What the minimum basic package of school inputs is in order to make quality education a possibility. With regards to this consideration, the government acknowledges that in striving for equity in education, there is a need to spend more on education for the poor, and that the basic minimum package may vary with factors such as socio-economic context.
- c) Prices of goods and services required by schools.
- d) The distribution of income and poverty in the country, including the greater ability to certain communities to make private contributions to the schooling process. With regard to this consideration, it is recognized that the poor in South Africa are not all equally poor, and that it may not be necessary for the state to deal with the problem of poverty differentially.
- e) The overall budget of the government.

#### **2.14.4 The resource targeting list**

According to section 100 of the South African Schools ACT 84 OF 1996, ( as amended), the state's resource targeting list should be broadly explored the state's re of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 should be because of its potential to yield data on the implications of being declared a no fee school. The researcher has explored this section of SASA to determine whether schools declared as no fee schools comply with the stipulations of the government. As indicated by section 100 of SASA, the resource targeting list of provincial education departments (PEDs) must maintain as a basis for the poor pro-poor distribution of the school allocation budget. The resource targeting list is a

list of all the public ordinary schools in the province, sorted from poorest to least poor. The principle is followed that, ideally, communities are best served by the schools closest to them. It is precisely for this reason that the preferential public funding of schools in poor communities is regarded as the priority for Government. However, exceptions are also contemplated in this subsection.

According to Themba Gadebe and Sello Tang of the Big Media Publishers (Pty) Ltd, dated 6 August 2006, the then Deputy Minister of Education, Enver Surty told journalists in Pretoria, ahead of the Council of Ministers meeting that over 25% of the country's 30 000 schools have already been identified as no fee schools and that the Department of Education had targeted to reach 40% by 2007. Gurson (2010:1) contends the fact that the education budget, which is R59, 70, amounting to 24% of non-interest expenditure is insufficient to address poverty-based funding in South Africa and that more money is needed to address the terrible backlogs left by 40 years of apartheid education where money was pumped into white education at the expense of black schools in rural areas and the townships. In his letter to the Sunday Times, dated 4 March 2008, Colditz argues against the notion of poverty-based funding inequalities which now marginalize the white learners from affluent schools. As indicated by Colditz (2008:1), a further important contextual fact is the basis on which public schools are funded, in 2008, 20% of South African schools labeled as most affluent were supposed to receive R129 per learner per year from the State, Schools falling in the next 20% category received R388 per learner per year while the poorest 20% got R775 per learner per year. Colditz (2008), argues against the continued "blame syndrome" by politicians of the past apartheid regime whereas the same mistakes are repeated by those who are said to be addressing equity and equality in resource allocations. In a nutshell Colditz here meant that most politicians keep on blaming the past apartheid regime for the unequal distribution of resources in schools but at the same time are doing the same injustices through fraud and corruption. Motala and Sayed (2009) also cite some challenges with regards to no fee schools and the pro-poor policies. As Motala and Sayed put it, the no fee s policy and the pro-poor policies continue to exist in tension with each other and have brought into sharp focus the question whether the current allocations are adequate. The redress-driven part

of the school's financing policy which relates to the school funding norms constitutes only 20% of the overall education expenditure. Added to this are the indirect costs such as transport and uniforms, which constitutes a significant portion of poor households' income. This information is vital for the study as it relates to the policy on no fee schools. The researcher is under the assumption that the distribution of financial resources does have an impact on the five areas of the school management which are professional management, curriculum management, financial management, and the management of parental involvement and the governance of the school. These five areas of management are the core areas of research in the study.

The researcher argues that the distribution of resources through the target listing system is still not pro-poor as planned by the state. Schools from rural backgrounds are still suffering from the scourge of being under-resourced as compared to privileged school from urban areas that enjoy the best of facilities and learning material. As Tilak (1996:362), illustrates the point, interstate variations, political pressures, increased government spending, increased costs and decreased revenue impact negatively on the government's prioritization of school needs programmers. The researcher assumes that the same can be related to the South African context. Not much has changed with regards to education provisioning in South Africa. According to Van Rooyen (2008:10), all too many schools in poor rural areas and urban working-class communities still suffer the legacy of large classes, deplorable physical conditions and absence of learner resources despite various schools building programmes. Motala (1997:392) believes that the basic needs of schools are still not prioritized. One of four schools in South Africa has no water within a walking distance, 24% get their water from rivers and dams. 43% have electricity, 13% have no toilets and nearly half have pit latrines. About 17 000 telephones are needed nationally, 62% have adequate stationery, 49% have adequate textbooks and 69% have no learning material.

According to section 101 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the provincial education departments must assign to each school a school poverty score that will allow

the provincial department to sort all schools from poorest to least poor. The principles governing the determination of the school poverty score are the following:

- a) The score should be based on the relative poverty of the community around the school, which in turn should depend on individual or household advantage or disadvantage with regard to income, wealth and/ levels of education.
- b) The scores should be based on data from the national Census conducted by statsSA, or any equivalent data set that could be used as source. The beneficiary of the school allocation, for example schools, or districts, should never be the source of the data, in order to avoid undesirable incentives to distort information.
- c) The derivation and calculation of the score should be sufficiently comprehensive to provide a reasonable measure of the relative poverty of the school community. However, it should not be the intention to incorporate the complete range of poverty indicators in the score. The score should moreover be constructed to be as transparent and generally understandable as possible.
- d) The basic methodology behind the score should be national in order to promote a pro-poor funding framework that treats equally poor schools equally, regardless of the province they find themselves.

Motala and Sayed interrogate the accuracy of the poverty-rating scores used to determine the school's allocation. As Motala and Sayed (2009:4) indicates it, the poverty scores which consider both the poverty of the school and the poverty of the community may not always capture the accurate the learner population in the school. According to Create (2009) , which is a publication of a private company that researches about education, fieldwork was undertaken in the Gauteng province of the Republic of South Africa, in 2009, it was apparent that many learners came from informal settlements, four or five kilometers away while very few learners originated from the communities where the schools were physically located. With regards to the allocation of scores per learner, the researcher argues against the legitimacy of the scores used to determine an allocation to a school. The main argument presented by the researcher is that inaccurate statistics are

used to determine school allocations. The allocations are based on statistics of the previous year which fluctuates year by year. These fluctuations are attributed to factors such as the high migration of learners from other countries to South Africa. In certain instances enrollments rise because of rural people moving to urbanized and industrialized towns and cities in search of jobs. The government does not take into account such estimates when making an allocation per learner.

The researcher also scrutinized section 102 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 which deals with steps to be followed in the determination of the school poverty score. According to the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the following should be taken into consideration:

- a) Each school must be linked to a specific geographical area that can be considered for the purposes of this determinations, the catchments area of the school. Where Census data is used, the geographical area would be the set of enumerator areas or place names closest to the school. Different levels of the school systems, for example primary schools and secondary schools would be dealt with separately. The Department of Education must determine precise rules for this step after consultation with Provincial Education Departments.
- b) Variables from the data set relating to households or individuals must be selected to inform three different indicators of poverty: income; dependency ratio or (unemployment rate); and levels of education of the community (or literacy rate). The Department of Education may change this set of indicators after consultation with the PEDs.
- c) Variables from the data set, and the indicators of poverty, must be weighted, for the purpose of arriving at final poverty score for each specific geographical area, corresponding to each school. The Department of Education will determine the weighting that should be used.

Garson (2010:2) maintains that the state faces serious challenges which range from; the immense backlogs of the apartheid regime, 6 to 8 million adults are not functionally

literate, teachers in township schools are poorly trained and the unacceptable low pass rate at grade twelve levels. Garson contends for more funding by the state to address the imbalances of the past and not scores that are not based on accurate learner information. It is arguable that a school's geographical area is considered when determining school allocations. In certain instances one finds that two schools in the same geographical area, with the same socio-economic status and the same poverty-based ranking get different allocations. In certain instances one finds that better resourced schools still get bigger allocations as opposed to schools that are really needy. It is also frustrating that allocations, in certain instances to secondary schools are given preference as opposed to primary schools. This is one of the many inequalities that confront the management of certain primary schools. Motala and Sayed (2009 :) think that a serious challenge faced by the state now is the effective implementation of the no fee policy. The researcher's last argument on the subject is that, in certain cases, one school in the same geographical area is declared a no fee school and the neighbouring school with the same poverty ranking continues to be a fee school. As Motala and Sayed (2009:4) view it, at a systematic level, the implementation of the no fee policy has again raised issues of national versus provincial responsibilities, and of provincial ability to accommodate the no fee schools. While much work has to be done in terms of national and provincial alignments and budgetary flows, more work is required to ensure that poor provinces are able to meet their responsibilities to the poorest learners, and that the budgetary allocations in terms of the Equitable Share Formula are sufficient.

According to Gadebe (2006:1), the then Deputy Minister of Education, Enver Surty promised to increase no fee schools by 40% in 2007. The researcher contends is of the assumption that the government is moving at a slow pace to reach the target. Up to the time of the print, only 60 percent of poverty-stricken schools have been declared into no fee schools in Mpumalanga.

#### **2.14.5 The school allocation and accountability**

The researcher also reviewed subsections 117, 119, 121,122 and 124 of SASA which deals with the school allocations and accountability. These sections of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996(as amended) were chosen because they relate specifically to the phenomenon under investigation which is the implications of being declared a no fee school. According to the World Book Dictionary, accountability can be defined as the state of being held responsible for carrying out one's obligations. According to section 117 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (as amended), the effective implementation and monitoring of the school allocation requires timely provision of accurate information by the Department of Education, Provincial Education Departments and schools. According to the Schools Act, the provincial Education Department and schools bear the responsibility of accounting for school allocations. Section 37(1) of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the school governing body of a public school must establish a school fund and administer it in accordance with directives issued by the Head of Department. Jansen and Amsterdam (2006:8) agree that the serious lack of capacity within South Africa to develop the capabilities of high level scholarship in education finance, and to nurture and retain such scholars and practitioners within universities and governments, respectively is one challenge facing the efficient and accurate management of state funds in education.

According to subsection 119 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the Provincial Education Departments must process enrollment data, school poverty data, provincial budget data and the school allocation data released by the Minister in order to determine provisional school allocations for each school for the next three years. The provision for the next three years must be communicated to schools by 30 September each year. The information must include information on which quintile individual schools find themselves in, what the national per learner target amount applicable to that national quintile is, what the rationale is for the national targets published by the Minister, what the national no fee threshold is and what calculations were performed by Provincial Departments of Education to arrive at each school's school allocation amount. Provincial Education Departments must furthermore submit to the Department of Education the data and the calculations used to arrive at the provisional school allocations for each school,



so that the Department of Education can be in a position to monitor policy compliance, make inter-provincial comparisons, and advice Provincial Education Departments of national best practice.

According to subsection 121 of the South African Schools Act 84 OF 1996, due to the fact that the school year and the Government financial year are different, the final school allocation for any school year can only be determined during the course of the full year in question, after the Provincial Legislature has approved the budget for the Provincial Department of Education. The final school allocation for the current year must be communicated to schools during the two weeks following the finalization of the PED budget by the Provincial Legislature. In order to facilitate proper planning, the PEDs should strive to ensure that the final school allocation communicated to schools in terms of paragraph deviates as little as possible from the provisional figures provided on 30 September of the previous year.

As indicated by subsection 122 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the Department of Education, Provincial Education Departments and schools must report on the usage of the school allocation, and the Department of Education and the Provincial Departments of Educations must furthermore report on the determination of the school allocation, within their respective annual reports. Reports produced by schools must explain how the spending of the school allocation supports the school development plan, quality education and learner performance. The National Department of Education and the Provincial Departments of Education must also produce analyses and proposals on how the school allocation can further enhance education delivery, including school effectiveness and learner performance. Analyses must moreover be produced on the impact of the school allocation on general socio-economic transformation, including black empowerment amongst manufacturers and suppliers of school material. These analyses must be widely disseminated to encourage public debate and participation.

The researcher has also made a specific review of subsection 124 to gather more insights on the implications of being declared a no fee school. According to subsection 124 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the Departme4nt of Education and Provincial

Departments of Education will collaborate to ensure that every school in the country has a set of policy implementation manuals and tools relating to the school allocation. This set must include, for example, the policy documents them, explanatory manuals, and tools for educating the school community about the purpose of the school allocation. Materials must be available in all official languages. Materials applicable to all provinces will be made available on the website of the Department of Education. The Department of Education and the Provincial Departments of Education must design and roll out training programmes in the use of the policy implementation tools. Borkman (2009) argues for a comprehensive training programme to enhance the school governing bodies' capacity in the area of financial management and accountability

Maile (2008), Borkman (2009), Kiti (2008) and Giese,Zide,Koch and Hall 2007) believe that the state has to devise a new system to enhance equity and equality in the allocation of resources by using accurate poverty-based scores provided by the Provincial Departments of Education. The researcher argues against the uses of the Education Management Information Services (EMIS) which is the main source of statistical information in our schools. The EMIS document is printed by the Provincial Departments of Education on a yearly basis and provides information about the number learners, educators, classrooms, toilets, teacher qualifications and their gender and statistics with regards to assets owned by the school, per school. The information provided by schools is then consolidated into one provincial register of the school's needs. The researcher's arguments is based on the fact that figures are often inflated by some school principals in order to get more allocations in terms of teaching personnel, financial allocations and furniture. The regional and district officials do not make verifications which result in inequalities in the allocation of state resources.

## ***2.15 Challenges with regards to the implementation of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (as amended)***

Central to South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy has been the establishment of a quality, equitable and democratic education system. To realize these

goals, the Government developed the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 which came into effect in 1997. The main objective of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 was to provide a uniform manner in the provision of education in South Africa. Although post-apartheid transformation has been impressive in scope, coverage and orientation, literature suggests that much still needs to be done to improve the education provisioning in South Africa, especially in areas of resource allocation for public schools. A critical analysis of specific provisions in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 was made with regards to no fee schools

. According to Ball (1994) as Bloch by Van Wyk (1999:177), the task in policy analysis, is to examine the moral order of reform and the relationship of reform to existing patterns of social inequality, bringing to bear those concepts and interpretive devices which offer best possibilities of insights and understanding. The analysis of South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 by the researcher is some form of trajectory study. As Van Wyk (1999:180) understands it, trajectory studies thus follow a specific policy through the stages of gestation, the micropolitics in the state involved in text production, and through case studies of the implementation of the policy into practice. The researcher has confined himself to the textual focus and interpretation of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 with more attention given to the poverty-based funding in public schools.

Although the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 can be applauded for its intent to redress the imbalances that existed in the old apartheid system, Jansen and Amsterdam (2006:8-13) identified the following challenges in the South African education system in the post –apartheid era with regards to resource allocation in public schools. The first point relates to the principle of equity as the desired objective in SASA with regards to the distribution and allocation of resources in public schools. According to Jansen and Amsterdam (2006:4), the achievement of equity is not simply a problem to be located within per capita spending on individual students; it is also something that expressed itself in inter-and interprovincial inequalities; in physical infrastructure; and the salary structures of black and white teachers, a function of qualification and experience biased in the former category of educators. The government has equalized funding but the problem is that it has succumbed to a *snapshot* analysis of equalization. As Jansen and

Amsterdam (2006:4) explain it, the problem with a snapshot analysis is that it takes what a government allocates at a particular moment or period of time without reference to the differential starting point of the entities being funded.

The second point relates to adequacy in the provision and allocation of state resources to public schools. Jansen and Amsterdam contends that it is not the achievement of equity alone that has to be considered in the allocation of state resources but whether there are enough resources or not to accelerate and realize the principle of equity as envisaged by the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. Jansen and Amsterdam (2006:5) contends the fact that the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 does not include efforts to relate the concept of adequacy to the nature of the state or the kind of economy that sets the external limits of the resource capabilities available for governmental action.

The third point raised relates to inefficiency. Jansen and Amsterdam (2006:5) contends the fact that even though South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 has clearly articulated plans and systems in place to deliver a poverty-based funding to public schools, the immediate evidence of mismanagement of resources is overwhelming. The General Report of the Auditor-General on Provincial Audit Outcomes for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2004 claimed that unauthorized, irregular , fruitless and wasteful expenditure amounted to 3,5% (R5833 billion) of total expenditure (R167,4 billion). There are massive indications of wastages in Provincial Education Departments ranging from the lack of service delivery in the form of training, continuous overspending on items such as substitute educators, poor planning or anticipated increases in the number of learners, illegal payments to contractors, the transfer of funds to entities without adequate monitoring and massive payments of interest-based payments and penalties such as R13 million paid to SARS ( South African Revenue Services) for late and underpayment of PAYE (Pay As You Earn) in one province (Jansen and Amsterdam,2006:8). Motala and Sayed (2009:4) see things differently.

According to Motala and Sayed (2009:4), great strides have been made in education in education towards racial equity in terms of state per capita expenditure per learner, but

more contentious is the extent to which redress of differential spending has been achieved. A key issue is that despite the significant gains in terms of equalization of educational expenditure in schools, public schools in South Africa continue to consist of two tiers, one privileged and well resourced and the other poor and disadvantaged. This is viewed as the unintended consequence of the fees policy, and thus state expenditure continues, for a variety of reasons, to marginally favour the rich.

The last factor that constrains the rolling out of the provisions of South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 is with regards to school financial management is the lack of capacity building for officials involved in financial management. As Jansen and Amsterdam (2006:8) put it, the serious lack of capacity within South Africa to develop the capabilities of a high level scholarship in educational finance and to nurture and retain such scholars and practitioners within universities and government is constraining an efficient financial service to public schools. Motala and Sayed (2009:4) also agree that the implementation of the no fee policy has also brought with it challenges. The Provincial Education Departments have an important implementing and monitoring responsibility which they are not always able to fulfill. Some of the problems that have arisen included a failure to release provincial funding timeously, cash flow problems for schools making the transition from fee charging to no fee schools, and a lack of communication between provinces, districts and schools. (Motala and Sayed, 2009:4)

## **2.16 Conclusion**

As expressed by Kumar (2005:30), one of the essential preliminary tasks when you undertake a research is to go through the existing literature in order to acquaint yourself with the available body of knowledge in your area of interest. The researcher has consulted a wide variety of local and international literature to fully acquaint myself with the body of knowledge on the implications of being declared a no fee school, a phenomenon under investigation. The researcher has read related literature which varies from articles, books, journals, dissertations, reports, papers and newspaper articles to gain

a deeper insight into the phenomenon under investigation. The researcher must indicate that the literature has contributed a lot of insight into the main research question.

All the literature that the researcher has reviewed, which ranges from themes such as no fee schools, poverty-based funding in public schools, poverty alleviation programmes in public schools, equity and equality and other related topics has generated ideas about no fee policies in public schools right from South Africa, America, Kenya and other parts of the international world. One of the major contributions of the literature that the researcher has reviewed has helped the researcher to establish a set of factors that led to the development of policies on no fee schools nationally and internationally, the objectives of the various policies, their scope of application and other factors.

Of cardinal significance is that the review of related literature on the implications of being declared a no fee school has helped the researcher to establish a link between what the researcher is investigating and what others have investigated before, the methodologies that they have employed in the data collection processes, the sampling techniques they have used as well as the various philosophical assumptions that they have used to approach the study. The review of the literature helped me to formulate the research problem and also to make a correct choice in terms of design. Another important contribution of the literature that the researcher has reviewed is that it helped the researcher to refine his methods of the research, the objectives and to draw a rationale and the significance of the study. The researcher has also been capacitated on acceptable academic writing standards.

The literature that the researcher has consulted has also broadened his knowledge in his research area. The researcher has a better understanding of the various conclusions that researchers before him have drawn from the studies, how they arrived at those conclusions as well as the recommendations that they have made. The researcher has also gained a lot about the various philosophical assumptions that researchers before me have used as lenses through which they approached the research problems. The review of policies on no fee schools has enlightened me about how to draw a conceptual framework

and how to formulate a hypothesis. The researcher has been developed on matters of financial interest in schools, governance, sources of school funding, dilemmas with regards to the implementation of policies at all levels.

It is also imperative to mention that in spite of the good things that the researcher has benefited from the literature review, the phenomenon under investigation was not addressed by the researchers in the literature. In most cases, the literature dealt with policy coherence, no fee schools, and school fees exemption criteria, the state of education in the apartheid and democratic era in South Africa, sources of funding, the impact of quality on education and other themes. The implications of being declared a no fee school was scantily touched, only in finance and governance. This has suggested to the researcher that not much has been written on the topic, especially from a South African context. It is a fact there is related literature from America, India, Russia and other African states but it do not relate to our South African context in terms of systems, procedures and practices of the international world. The objectives of policies that the international world differ in terms of objectives, level of implementation and scope.

It is the researcher's assumption that the findings of studies from other parts of the world cannot be generalized to the South African reality. As a growing democracy and a growing economy with a diversified nation in terms of politics South Africa cannot be placed on an equal footing with countries that have develop economies. The research is placed in a purely South African context, depicting the realities of what happens in poverty-stricken and rural settings where schools are located. The study capitalizes on the gaps and weaknesses of other studies in terms of methodology and layout. The study also capitalizes on gaps relating to the status of knowledge on what it really implies to be declared a no fee school, what implications are there for the professional management, curriculum management, financial management, and the management of parental involvement and the governance of the school. The study attempts to fill all the identified omissions.

Researchers from South Africa have also not investigated the implications of being declared a no fee school. The link between poverty and performance, poverty alleviation strategies and the redress of past inequalities dominated the show. Only 2% of the total literature attempted to address the phenomenon under investigation, which are the implications of being declared a no fee school. In most cases their work centred around equity and equality in terms of resource allocations and not on the implications of being declared a no fee school for the five areas of management in the study.

Common trends that emerged in the literature review include school-based poverty-funding by modern states. This involves the ranking of school according to their poverty levels to determine their allocations. Another trend that has emerged in the literature review is the fight against poverty through education and the observance of the Millennium Development Goals which purposed to establish no fee schools by 2015. The review of literature also established a threshold of performance in schools both nationally and internationally. There is a growing conception that funding must match functionality. Another identified trend in the literature is that modern states allocated large portions of their budgets to education, giving more attention to pro-poor resourcing strategies and addressing the issues of equity and equality in the distribution of resources. Another trend that has emerged in the literature review is socio-economic transformation, including black empowerment amongst manufacturers and suppliers of learning material as job-creation schemes. The literature review has identified a trend where the local spheres of government and the private sector are lured by states to contribute to the funding of education. The literature has also exposed a fast growing trend among modern nations of the world, which is the effective implementation and monitoring of state allocations to schools by the state to ensure an efficient delivery of resources. What has been noticeable as another trend in the literature reviewed is that modern states are developing programmes and systems to capacitate people responsible for the spending of school funds for efficient and effective accountability standards with stricter sanctions imposed on those involved in the squandering of public funds.



This review of literature that the researcher has done revealed that not much has been researched on the implications of being declared a no fee school, especially from a South African Context. A variety of related international literature like journals, articles, dissertations and others have generated a lot of insights and information with regards to the phenomenon under investigation but it is the researcher's assumption that a study, which depicts a true South African context and the realities prevailing in rural and urban poverty-stricken areas with regards to education funding, is necessary. The researcher assumes that South Africa has unique political and economic problems even though she recognizes the value of globalization in education. It is upon that premise that the researcher undertook a study of this magnitude to cover such gaps and to contribute to the already existing body of knowledge on the phenomenon under study and also to generate possibilities for further research in the future.

## 3 CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

Nieuwenhuis (2007:70) defines a research design as a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:160) a research design is a plan for selecting subjects, research sites and data collection procedures to answer the research question. The design gives an explanation regarding the choice of a sample population where the respondents are stationed, how they will be involved in the study as well as the circumstances under which they will be studied. Of cardinal significance is that a research design is a plan that acts as a bridge between the theoretical discussions of the opening chapter and the subsequent chapters. This design must cover:

- Specific styles of research
- Specific issues in planning a research e.g. sampling, reliability, validity and ethical considerations
- Planning data collection and
- Data analysis. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2002:73))

As indicated by Nieuwenhuis (2007:70), “the choice of a research design is based on the researcher’s assumptions, research skills and research practices, and influences of the way in which he or she collects the data. There is a difference between a qualitative research design and a quantitative research design. Qualitative data take the form of words, spoken or written and visual images (observed or creatively produced). A qualitative research design is associated primarily with strategies of research such as ethnography, phenomenology and grounded theory, and with research methods such as

interviews, documents and observation”. “The nature of the data produced is of crucial importance in determining whether the research design is qualitative or not and not necessarily the kind of research method used”. (Denscombe, 2007:286).

The previous chapter did take theoretical assumptions into consideration when making a definition of what the implications of being declared a no fee school is and the scope of application of this piece of legislation which is the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. The researcher looked at the problem through the functionalist paradigm with regards to the implications of being declared a no fee school for governance, curriculum management, and financial management, the professional management of the school as well as the management of parental involvement in schools that have been declared as no fee schools. The research design used by the researcher in this investigation is mainly qualitative.

### **3.2 THE QUALITATIVE APPROACH**

As indicated in the first chapter, this study follows a qualitative approach. Nieuwenhuis (2007:70) indicates that in the research literature, six types of research designs are often discussed, namely conceptual studies, historical research, action research, case study research, ethnography and grounded theory. As indicated, this study involves action research and case study research. The type of action research conducted is participatory action research which is based more on the critical theory and aims at empowerment. Targeted for empowerment are the principal of the no fee school, school finance committees, and school governing bodies, members of the school management team, educators, finance clerks and parents. These are people who confront issues of the policy on no fee schools on a daily basis. The type of case study used relates to a developmental case study. As Nieuwenhuis (2007:75), puts it, depending upon the underlying philosophical assumptions of the researcher, case study research could be positivist, interpretive or critical. As indicated in the previous chapter, the researcher has approached the study from an interpretivist perspective.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:395), “qualitative research describes and analyses people’s individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts, and perceptions, the researcher interprets phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”. The following are characteristics of the qualitative approach as understood by Cohen, Mannion and Morrison (2002:137)

- Humans actively construct their own meanings of situations.
- Meanings arise out of social situations and are handled through interpretive processes.
- Behaviour and, thereby data are socially situated, context- related, context-dependent and context-rich.
- 

The researcher chose the qualitative approach in order to investigate the implications of being declared a no fee school for governance, professional management, curriculum management, financial management and the management of parental involvement in a school that has been declared a no fee school. This researcher has chosen the qualitative approach because of its potential to generate the respondents’ perceptions with regards to the implications of being declared a no fee school for the five areas of management mentioned above. One other profitable use of the qualitative approach is that it allows the researcher an opportunity to closely interact with participants within their own context.

### ***3.3 The role of the researcher***

Contrary to typical quantitative techniques where objectivity is the goal, qualitative studies accept researcher subjectivity as something that cannot be eliminated and see the researcher as research instrument in the data gathering process. The researcher’s immersion in the changing real-world situation is essential since the qualitative researcher needs to record those changes in the real-life context. (Nieuwnhuis, 2007:79). The researcher has incorporated his subjective understanding of the implications of being

declared a no fee school as perceived by the respondents in the study. The study is contextualized to the schools identified as research sites in the study with due consideration for their life-world experiences.

The qualitative approach however has several demerits to be considered by the researcher. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:14-15), indicates that the qualitative approach can be time consuming and demanding as data obtained is voluminous, more expensive than the quantitative approach and more prone to human bias and error because the researcher becomes immersed in the phenomena being studied.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:156) also cite that the presence of the researcher may cause reactivity from participants, leading them to avoid, impress, direct, deny and influence the researcher and that the open-ended and diversity of the situations studied could be problematic. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:15) continues to point out that there could be a temptation for the researcher to overemphasize the difference between contexts and situations rather than their gross similarity or their routine features and that participants may be falsely conscious, deliberately distorting or falsifying information and lastly, that the researcher is likely to have difficulty of focusing on the familiar—participants being so close to the situation that they neglect certain often tacit, aspects thereof.

The researcher has taken into consideration the cautions given by McMillan and Schumacher (1993) and Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) by choosing research sites that are within his proximity, which will render the study more cost-effective. The researcher has also ensured that time is correctly apportioned to the study through well-structured time lines. Although the researcher's subjectivity cannot be overruled in the study, the researcher has taken cognizance of the essentials of trustworthiness with regards to qualitative data. To avoid the falsification of information, the researcher has conducted a preliminary session with all the participants where they were briefed about the purpose of the study and a guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher

has also employed the use of control questions where various participants answer the same question so that the responses of others can be verified.

### **3.4 Theoretical framework**

According to Jansen (2006:1) a theory is the opposite of practice or action taken. It is also defined as hypothesis, initial idea, a tentative solution, a model or heuristic that needs to be tested or followed up to determine whether it is valid or true. A theory can also be defined as an explanation for a specific phenomenon. The researcher has employed a theoretical framework in his study in order to understand why things happen as they do.

The phenomenon under study, which is the implications of being, declared a no fee school has been approached through an interpretive lens. As Nieuwenhuis (2007:99), indicates, qualitative data analysis is usually based on an interpretive philosophy that is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data. According to Jansen (2006:9), interpretation of a philosophical assumption is underpinned by the following:

*It foregrounds the meaning that individuals or communities assign to their experiences.*

*The interpretation of a philosophical assumption is also intersubjective which means that meanings are crucial to achieving understanding and meaning of a certain phenomena. The behavior displayed in a certain phenomenon is constituted by social conventions and ideologies therefore interpretation is required as the facts do not speak for themselves. Somebody has to construct a meaning of certain behavior The social context, conventions, beliefs, norms, and standards of a particular person or community are crucial elements to arriving at an understanding of human behavior in a certain social setting or context..*

The researcher had chosen this theoretical framework because of its focus on the meaning that the participants in the study assign to their experiences of a no fee school. This theory contributes to the answering of the research questions because it takes into account the social context of the study, which in this instance is the three selected schools that have been given a poverty-based ranking. The theory also brings to light conventions, norms and standards that are crucial to assign understanding and meaning to a specific phenomenon, which is, the implications of being declared a no fee school.

In the light of the information given above, it was the researcher's assumption that the interpretive philosophical assumption relates to the phenomenon under study, namely, the implications of being declared a no fee school. The researcher has explored procedures followed by the Mpumalanga Department of Education in allocating resources to schools, why it does so, how the three selected schools manage their finances and what the implications of doing so are for the governance and management of the school

### **3.5 Sampling**

According to Melville and Goddard (1997:29), sampling means the choice of a population or any other group that is the subject of research interest. As indicated by Nieuwenhuis (2007:79), qualitative research is generally based on non-probability and purposive sampling rather than the probability or random sampling approaches. This study has used purposive sampling as the most appropriate sampling technique. As defined by Nieuwenhuis (2007:79), purposive sampling simply means that participants are selected because of some defined characteristics that make them the holders of data needed for the study. The decision taken by the researcher to use purposive sampling in the study is for the purpose of obtaining the richest possible source of information to answer the research questions. In this study three schools from Witbank circuit number two have been used as research sites. The unique characteristic of the three sampled schools are that they have all been categorized as no fee schools. School A is a quintile one school, school B is a quintile two school and school C is a quintile three school.

According to the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (as amended) quintile one, two and three schools are declared no fee school in terms of their poverty levels. This means that the school governing bodies cannot levy compulsory school fees from parents of learners registered in these schools.

School A is a quintile one primary school from the densely populated informal settlement near the city of Witbank. School B is a quintile two combined school from a semi-urban area in the same town and school C is a quintile three secondary school from a deep rural community, thirty five kilometers from the city of Witbank. The three schools have been sampled because they share the same socio-economic status characterized by struggling households to provide for the basic necessities of life like a decent shelter and education. Some unique features of the sampled three schools include high parent mortality rates, a high unemployment rate, child –headed homes and a high rate of low-income earners. The sampling technique used in the study is also a convenient sampling in the sense that the sampled three school and the participants in the study are within the researcher’s proximity. The researcher does not have to spend a lot of money to reach the sites and the participants which makes the entire study cost-effective and manageable to the researcher.

Participants from the three schools in the study were the principal, the chairperson of the school governing body, an education specialist, a member of the school finance committee, a parent who has served for two terms in the school governing body and an educator. The principal has been chosen to participate in the study because he or she would be knowledgeable about the professional management of the school while the chairperson of the school governing has been selected as a participant because he or she has the potential to yield data with regards to governance issues. The education specialist was selected as a respondent because of the likelihood that he or she would be able to yield the required data with regards to curriculum management at the school. A member of the school finance committee has been selected to provide data on all issues surrounding the school’s financial management while the parent has been identified as a respondent in the study because of his or her knowledge and experience of policy



changes and experiences both from a school governing body and parent perspective. This respondent has the potential to yield data about both the old and the new system of funding in schools. All the participants involved in the study have been selected because of their potential to generate data on the implications of being declared a fee school.

The researcher has used purposive sampling because it does involve the participants only but also take into consideration factors such as events, activities to be used as data in the study. As Nieuwenhuis (2007:79), explains it, “purposive sampling decisions are not only restricted to the selection of participants but also involve the settings, incidents, events, and activities to be included for data collection”.

### **3.6 Case study**

The researcher is aware that the study touches on sensitive matters like the scrutiny of the school’s financial records. It is in that instance that a case study has been incorporated in the study because it has the capacity to shed light on phenomena, like processes, events and persons.

Case studies strive to portray what it is like to be in a particular situation, to catch a close-up reality and thick descriptions of participants’ lived experiences of thoughts about and feelings for a situation. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000:182). According to Yin (2009:4), as a research method, the case study is used in many situations, to contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political and related phenomena. Case studies are found in economics in which the structure of a given industry or the economy of a city or region may be investigated. The case study is therefore relevant because it touches on the economy of the school that has been declared a no fee school by exploring the implications of the policy on no fee schools.

As Bell (2005:10), sees it, case study research aims to identify the features and various interactive processes at work, to show how they affect the implementation of systems and influence the way an organization functions. These processes may remain hidden in a

large scale survey but could be crucial to the success or failure of the organization. The researcher is under the assumption that the identification of the various interactive processes of the participants selected as informants or respondents in the study is crucial to his understanding of what the implications of being declared a no fee school has in terms of financial management, curriculum management, and governance, the professional management of the school and the management of parental involvement in the no fee schools. The researcher is also under the assumption that such an understanding has a potential to contribute to the researcher's understanding and interpretation of the experiences and culture of the school's financial management.

The researcher also employed the use of the ethnography approach within the qualitative methodology. As McMillan and Schumacher define it, ethnography is seen as a description and interpretation of a culture or system. The researcher has used the ethnographic approach in order to determine the culture and the systems that the no fee schools use to purchase teaching and learning resources, the school's system of budgeting, the culture of drawing the school's register of needs, resource prioritization and also the culture and systems that no fee schools use to make financial statements and reports. The culture of the school's governance, curriculum management, the management of parental involvement and systems that are in place with regards to the professional management of the school will be explored through a case study. This is to ensure that the study yields optimal data and adequately answers the research questions.

As put by Denscombe ( 2009:35), case studies focus on one or just a few instances of a particular phenomenon with a view to providing an in-depth account of events, relationships, experiences or processes occurring in that particular instance. The researcher has used the case study approach because it deals with the case as a whole, on its entirety, and has some chance of being able to discover how the many parts affect one another.

Qualitative research also study groups of individuals who have a similar experience but may not be interacting with each other. (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:398). All public ordinary schools that have been declared into no fee schools share similar experiences of implementing the policy of no fee schools to those schools that have been categorized as poor quintiles. A close study of the schools' specific cases assists in unraveling the challenges surrounding the phenomenon of no fee schools. As indicated by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2008:28), "this is possible because a case study provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than by simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles".

It is important that the implications of being declared a no fee school is thoroughly explained. The case study approach has the potential to investigate the interactions of the groups which are involved in the management and governance in the no fee schools. Purposive sampling was used to identify the three schools that have been used as research sites in the study. As defined by McMillan and Schumacher (2001:400), purposive sampling is selection of information-rich cases for in-depth study when one wants to understand something about those cases without needing or desiring to generalize to all such cases. The researcher has chosen the three no fee schools which in his opinion, and have the potential to yield rich data on the implications of being declared a no fee school.

The researcher also acknowledges the criticisms leveled against the use of case studies in research. Bell (2005:17) summarizes the weakness of case studies as the problem of representativeness, which means that records are used to substantiate certain claims instead of the physical availability of participants and the problem of the generalization of research findings to wrong contexts, settings, surroundings and unique circumstances.

Bell (2005:17) believes that the limitations of the case study mentioned above can be overcome, if the study is well structured and carried out, and make no claims which cannot be justified and that the findings should be related in a way that will enable

members of similar groups to recognize problems and possibly, to see ways of solving similar problems in their own group.

### **3.7 Data collection**

As seen by Kumar (2005:143), “the choice of a particular method of collecting data depends upon the purpose of collecting information, the type of information being collected, the resources available to you, your skills in the use of a particular method of data collection and the socioeconomic demographic characteristics of your study. Each method has its own advantages and disadvantages and each is appropriate for certain situations. The choice of a particular method for collecting data is important in itself for ensuring the quality of the information”.

Nieuwenhuis (2007) has a different viewpoint with regards to the choice of a particular data collection method, According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:78-79), “there are several principles that apply to qualitative data gathering in research. Qualitative research is based on a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in context or real-world settings and, in general, the researcher does attempt to manipulate the phenomena of interest. In other words, research is carried out in real-life situations and not in an experimental situation. Consequently, unobtrusive data gathering techniques, like interviews and observations, are dominant in the naturalistic (interpretive) paradigm”. The researcher has carried this investigation in a real-life situation which is normal school situation here various people , like the principal, the school governing body, parents and educators interact on a daily basis.

### **3.8 Individual semi-structured interviews**

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:340) define the interview as a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used; non-verbal, spoken and heard.

The researcher has chosen this data gathering tool because it involves direct interactions between the researcher and the participants.

According to Denscombe (2009:174), when the researcher needs to gain insights into things like people's opinions, feelings and emotions and experiences, then interviews will almost certainly provide a more suitable method-a method that is attuned to the intricacy of the subject matter. This study does exactly that. It explores the participant's opinions, feelings, emotions and experiences with regards to the policy on no fee schools. Through interviews the researcher was able to fully investigate the implications of being declared a no fee school. Nieuwenhuis (2007:87) sees an interview as a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks particular questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviour of the participant.

The study has employed the use of individual semi-structured interviews as a data collection method. With semi-structured interviews, the interviewer has a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. As Denscombe ( 2009:176), explains it, with the semi-structured interview, the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher. The answers are open-ended and there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest. (Denscombe, 2009:176).

Semi-structured interviews have been used in the study because they allow for probing individual responses as opposed to structured questions which only allow for limited response. As expressed by Babbie (2005:31), "a qualitative interview is an interview between the interviewer and the participant in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry but not a specific set of questions that must be asked with particular words and in a particular order. The researcher is of the assumption that semi-structured interviews were relevant for the study. As Hatchi (2002:94), one of the advantages of the semi-structured interviews is that the researcher can use guiding questions and yet remains open to follow the leads of participants and probing into areas that arose during the

interview interactions. As put by Nieuwenhuis (2007:88-89), three types of probing strategies can be used by researchers to obtain the maximum amount of data and to verify that what the researcher has heard is what the person meant. The probing strategies are:

- ✓ Detailed oriented probes which are aimed at ensuring that the researcher understands the “who” “when” and “where” of the answer given by the participant.
- ✓ Elaborate probes which are designed to get the full picture and normally involve asking the participant to tell the researcher more about a certain example or answer given.
- ✓ Clarification probes which are used to check if the researcher understands of what has been said are accurate. Paraphrasing can be used to confirm what has been said.

The researcher allowed for probing in the interviews and this strategy yielded results in terms of the amount and quality of the data obtained through semi-structured individual interviews. King and Horrocks (2010: 40) define probing as making follow-up questions that encourage a participant to expand on an initial answer in order to obtain more depth in his or her response. The researcher used two probing strategies to encourage the respondents to expand on the initial answer given, which are namely, elaboration and clarification. The researcher encouraged the respondents to elaborate on certain answers given so that he could gain more data on the implications of being declared a no fee school. The researcher also employed clarification as a probing strategy in order to get an explanation of certain words or phrases in the respondents’ answers which he did not fully understand. The interviews were audio-taped to avoid missing valuable information and also to avoid disturbing the attention of respondents during the interview. All taped information was transcribed verbatim for the purpose of data analysis.

### ***3.9 Preparing for the interview***

The main data collection tool used in the study involved semi-structured individual interviews. The researcher made a thorough preparation of the interviews so that they could allow for a conducive and relaxed atmosphere and environment. As indicated by McMillan and Schumacher (1993:251), once the researcher makes the decision to use an interview to collect data, he or she constructs an interview schedule. The schedule lists all the questions to be asked, giving room for the interviewer to write answers. The researcher has constructed an interview schedule that adequately relates to the objectives of the study. The researcher has ensured that questions were phrased in such a manner that they allowed for individual responses. Semi-structured questions that are open-ended and specific in their purpose were constructed for the study.

### ***3.10 Keys to the success of the interview***

Nieuwenhuis (2007:88) believes that researchers should use the underlisted keys to make a success of their interviews with participants in the research process:

- Researchers should find participants that are knowledgeable in terms of the research question to provide the information required.
- The researcher should make sure that the participants clearly know what the aims of the interview are and also about what information the researcher wants from the respondents.
- The researcher has to use temporary data analysis in order to arrive at rich and descriptive data on the study being conducted and to saturate the data.
- Researchers should be use questioning strategies that have a potential to yield adequate data. Researchers should avoid questions which requires yes or no as an answer and as a result yield inadequate data.
- Researcher should also include questions on the experiences and behavior of certain participants in the study.

- A good interviewer should listen attentively to the informants and interviewers should guard against dominating the interview process or speaking all the time.
- The interviewer should understand that the meaning of certain facial expressions gestures and observe the respondents' body language and also check his or her non-verbal cues, such as maintaining eye contact and keeping an upright position.

The researcher has made sure that the respondents in the interview were clear with regards to the aim of the interview and what information was required from them. The researcher has also ensured that information –rich participants were chosen as qualified people to answer the interview questions. It is for this very reason that principals of the selected schools, chairpersons of the school governing bodies, members of the schools' finance committees, education specialists, parents and educators were selected as participants in the study. The researcher also guarded against dominating the interview by showing good listening skills and by observed the non-verbal communication and maintaining a good eye contact and an upright position throughout the whole interview process. Taking into consideration all the factors mentioned by Nieuwenhuis (2007:88), the researcher constructed the interview schedule for the study as follows:

1. What do you understand by the notion of “no fee” schools?
2. In your opinion, how does this legislation affect the professional management of the school?
3. Do you think that the legislation on no fee school necessitates some changes in the financial management of the school? If so, how?
4. What do perceive to be the challenges faced by the finance committee with regards to the legislation on no fee schools?
5. What changes have you noticed in the management of the curriculum since your school was declared a no fee school?
6. Do you think that the declaration of your school into a no fee school had any effects on the level of parental involvement?



7. In your opinion, how did this declaration affect the school's general performance?  
Can you please elaborate on this..
8. How different is the governance of the school since it was declared a no fee school to the previous fee paying schools?
9. Do you think that the declaration of your school into a no fee school posed some challenges for its governance? Can you please expand on your experiences as member of the SGB in a no fee school..
10. What can you comment about the discipline of learners since its declaration into a no fee school?

The researcher made sure that the setting of the interview was comfortable for the respondents and that the interview was conducted in a language in which the respondents were comfortable. The researcher arranged the venue of the interview and made sure that it was quiet and private.

### **3.11 Document analysis**

As indicated by Bell (2005:115), “when a researcher has decided on the topic, refined it and specified the objectives of the study, he or she will be in a position to consider how to collect the evidence the researcher requires”. The study has employed the use of documentary sources provided by the selected schools to collect additional data about the phenomena under study, namely, the implications of being declared a no fee school.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:82), when a researcher uses document analysis as a data gathering technique, the researcher will focus on all types of written communications that may shed light on the phenomenon being investigated. Written data sources may include published and unpublished documents, company reports, memoranda, agendas, administrative documents, letters, reports, emails, messages, faxes, newspaper articles, or any other document that is connected to the investigation. The study covered the scrutiny of documentation which related to the implications of being declared a no fee school. The researcher has ensured that the documents used in the study

to gather data are authentic. This means that the documents have been duly signed and stamped and also indicate dates in which they were prepared. This is the verification that the researcher did to make sure that official documents were used in the study. The researcher has used a criteria suggested in literature to select the documentary sources in the study.

Nieuwenhuis (2007:83) suggests the following criteria for the selection of documents:

- The researcher should make verifications about the kind of documents to be used in the study and that they are official or unofficial.
- The researcher should make verification with regards to the publication date of the document if the phenomenon under investigation has changed in recent years.
- Researchers should also consider the intent or purpose of the document and the context in which the document was produced.
- The researcher should verify the main points or argument of the document.

The documents were used in the study are primary sources that are original and are used by the school in relation to the phenomenon under investigation. In an attempt to gather more data on the implications of being declared a no fee school, the researcher scrutinized the following primary sources from the three selected schools:

- A copy of the school budget and financial report
- Audited financial statements
- The school's finance policy
- The school's register of needs and prioritization list
- The SGB minute book
- Records of the Whole School Evaluation
- The school management team's record of minutes

The researcher studied the school budget in order to determine whether the funds allocated to the school meet the identified needs of the school in terms of its poverty-based ranking as per the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (as amended). The scrutiny of the school budget enabled the researcher to verify whether the school operates annually on a surplus or deficit. The budget has an influence on the provision of resources that the school needs. This may range from learner support material, teacher support material, the school's labour saving devices, equipment, cleaning material to other basic necessities of the school. The researcher also scrutinized the audited financial statements in order to establish the authenticity of the financial records and statements. The audited financial statements were also studied by the researcher in order to take note of the comments by the school's accountants which indicated whether the school has some challenges or not in terms of income and expenditure. The audited statements have also enabled the researcher to verify whether the school employed mechanism such as fund-raising projects to supplement the financial resources allocated by the State.

The school's finance policy was studied in order to determine the school's procedures for purchasing, the handling of the petty cash, claims procedures and the allocated specific functions of the constitutive members of the school's finance committee and the school governing body while the school's finance policy was also studied to establish banking procedures of the school. The school finance policy also helped the researcher to establish the implications of being declared a no fee school in terms of its poverty-based ranking. The researcher established that the schools operated on a surplus every year which affects the provision of resources such as textbooks. The records of the school governing body minutes were scrutinized in order to establish the experiences of the school governing body with regards to the financial resources allocated to the school by the state. The SGB's minutes will also indicate the emotions of the school governing body with regards to the policy on no fee schools as well as their experiences with the level of parental involvement in the no fee school. The researcher has also scrutinized the school's register of needs in order to find out what tops the school's needs in terms of resources and to establish challenges and progress made in this regard. Records of the Whole School Evaluation were also studied to determine the overall performance of the

school. Such records depicted the strengths and weaknesses of policies implemented at the school. The researcher perused the minutes of the school management team meetings in order to establish possible challenges and progress made in curriculum management and the perceptions of the school management team of the impact of being declared a no fee school for curriculum management.

The use of documentary sources as data collection tools in the study did not intrude upon or alter the setting, in ways that the presence of the investigator often does. They are not dependent upon the whims of human beings whose co-operation is essential for collecting reliable data through interviews and observations. (Merriam, 1998:112). The researcher took time to analyze the documentary sources of the three selected schools in relation to the phenomenon under investigation. The details of the findings will be discussed in the next chapter.

### ***3.12 Data analysis and interpretation***

According to Denscombe (2009:287), the analysis of qualitative data is based upon four guiding principles. The first is that the analysis of the data and the conclusions drawn from the research should be firmly rooted in data. The researcher made sure that he did not make additions or subtractions from the data provided. The researcher also made sure that his conclusions on the data are based on evidence that he collected. The second principle linked with the first is that the researcher's explanation of the data should emerge from a careful and meticulous reading of the data. To do that, the researcher read the data all over again and made sure that the data was correctly captured. The researcher made corrections to possible omissions and additions to the data. The third principle is that the researcher should avoid using unwarranted perceptions into the data analysis. The researcher did this by eliminating presuppositions when capturing the data. The researcher made sure that his own judgments and perceptions do not change the authenticity of the data gathered in the study. The fourth principle is that the analysis of

data should involve an iterative process. The researcher did this by making sure that the data analysis was logical. The researcher moved from particular features of the data towards more generalized conclusions and the development of concepts and theories. The researcher constantly went back and forth between the data collection stage and the data analysis in order to code, interpret and verify the data collected. The researcher has attempted to make sure that the principles Bloch above, were fully considered when the analysis of the data was done.

### ***3.13 Preparing qualitative data analysis***

As explained by Denscombe (2009:289), before the data can be used for research purposes, it need to be collected, processed and filed in a way that makes them amenable to analysis. To prepare the data for analysis, the researcher has made duplicates of all recordings, photocopies of visual images or documents such as field notes or transcripts. The researcher has done this to guard against any loss or damage to the data collected. Secondly, the researcher has ensured that all materials are collated and organized into a compatible format .Thirdly, the researcher has made sure that, when possible, the data is collated in a way that allow researchers' notes and comments to be added along at a later stage. Lastly, the researcher has ensured that each piece of raw data material is identified with a unique serial number for reference purposes.

### ***3.14 Qualitative data analysis and interpretive analysis***

Literature on qualitative data analysis documents a range of approaches, processes and procedures whereby the researchers extract some form of explanation, understanding or interpretation from the qualitative data collected of the people and situations that they are investigating. Qualitative data analysis is usually based on an interpretative philosophy that is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data. (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:99). As explained in chapter one, the researcher approached the study through the lens of the interpretative theory. This is the very same philosophical

assumption that the research has employed in the data analysis to establish the understanding and interpretation of the implications of being declared a no fee school.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:99), qualitative data analysis tries to establish how participants make meaning of specific phenomenon by analyzing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomenon which is best achieved through a process of inductive analysis of qualitative data. The main purpose is to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in the raw data, without the restraints imposed by a more structured theoretical orientation. The study has established what the participants in the study make meaning of the implications of being declared a no fee school and also explored their understanding, attitudes, knowledge, experiences and interpretation of the policy on no fee schools.

As advised by Nieuwenhuis, the researcher has avoided the use of deductive approaches in the analysis of data as they have the potential to create blind spots and blank spots which has an impact on the trustworthiness of the data collected. (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:99)

### ***3.15 Coding as a data analysis technique***

To analyze data gathered through the various methodologies indicated for this study, the researcher employed the use of coding as the main analysis technique. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:512), explain coding as the process of dividing data into parts by classification systems, segmenting the data into topics by using predetermined categories to break into smaller subcategories. Denscombe (2009:292), describe codes as tags or labels that are attached to the raw data. They can take the form of names, initials or numbers and the codes are systematically used to link the bits of the data to an idea that relates to the analysis. Nieuwenhuis (2007:105) understands coding as the process of reading carefully through your transcribed data, line by line and dividing it into meaningful analytic units. Mouton (2006:108), defines the process of data coding as the

breaking down of data into manageable themes. patterns, trends and relationships to understand the various constitutive elements.

To analyze the data gathered, the researcher transcribed (in the case of interviews) inductively coded, and related the main themes, which are financial management, curriculum management, the professional management of the school, the governance of the school and the management of parental involvement to the primary research question which is: What are the implications of being declared a no fee school? The researcher has inspected the relationships between concepts and constructs to see whether there were patterns or trends that could be identified or isolated or to establish the themes in the data. Nieuwenhuis (2007:99) maintains that the main purpose of the inductive analysis of qualitative data is to allow the research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data. As Mouton (2006:109), puts it, the coding is done to account for observable patterns and trends in the data, in other words, to relate the findings of the existing theoretical frameworks or models to whether this held true or falsified. The findings of the research will be linked to the main philosophical assumption in the study which is interpretive.

The researcher has ensured that the coding of the raw data (transcribed interviews and copies of documents gathered at the three selected schools entail their close scrutiny and the identification of important themes or meaningful units. The researcher then assigned codes in the form of unique identifying names and symbols. After the coding process had been completed and the relevant data grouped according to codes, the researcher will then embark upon the process of analyzing the data.

In conclusion, the patterns and trends that the researcher identified with regards to the participants from the three selected schools were then related to the policy on no fee schools as contained in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 and to the findings of contemporary researchers or the identified research problem which in this case is the implications of being declared a no fee school.

### **3.16 Trustworthiness**

The study was confined to a qualitative research design which focuses on trustworthiness as a principle of assessing the reliability of the data gathered.

As understood by Nieuwenhuis (2007:114). Assessing trustworthiness in qualitative research is the acid test of one's data analysis, findings and conclusions. One procedure that the researcher used to assess trustworthiness of the data in the study was by consistently checking (e.g. having another coder takes the category descriptions and finding the text which belonged to these categories. In order to achieve this, the researcher used multiple data sources. This helped the researcher to check his findings. The researcher then went on to combine the individual interviews with the information from the participants in the study and an analysis of written material on the implications of being declared a no fee school. I verified whether the data from the interview and the case study pointed to the same conclusion. The data from the interviews and the case study did indeed point to the same conclusion which led the researcher to assume that trustworthiness was achieved pertaining to the data collected.

To further enhance the trustworthiness of the study, the researcher made a verification of the raw data. This was done by submitting the field notes or transcripts (in the case of interviews) to participants in the study so that they could correct any errors or facts. The researcher also applied this to establish the perceptions, understanding, knowledge and attitudes of the participants in the study about what it implies to be declared a no fee school. The researcher gave all the participants a chance to verify whether or not the facts were what they had given to the researcher as data or not. This helped the researcher to establish whether the interpretations of what the participants had shared with the researcher were true or not.

To further enhance the trustworthiness of the research data, the researcher kept notes on decisions that he had taken during the course of the research. The researcher kept a



journal to record all the decisions that he had taken during the course of the study, especially the processes of data collection and analysis. (Nieuwenhus, 2007:114). This helped others to follow the reasoning of the researcher. The researcher then documented the category labels of the data that he has created, the revisions that the researcher has made to those categories and any observation that he noted concerning the data he worked with the text. As indicated by Nieuwenhus (2007:114). This helped another person to see how the researcher did his analysis and how he arrived at interpretations. To verify and validate the researcher's findings, the researcher has provided his participants with copies of the draft report. The researcher subsequently asked the participants in the study to make oral or written comments on the whole study.

To have control over any bias, the researcher avoided generalizing the findings of his study across a population. The findings of the implications of being declared a no fee school were understood from a particular perspective and context. The uniqueness of an individual, group or situation was not generalized to a population by the researcher. To further enhance the trustworthiness of the study, the researcher maintained confidentiality and anonymity as dictated by universal research ethics. The researcher did not mention the names or positions of his participants.

To conclude the enhancement of trustworthiness in the study, the researcher stated the limitations of the study upfront. This will assist the readers to have a better understanding of how the researcher arrived at his conclusions.

### **3.17 Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with the research design and methodology used in the study. The main methods employed were the case study, implemented by means of individual semi-structured interviews. To collect more data, the researcher also employed the use of the analysis of official documentation as well. The case study involved three schools that were purposefully selected from quintile 1, 2 and 3 schools that have a poverty ranking.

## 4 CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 3 the research design and metrology was outlined as tools that the researcher used to gather data about the implications of being declare a no fee school. The searcher described how he would be analyzing the data qualitatively through coding and would then arrive at certain conclusions. The interpretive philosophical assumption was shown to be incorporated in the data analysis stage to give a clear understanding of the attitudes, perceptions, knowledge and interpretations towards and of the no fee schools policy displayed by the selected participants from the three schools. Attention was also paid to aspects that would enhance the trustworthiness of the data collected in order to guard against any bias and subjectivity from the researcher.

This chapter outlines the results obtained from the study of the participants as described in the preceding chapter. The three selected schools are respectively categorized as quintile 1, 2 and 3. This means that all the three these schools from rural, urban and semi-urban backgrounds respectively are no fee paying schools. According to section 39(7) of the South Africa Schools Act 84 of 1996 (as amended), school governing bodies in schools that have been declared no fee schools may not levy compulsory school fees.

The democratically elected government of the Republic of South Africa embarked on a systematic process through the South African Act 84 of 1996 to dismantle the previous racially segregated education order as well as to revise the entire education policy environment at all levels of the education system. The South African Schools Act 108 of 1996 ensures that schools that have the highest poverty-ranking scores are declared no fee schools. The declaration of certain schools as no fee schools has sparked a national debate on the strengths and weaknesses of this system, but of prime significance is the adequate understanding of the policy implementers at school level about it implications for the school governance, financial management, curriculum management, professional management and the management of parental involvement in these schools.

This investigation has attempted to answer the research questions presented in chapter 1 by researching the implications of being declared a no fee school for the five areas of the school's management mentioned in the previous paragraph.

The main research question was: *What are the implications of being declared a no fee school?* The following are sub questions that were formulated to assist in the answering of the main research question:

- *What are the implications of being declared a no fee school for its governance?*
- *What are the implications of being declared a no fee school for its professional management?*
- *What are the implications of being declared a no fee school for its financial management?*
- *What are the implications of being declared a no fee school for curriculum management?*
- *What are the implications of being declared a no fee school for parental involvement?*

## **4.2 RESEARCH SETTINGS FOR INTERVIEWS**

As indicated by Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:199), with regards to the research setting, researchers should consider the practical issue of gaining access to the setting. To gather data for the study, the researcher employed interviews and the scrutiny of the school's documentary sources. Permission was granted by the Circuit Manager of Witbank circuit number 2 to have access to the three schools selected as research sites. Two of the schools that participated in the study are public primary schools and the other one is a secondary school, all falling within the Witbank circuit number 2 in the Nkangala region of the province of Mpumalanga. The researcher made appointments with the elected schools through their respective principals. Participants that were interviewed included the chairpersons of the school governing bodies of the schools sampled, the principals of the three schools, one member each of the finance committee and the school

management team of the three schools, a parent from each of the three schools who once served as a member of the governing, and finally an educator from each of the three selected schools. In total 18 participants were interviewed in the study. In all respondents were interviewed in the languages included English and IsiZulu, a predominant Nguni language in the area.

The researcher made sure that he presented and introduced himself to the respondents as recommended by Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005:199), another issue which the researcher has to consider is to guard against wearing something that represents a certain culture and wearing the right clothes. To gain the trust of the respondents the researcher paid specific attention to the uniqueness of each respondent and accorded him or her with the necessary respect. Lastly, the researcher guaranteed all the participants of their anonymity and created a relaxed atmosphere conducive for the participants to express their true feeling and opinions without fear of disapproval or condemnation. The researcher also took into consideration cultural, language and gender differences of the participants and ensured that no respondent discriminated against.

### 4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

**TABLE 4.1. Demographic data of SCHOOL A**

Designation	Type: School Type	Level of education	Member category	Race	Gender	Age
Principal	Rural primary	PTD	Management	Black	Male	54
SGB Chairperson	Rural primary	Std 8	Parent	Black	Male	46
SMT rep	Rural primary	B.A PTD	Educator	Black	Female	48`
Fincom rep	Rural	PTD	Educator	Black	Female	44

	primary					
Parent	Rural pr	Std 6	Parent	Black	Male	53
Educator	Rural primary	PTD FDE	Educator	Black	Female	48

Table 4.1. indicates of the demographic data of the participants of the quintile 1 school from a rural area. Ten percent of the participants have a university degree, while 40% have teaching diplomas and 40% of the participants have not gone beyond the level of grade twelve.

**TABLE 4.2. Demographic data of SCHOOL B**

Principal	Semi-urban primary	B. paed	Management	Black	Female	54
SGB chairperson	Semi-Urban	Std 10+ Diploma	Parent	Black	Male	46
SMT rep	Semi-Urban primary	B.A. PTD	Educator	Coloured	Male	42
Fincom rep	Semi-urban primary	PTD+ ACE	Educator	Black	Male	52
Parent	Semi-Urban primary	Std 10	Parent	Black	Female	53
Educator	Semi-urban	B.A.PTD	Educator	Black	Male	45

Table 4.2.indicates a demographic data of a semi-urban. Quintile two primary school. The ages of the participants range from the mid-forties to mid-fifties. 60% of the participants are university graduates while 40% are in possession of diplomas.

**TABLE 4.3. Demographic data of SCHOOL C**

Designation	School Type	Level of education	Member category	Race	Gender	Age
Principal	Urban-secondary	B.A. B.ED	Management	White	Male	54
SGB	Urban	Std 10 N6	Parent	White	Male	58
Chairperson	Secondary					
SMT rep	Urban-secondary	B.Paed. STD	Education specialist	White	Female	50
Fincom-rep	Urban-secondary	B.comm. STD	Educator	White	Female	46
Parent	Urban secondary	B.Sc (Hons)	Parent	White	Male	52

Table 4.3. Indicates that 80% of the participants have university degrees and range from fifties in terms of their ages. All the respondents have served in the school governing body before their schools were categorized as a no fee schools. What is striking about all the participants in the study, is that al of them have served in their respective governing bodies before the schools were declared no fee school. The researcher also found it striking that all the respondents could read and write with ease, given their various levels of literacy.

## 4.4 FINDINGS

### 4.4.1 INDIVIDUAL SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured and open ended questions divided into seven categories were administered to the participants. All the participants arrived for the interviews, giving a response rate of 100%. A summary of the findings from these interviews is discussed below:

#### 4.4.2 THE IMPLICATIONS OF BEING DECLARED A NO FEE SCHOOL FOR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

All of the fifteen participants in the interviews responded to the question on the implications of being declare a no fee school for the financial management of the school. Some of the responses received were as follows:

##### **SCHOOL A**

member: To me, a no fee school means that no school fees will be paid by parents. At the same time, it implies a lot of accountability on the income and expenditure of the school.

Parent : By no fee schools it is meant that education is now free. It implies more skills and expertise is needed for accuracy and honesty in dealing with financial matters of the school.

Principal : No fee schools are schools that do not levy compulsory school fees to parents but there is more than that. In my view it implies a more efficient and effective financial management system for the school

SGB chairperson : No fee schools are the fruits of our freedom I think it implies more accountability and transparency.

SMT member : Free education, which comes along with a responsibility to improve the school financial administration and management systems

Educator : Free education is not free at all. It comes along with accountability for the funds provided and also accurate financial management systems.

##### **SCHOOL B**

Fincom member : It means that school fees are no longer compulsory. This declaration implies more training for the school finance committee.

Parent This is free education for all, especially for struggling households. There is more than that. Fraud cases will increase in schools. The SGB should guard against irregularities and mismanagement

Educator

**SMT** Free education means that parents of learners will no longer pay school Fees, but the State will monitor how schools spend their allocations. Schools have suitably qualified staff to render effective financial management.

**SGB** Free education but new challenges for the SGB and the school finance Committee. This declaration also implies accountability for the funds allocated to schools.

**Principal** Parents will no longer pay school fees for the education of their children. At the same time, schools have to manage these funds because they will account for every cent spent.

## SCHOOL C

Principal Free education for all but also a new need for more financial expertise in schools.

SGB chairperson : I means that parents have been relieved from the burden of paying school fees. At the same time, this declaration implies advanced accounting skills

SMT member : It means that parents no longer pay school fees but for such schools there is a demand for more efficiency in finance records

**Fincom member** Education is now available free of charge but there is a need for computer literate staff, and accountability on the SGB and the finance committee of the school

Parent : A financial relief for struggling households who could not afford school



fees. At the same time this declaration implies more in-service training for SGBs in order to render clean financial administration systems for schools.

Educator : This means that education has now become free for all. Schools have to more financial transparency.

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In general, all the eighteen participants understood what no fee schools are. All of them viewed the implications of being declared a no fee school for financial management as more accountability, more expertise and skills needed in financial management and more accuracy and financial transparency at school level. All the participants welcomed the declaration of their schools into no fee schools as sigh of financial relief to struggling households.

#### **4.4.3 THE IMPLICATION OF BEING DECLARED ANO FEE SCHOOL FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

This is how the various participants view the implications of being declared a no fee school for parental involvement in the school activities

##### **SCHOOL A**

Principal : This implied a serious decline of parental involvement in the school. Parent s no longer feels liable for the supervision of homework, fundraising etc. They no longer attend parents' meetings because they do not pay any fees anymore

**SGB** Parents no longer come to meetings. Their level of support to the school have declined. They have a misconception of the no fee policy and have distanced themselves from school activities such as fundraising and sports.

SMT member : In my view, since our school has been declared a no fee school, most parents no longer supervise home works and come to school when called.

Education has now become the business of educators only with a minimal parental support

**Fincom**A misconception of the no fee policy. Parents do not want to involve themselves in fund-raising projects. They say the supply adequate for the whole year. It has now been difficult to supplement the schools income unlike in the past.

Parent : The government has silenced us. We do not have say anymore because we contribute nothing. Anyway we are relieved from a lot of burdens.

Education is free now.

Educator : The level of parental involvement has declined severely. Parents no longer engage with educators because they do not Understand that they are still responsible for the education of their children.

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## **SCHOOL B**

Principal : Parents are no longer involved in anything.

**SGB** Parental support is very low.

**SMT** The educator/parent bond has decreased.

**Fincom**co-operation has declined since the school was declared a no fee school. They show no co-operation at all.

Parent : Parents still value education but given the responsibility to educators and the SGB to manage everything.

Educator : Some parents still support the school but others are now reluctant to participate in school activities anymore. We struggle to get them when we need them at school.

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## SCHOOL C

Principal : A low sense of the school ownership.

Sgb chairperson : Less parental involvement.

SMT member : Less commitment to learners' work and the school in general.

Fincom member : they complain about giving anything to the school and say funds are available from the state.

Parent : Parental involvement has declined because there is no transparency with regards to the funds received and how they are spent.

**Educator** support poses a for no fee schools in commitment to their

Generally in all the three schools, there is a feeling that the declaration of some schools no fee schools have led to a decline in parental involvement in many of the schools activities. This is attributed to their misunderstanding of what a no fee school is, especially in rural communities where the level of literacy is very low.

### 4.4.4 THE IMPLICATIONS OF BEING DECLARED A NO FEE SCHOOL FOR THE PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL

All the respondents were asked what the implications are of being declared a no fee school for its professional management. Below is a summary of how the participants responded to the question.

## SCHOOL A

Principal : More resources for the school and a financial relief to needy learners  
serious overcrowding and lawlessness

SGB : the development of more policies to regulate the conduct of learners.

SMT : Overcrowded classrooms, learner absenteeism and late-coming

Fincom : Increased cases of absenteeism. Unruly behaviour and a lot migration  
no fee schools

Parent : Increased parental involvement in learner discipline and a sense of  
fidelity from the community to fight school-based violence.

**Educator** shortages of furniture and learner support material. and xenophobic challenges in  
campus.

## SCHOOL B

Principal : Serious enrollment hikes.

**SGB** The introduction of zero-tolerance policies on educator and learner conduct.

**SMT** and learner- support material backlogs

Fincom : More budgetary constrains because of large enrolments

Parents : More parent and community mobilization to restore order in schools.

Educator : overcrowding, disciplinary challenges and increased poor performances

## SCHOOL C

Principal : High enrolments, overcrowded classes and more unruly behaviour from learners

**SGB** The development of a stricter code of conduct for learners.

SMT member : More workshops on classroom management, conflict management and Teacher supervision

Fincom member : More financial resources to acquire learner support material, textbooks and teaching media

Parent : More parental involvement to enhance discipline among learners.

Educator : overcrowding, high enrolments and more disciplinary problems

Almost all the participants (94%) from the three schools Bloch high enrolments, overcrowding, disciplinary challenges and a need for more funding to cater for the high enrolments declaration of their schools as no fee schools. Almost all the respondents attributed the disciplinary challenges to the high migration less from fee payment to no fee schools. All the respondents from the three school Bloch more parental involvement as one implication of being declared a no fee school to enhance proper discipline and conduct in no fee schools. The participants also pointed to the enhancement of capacity building for educators to deal with unruly behaviour and conflict management and also stricter codes of conduct for learners.

### 4.4.5 THE IMPLICATIONS OF BEING DECLARED A NO FEE SCHOOL FOR GOVERNANCE

All fifteen participants in the study answered the question on the implications of being declared a no fee school for governance. The five respondents from school A indicated that the implications are a more professional management for both educators and learners to enhance a healthy culture of teaching and learning. They also Bloch the development of new codes of conduct for both educators and learners to deal with absenteeism, punctuality and time on task. They also Bloch

the development of new codes of conduct for both educators and learners to deal with absenteeism, punctuality and time on task. They further Bloch the strengthening of the bond between the home and the school and the supervised enrolment of new learners to curb enrolment hikes, as well as the retraining of the SGB to deal with the efficient management of the school finances, the recruitment of skilled financial experts to serve as co-opted members of the SGB and building the capacity of the finance committee and clerical staff to render an efficient financial administration. All the five respondents from school A Bloch more financial accountability as an implication of being declared a no fee school for the governance of the school.

School B Bloch serious disciplinary challenges as a result of high enrolments by learners who are attracted by the no fee schools. School B also Bloch the strengthening of the ties between the school governing body, school management team and educators to fight any possible challenge regarding the conduct of both learners and educators. This school also reported more parental involvement and the development of new policies that match the legislation of schools into no fee schools. School B also Bloch the building of the capacity of the SGB render quality service through workshops and regular in-service training for all members of the school governing body and Bloch more transparency and financial accountability of the SGB to all relevant stakeholders and more training for the SGB on the compilation, reading and interpretation of financial records

School C, which is a quintile three school from an urban area, responded by citing the following implications of being declared a no fee school for the governance of the school; the development of effective policies by the SGB to enhance school safety, the introduction of disciplinary committees to enhance proper discipline, support to be given to the SGB by all staff members and parents, the co-operation between the SGB and learner Representative Councils and a seriously high expenditure for the operational needs of the school. The respondents from school C also Bloch more financial accountability for the SGB about the funds they use to run the school and the need for training to enhance expertise and knowledge in the management of school funds.

#### **4.4.6 THE IMPLICATIONS OF BEING DECLARED A NO FEE SCHOOL FOR CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT**

All the eighteen participants from the three schools that participate in the study made their responses to what the implications of being declared a no fee school for the curriculum

management of the school. Below is a documented response of the various interviewees to the question.

## **SCHOOL A**

**Principal** : To be honest with you, this implies more accountability from the principal

with regards to the performance of the school. The funds injected to improve performance must yield results. This also implies a strategic development of an instructional programme to monitor learner and educator performance.

**SGB chairperson** : An improved pass rate for our children and more textbooks, teaching aids

for the school. It also implies constant monitoring the performance of the school in general .

**SMT member** : This implies the introduction of strategic mechanism to monitor the performance of educators in class and the acquisition of more teaching and learning material for the school and a higher pass rate at in all the phases. It also implies more accountability for the functioning of the various departmental heads of the school.

**FINCOM member** : I think it implies thorough planning with regards to the purchasing of stationery, textbooks and teaching media. It also implies an improved performance across all learning areas and phases. Most importantly, an efficient financial administration.

**Parent** : In my view this implies a better performance for the school and more hard

work for all educators in all the phases of the school.

**Educator** : This implies an increase in the acquisition of learner and educator support material. It also implies a greater expectancy of improved results in the general performance of the school.

## **SCHOOL B**

All the six participants from school B which is a school from a semi-urban area answered the question on what the implications of being declared a no fee school are for the management of the curriculum in the school. The researcher has documented a summary of the interviewees' responses to the question:

**Principal** In my opinion, this implies a need of good leadership skills from all the specialists in order to monitor academic progress. It also implies accountability on the performance of the school in all the grades.

**SGB** This implies that educators must work hard to improve results. The school does not have an excuse for a high failure rate anymore because resources have been injected into our school.

**SMT** I think that this implies more effort by the educators and learners produce better results and a good management of all curriculum activities by the school. This actually imply a need for a good financial administration to cater for all the curriculum needs of the school.

**Parent** : This imply more parental involvement in the supervision of children's home work and more co-operation with the school.

**Educator** I think it implies more accountability for the school in terms of the academic achievement of learners and more curriculum support for educators by our regional office.



## SCHOOL C

Below are the responses of the interviewees from school C with regards to the implications of being declared a no fee school for curriculum management.

Principal : I think this implies the setting of an efficient, accountable and a diligent team of educational specialists to monitor, evaluate and coordinate all teaching and learning activities in the school. It also implies an accountability for the school in terms of progress made since the school was declared a no fee school.

SGB Chairperson : I think it implies an overall good performance of the school.

SMT member : This is no good news to educational specialists. It implies hard work, good leadership skills and the ability to monitor all the curriculum activities of the school.

FINCOM member : This is a financial relief for the school in terms of resources required by the school but at the same time a good financial administration to prioritize the curricular needs of the school.

Parent : In my view, this implies good chances of academic achievement for our children and a financial relief for parents who had to buy certain items like textbooks and stationery.

Educator : I think that this implies a new sense of professionalism, commitment and

hard work for educators in order to raise the standard of performance, especially at grade twelve level

The responses of all the participants indicated that the declaration of certain schools as no fee schools implies an improved academic performance for learners, a committed and professional input by educators, excellent leadership capabilities on the school management team, a good financial administration for the school and more parental involvement in the learner's work. All the participants also Bloch strong organizational and leadership skills on the side of the school principal.

#### **4.4.7 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

To gather more data on the implications of being declared a no fee school, the researcher posed a question to the participants on the extent of parental involvement in the school activities since the three selected schools were declared no fee school. Below is a summary of how the six respondents in the six participants in the three schools answered the question:

##### **SCHOOL A**

Principal : The declaration of our school into a no fee school was welcomed by the entire school community with gladness as it lifted the financial burden of households that are plagued by poverty as result of high mortality rates and unemployment, however, it has also brought along some disadvantages. The level of parental involvement has tremendously declined since our school was declared a no fee school. To cite a few examples, our parents no longer attend parent meetings like before, they no longer show any interest in the school's extra-mural activities and are no willing to contribute anything to the school in the form of fund-raising.

In actual fact, our parents have lost ownership and interest in all almost all the activities of the school. What has been noticeable is their absenteeism in parent meetings.

**SGB Chairperson** : I can say that parents no longer cooperate with the SGB. They don't attend the meetings that we call after hours and even on weekends. They only show up when a learner has been physically assaulted or something serious that involve the police. They do not even show up for meetings where we discuss important issues like school safety and finances. It is no longer in past where they attended in numbers to discuss their concerns.

**SMT** We struggle to get parents to the school these days. When they called to discuss serious problems like learning barriers faced by their children , poor performance in certain learning areas like Maths, Science and Literacy, they cite a number of excuses. Some do respond to our calls but in most instances, they no longer get involved in the education of their children. This may be attributed to their lack of understanding on their role in a no fee school.

With regards to supplementing the school income, our parents question the fundraising events that we hold at the school. Some parents have indicated to their children that they won't participate in any campaign to raise funds because the government gives the school a lot of money and that education is now free. I have also realized that the parents have become reluctant to support our cultural activities like music. In fact, their

interest in education is showing a serious decline.

Parent : We have been told that there is free education nowadays and that the government has taken everything pertaining to education to their shoulders. It is difficult to get involved and ask so many questions whereas you don't pay anything. Yes, I have seen that some parents do not work with schools anymore, may be parents need some training on the policy on no fee schools.

Educator : As an educator, I have noticed that our parents have completely misunderstood what a no fee school is. To most parents, especially in a rural area like ours, where the level of literacy is very low, free education means that they should no longer concern themselves with their children's learning activities, let alone, extra-mural activities, like sports.

## **SCHOOL B**

This is how the six respondents from a semi-urban area responded to the involvement of parents in school activities in their school since it was declared a no fee school.

Principal : I have come to notice that some parents do participate in the activities of the school, but to a very low extent. When class educators write or telephone parents or come to school reluctance or drag their feet. They no longer attend fundraising projects tree planting ceremonies and our vegetable garden project. Most parents do not attend our parent evenings where the performance of their children are discussed. Recently, I have

noticed a serious absenteeism in SGB meetings. I must however, mention

that some parents help the school a lot to raise funds and negotiate with their employers for sponsorships. Some parents accompany learners during

school trips but honestly, there is a slight decline of parental involvement

in most of the school activities.

**SGB** What I have noticed recently, is a remarkable loss of interest in the

education of their children. We postpone many our parent because of poor

attendance. This is frustrating SGB elections. I have also noticed that they

no longer attend sports events like athletics and soccer games like before.

It looks like our parents no longer engage themselves in most of the school

activities. As a member of this community, I often hear my neighbours saying “ education is now free and we are no longer obliged to raise funds

for the school like before.

As somebody who works with the SGB in the management of finance in the

school, I have come to notice that the school fund that we supplement through fundraising projects has shown some decline because our parents

have a completely different understanding on their financial obligation since the school was declared a no fee school. Parents no longer want to pay for their children’s lost textbooks and have distanced themselves from

most of the school activities like sports and cultural activities.

**SMT** I think the misconception of free education has misled parents into

believing that they are no longer responsible for the education of their children. We have noticed a low level of parental involvement in extra-mural activities and intra-mural activities. These days, they do not respond even if called for cases like learner underperformance and disciplinary issues.

Parent : I have realized that we parents do not take part in most of the school activities. Some educators tell our children “ Your parents no longer pay anything towards the school, so they cannot complain over anything”. This has made us to take a back seat because our money no longer speak for us. We receive information about sporting activities late and in some cases we are just asked to donate money without an explanation.

Educator : As an educator in a no fee school, I must say that since this school was declared a no fee school, the level of parental involvement has shown a massive decline in almost all the school activities. Most parents no long when we ask them to attend parent evenings which are held on a quarterly basis, only a few show up. This is very frustrating.

## **SCHOOL C**

Below are the documented answers of the six respondents of school C which is a quintile three school from an urban area with regards to parental involvement in the school’s activities since the school was declared a no fee school:

Principal : What I can say is that the declaration of our school into a no fee school has

been met with applause and praise for our ANC led government, however

it has been met with a lot of misunderstanding by our parent community.

They think that they re no longer responsible for the education for the education of their children since it is now freely offered. The bond that existed between the school and the home no longer exist. In actual fact our

parents display a massive resistance to almost everything, from sporting activities,

fundraising campaign and our extra-mural activities. The level of parental

involvement since our school has been declared a no fee school has declined.

**SGB** From our side as a governance structure of the school, we have noticed

that parents of our learners no longer attend parent meetings. Parents no longer want to be elected into SGB sub-committees like disciplinary committees. Our last two fundraising events were marked by criticism

and

a heavy resistance by

parents who feel no longer feel financially obliged to the school. Only members

of the SGB attend the school's extra-mural activities. In most cases, the parents of our learners have shifted their responsibilities to the school governance.

**SMT** I have witnessed a low level of parental involvement since our school was

declared a no fee school. Parents no longer attend our 'open book' evenings where the performance of each learner discussed with the relevant class educator. Parents also show reluctance and attitude towards

the school' extra-mural activities and intra-mural activities. Their interest in

education has slightly diminished over the past year.

**Fincom** I will relate my experiences to the financial side of things. Since our school has been declared a no fee school, parents do not want to make any financial contribution to the school. They do not support our fundraising campaigns any more

**Parent** : The level of parental commitment to the school in general has declined since the school was declared a no fee school. This may attributed to a number of factors which includes the misconception of free education and the financial obligation of parents in no fee schools. Parents have become reluctant to attend sporting activities and fundraising campaigns.

**Educator** : I can say that parental involvement in the school's activities has shown a massive decline. It looks like, parents do not understand the notion of free education. Various adhoc committees like sports, fundraising and culture are complaining of a low interest parents of our learners.

#### **4.4.8 DISCIPLINE AT THE SCHOOL**

##### **SCHOOL A**

All the respondents from school A responded by saying that the increase in the school's enrolment which has been caused by its declaration as a no fee school has brought along a variety of disciplinary challenges for the school. This varies from absenteeism, late coming, vandalism, theft, violence to bullying. All the respondents attribute the disciplinary challenges of the school



to the lack of a strong bond between the home and the school, which in this instance is caused by the lack of knowledge and understanding of current policies and a high level of illiteracy.

## **SCHOOL B**

Three of the six respondents from school B said that their school has never witnessed any serious disciplinary problems except for vandalism of the school property, a high rate of absenteeism and late-coming. The principal, the educator and the SMT representative did not match the prevalent disciplinary problems of the school with its declaration into a no fee school, rather they attributed it to the low level of parental commitment to the education of their children and the parents lack of knowledge and a full understanding of what the responsibilities of parents in a no fee school are. The SGB chairperson and the parent Bloch that the disciplinary problems prevalent on the school campus are caused by the declaration of the school into a no fee school. Both respondents Bloch the fact that education no longer has value for the money that parents paid in the past. The parent responded by saying that vandalism is an attitudinal problem to the current legislation of no fee schools. The parent indicated that the learners break classroom windows and scrub desks because their parents have nothing to loose.

## **SCHOOL C**

All the six participants from school C answered the question on the influence of the no fee policy on the schools general discipline by blaming the government for the introduction of no fee policies in education. The principal responded by saying that the introduction of no fee schools has attracted a lot of “over-age” learners and immigrants to the school which has resulted in serious enrolment hikes and overcrowding in the classrooms. The principal mentioned xenophobic attacks on some learners who migrated to the no fee school and bullying which prevails in the uncontrollably large classes.

The chairperson of the SGB Bloch the fact that a few disciplinary cases have been brought to the SGB which includes gang fights, stealing and a number of attacks on learners who are from other African states who have got study permits. The chairperson of the SGB responded by saying lawlessness on the school campus was a family problem and had nothing to do with the declaration of the school into a no fee school.

The representative of the school management team responded by saying the management of discipline is under control at the school, except for a few serious cases which were reported to the policy. This respondent said that the declaration of the school into a no fee school has nothing to do with the breach of discipline by learners but rather is a solution to poverty-stricken households.

The finance committee representative answered by saying that the school has lost a lot of money through the repair costs incurred as a result of vandalized doors and desks recently. This respondent said that the declaration of the school into a no fee school had no influence on the behaviour of both the learners and educators at the school an opinion also shared by the parent respondent. This respondent answered by saying that discipline lies in the heart of a person and not in the quintile into which the school is placed. The last respondent, the educator answered by saying that the declaration of Their school into a no fee school brought along unruly characters from fee paying schools into their school which manifested in gang-related fights and assaults on other learners. The educator opinioned that fee paying schools have fewer disciplinary challenges. All the respondents mentioned vandalism, fights, absenteeism and late coming as prevalent challenges in this quintile three school from an urban area.

#### **4.4.9 THE EFFECT OF BEING DECLARED A NO FEE SCHOOL ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SCHOOL**

**A**

All the six participants answered the question on what the effects of being declared a no fee school are on the school performance. The researcher has made a summary of five responses with regards to the question posed in the interview.

Principal : A remarkable effect of the declaration of our school into a no fee school on performance is the improvement with regards literacy and numeracy in the foundation phase. The acquisition more reading material and teaching aids

has brought a lot of improvement to learners who could not read, write  
or  
count figures in the elementary stage. The funds that we got from the  
state  
enable us to purchase more learner support material which yielded good  
results in terms of performance.

**SGB** The performance of the whole school has improved since our school was  
declared a no fee school. We managed to install electricity at the school  
so  
that our educators could use the overhead projector and television set in  
the intermediate and senior phase. I must say the analysis of results  
made  
indicate an improved pass in mathematics, sciences, life skills and  
technology in grade seven.

**SMT** The declaration of our school had a positive effect on the performance of  
our learners at the school. The intermediate and senior phase has an  
improved pass rate in the sciences, Literacy and mathematics. The  
analysis  
of results in the foundation phase has also improved from 68% to 83%  
in  
the past Twelve months.

**FINCOM rep** : I have seen a tremendous improvement in the overall performance of  
the  
school, especially grade seven which is the exit point of the school. The fund allocated to the  
school enabled us to acquire more teaching media to enhance the understanding of our learners in  
mathematics, science, literacy and natural science. I am optimistic that in the next twelve months  
the school shall meet the required regional standard of a 90% pass rate.

**Parent** : I think that the declaration of our school into a no fee school has had a  
positive effect on the performance of our learners. Through the  
allocation

of funds by the government, the school has improved a lot in infrastructural development and the acquisition teaching aids for our learners. This has really reduced the high failure rate in grade seven.

Educator : I think, I must applaud the government for introducing the no fee schools.

Since our school was declare a no fee school, the SGB has purchased additional resources like teaching aids to enhance the understanding and mastery of concepts in science, mathematics and technology. This has really improved performance of our learners in almost all the assessments of the year.

## **SCHOOL B**

All the six participants from this school which is from a semi-urban area answered the question on what the effect of being declared a no fee school is for the performance of the school. Below is a documented summary of all the five respondents in school B

Principal : To be honest with you, the declaration of our school into a no fee school.

The school has brought a tremendous improvement in the school in terms

of performance. We have managed to improve our pass rate in all the three phase of the school. The school has now acquired more resources in

form of teaching media, equipment, textbooks and more teaching aids for

the foundation phase. Our curriculum implementers have remarked that the school has improved a lot in the foundation and senior phases.

**SGB** Looking at the statistical records on performance at the school, I can safely

say that the performance of the school has shown a great improvement.

The failure rate in grade seven has been dramatically reduced. As parents,

we are happy, that at last, we can benefit from our hard-earned freedom.

**SMT** The declaration of our school into a no fee school has had positive effect

on the academic achievement of our learners, especially in the department of mathematics and sciences. Learners can now access glass beakers, test tubes and other chemicals that they use in their lessons. This has improved the confidence of our learners and yield positive results in terms of performance.

The academic achievement of our learners has improved quite a lot. The school has managed to purchase science and mathematics kits for the intermediate and senior phases of the school. Learners now enjoy the perception of reality in these subjects. There is also a remarkable improvement in literacy and technology in the senior phase. Briefly, the declaration of our school into a no fee school has injected a lot of resources which led to an improved performance.

Parent : In my view, the declaration of our school into a no fee school has had positive effects in terms of academic achievement. The pass rate at the school has improved because additional teaching and learning resources are now available.

Educator : The declaration of our school into a no fee school has positive results. Our learners now show enthusiasm and a thirst for knowledge. Teaching has now become interesting because additional resources have been bought by the school. We are now able to compete with the best schools in our circuit.

## SCHOOL C

All the six participants from school C answered the question on what the effect of being declared a no fee school is for the performance of the school. School C is a quintile three secondary school from an urban area. The researcher has documented the responses of the six participants in the interview as follows:

**Principal** : To be honest with you, the declaration of our school into a no fee school has improved the performance of both our educators and our learners. Our quarterly analysis of results in the two phases of the school has shown a great improvement. Through the funds allocated to the school, we have managed to receive our science laboratory, our library and have also managed to open a mini computer centre. This has boosted the morale of our educators and the enthusiasm of our learners, especially in grade eleven and twelve. All these factors combined have improved our pass rate. We have improved from a 52,4% to 58,4% in 2009. We hope for more in 2010.

**SGB** The declaration of our school into a no fee school has yielded a positive academic achievement for our learners because we put curriculum needs as a priority in our budget. This has produced an improved pass rate in grade twelve and the other junior grades. I think educators and learners are more motivated and work very hard. As a result the performance of the school has shown some improvement.

**SMT** Since our school has been declared a no fee school, we have seen an injection of additional resources that has truly improved our teaching and learning. More facilities and resources are now available to be used by learners after contact time. The staff and learner morale is very high and this has led to a reduction of the failure rate in grade twelve.

The performance of the school has improved greatly since our school was declared a quintile three school. Through the funds allocated by the government to the school we have managed to secure infrastructural improvements to the school, facilities and resources that enhance a healthy learning environment. We have bought extra teaching media, textbooks, learner-support material to make sure that all the curriculum needs of the school are met. This has improved the performance of the school.

Parent : Last year's grade twelve results are evidence that the performance of our school has improved since our school was declared a no fee school. The pass rate is steadily improving. We hope for the best again this year.

Educator : The declaration of our school has yielded positive results in terms of the performance of our school, especially in grade twelve which was criticized and attacked over the past five years. The availability of extra teaching and learning resources has motivated us, educators to put more effort into our teaching. This has led us to obtaining eight university exemptions in 2009.

All the eighteen respondents from the three school answered the question by indicating that the performance of the three respective schools which have been declared as no fee schools has shown an improved academic performance which in turn indicates that the policy on no fee schools had a positive effect. The attitudes, tone and expressions of all the eighteen respondents throughout the interview indicated that the three schools have welcomed the declaration of their schools into no fee schools with praise and applause. All the participants indicated an improved educator and learner performance in their schools.

## **4.5 THE SCRUPINITY OF DOCUMENTARY SOURCES**

As Denscombe (2007:232) indicates it, for the purpose of research, documentary sources should not be accepted at face value. Their validity is something that needs to be established rather than being taken for granted. The researcher has ensured that the documentary sources used in the study were authentic, credible, representative and have a clear and unambiguous meaning. The researcher has employed the use of content analysis to analyze the documentary sources of the three selected schools. Denscombe (2007:236) defines content analysis as a method which helps the researcher to analyze the content of the content of documents. In chapter 3 an indication was given that documents to be analyzed in the three selected schools included audited financial statements, minutes of the school governing body, the school's finance policy, the school budget and financial report, the school's register of needs, records of the school management team minutes and records of the whole school evaluation.

### **4.5.1 THE FINANCE POLICY OF THE SCHOOLS**

In school A, the researcher found that the finance policy used by the school is not in compliance with the needs of a no fee school. The finance policy does not have clearly defined roles of the school finance committee members and does not have clearly spelt out procedures on banking, recycling the petty cash and procedures to be followed when making small and bulk purchases. The finance policy scrutinized in school A still incorporates the norms and standards for school funding which have been amended. There is also a clear indication in the policy that the principal of the school is the final accounting officer and not the entire school. It was developed a long time ago and was never updated by using the relevant amended sections of the South African Schools Act. The researcher also found that the entire finance policy of school A is not functional as it does not bear any relevance to that required for the management of a quintile one school. In school B, which is a quintile two school from a semi-urban area, the researcher found that the school had a functional finance policy which clearly indicates the functions of the SGB treasurer, the signatories to the school account as well as their responsibilities, methods of banking and withdrawing school funds, how the petty cash is recycled on a monthly basis, the functions of the school finance committee and the roles of the school bookkeepers. The finance policy of school B reflects systems and procedures to be



followed in the purchase of furniture, stationery, equipment, textbooks and tools. The researcher found that the finance policy from school B was redeveloped to comply with the requirements of the South African Act 84 of 1996 (as amended.)

In school C the researcher found that the school uses a functional finance policy which needs some amendments on systems and procedures for the handling of the petty cash, making purchase and contracts with suppliers. There is also evidence of well defined roles for the school governing body, the treasurer and the school book keepers.

#### **4.5.2 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

In school A, the audited financial statements indicated that the school operated on a deficit. The notes on the audited financial statement indicated that the school lacks capacity in the drawing up of an accurate cash payment and cash receipt journal as well as records on expenditure. The researcher noticed a serious challenges in the bookkeeper's ability to draw up accurate financial data conducive to an efficient and effective financial administration.

In school B, the scrutiny of the audited financial statement also indicated a challenge on the side of the SGB to account for some of the funds used in the last financial year. As reflected in the notes compiled by a registered financial accountant, the school needs to work on the compilation of accurate financial records for purpose of auditing.

The audited financial statement from school C which is a quintile three school, indicated that funds at the school are properly managed. There is a correlation of figures in terms of income and expenditure and the accountant's notes at the bottom of the last page of the audited statement indicated that the accountant was satisfied with the school's financial management and administration.

#### **4.5.3 THE SCHOOL BUDGET**

In school A the researcher found out that 40% of the school's allocation went to the school's infrastructural improvements which included the erection of a fence around the school, the installation of electricity at the school and minor renovations in the school's plumbing system and classrooms. 20% of the school budget was spent on the acquisition

of teaching and learning resources, while 30% was spent on the purchase of office furniture. The budget record indicated that the remaining 10% was spent on cleaning equipment and tools. The budget indicated that the school has gained a lot from being declared a no fee school.

In school B the researcher found that the school used 50% of the school budget for the acquisition of extra teaching and learning resources while 20% was spent on maintenance and other operational costs which included administrative costs and stationery. 20% of the school budget was spent on structural improvements. The last 10% of the school budget was used on staff wages, and unplanned expenditure.

The budget copy from school C indicated that the school spent 20% of the school fund on maintenance, 30% on the acquisition of teaching and learning resources, 10% went to cleaning equipment, 10% to staff wages, 10% to administrative costs and the last 20% of the school budget was used on staff wages and the purchase of equipment. The records of the school budget indicate that the school prioritized the advancement of the curriculum. The records indicate that almost half of the entire annual budget is used on curriculum advancement. The researcher is under the assumption that the declaration of the school into a no fee school implied a serious accountability for the funds used, with regards to the SGB. The researcher found that the structuring of the school's budget indicated that the school benefitted as a result of its declaration into a no fee school. The records of the school budget also had indications that the school did not deviate from the budget set for the previous year.

#### **4.5.4 THE MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNMENT BODY MEETINGS**

The minutes of the SGB meetings from school A indicated that the school was financially relieved from the burden of sourcing extra financial resources from the already struggling local business community. The minutes also indicated that the school has a challenge of skilled and qualified staff to interpret financial statements. The mood in the documented minutes of the SGB indicated that the declaration of the school as a no fee school has had positive effects which included more financial resources for the school, the acquisition of furniture, learner support material and the financial relief of poor households from the

payment of a compulsory school fee. The minutes however, depicts a serious challenge for the school with regards to the building of capacity to all the financial administrators and managers of the school.

In school B, the minutes of the SGB meetings indicated that the parents were happy that the school received a quintile two status which relieved struggling households of their obligation to pay school fees. The minutes indicate that the school compiles monthly reports which are duplicated and discussed with parents in parent meetings. The minutes also indicated that the school had prioritized the curriculum needs of the school and infrastructural developments to enhance school safety

The security of SGB minutes of school C indicated that the school was moving in the right direction in terms of realizing its short and long term goals, which included the purchase of learner furniture, learner support material, teaching media and infrastructural developments. The minutes indicate a positive attitude towards the policy on no fee schools and progress made so far.

#### **4.5.5 RECORDS OF THE WHOLE SCHOOL EVALUATION**

The Whole School Evaluation records in school A indicated that the school has improved in academic achievement, curriculum planning and assessments, classroom visits, the filling system and the overall management of the school. The SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunities and threats) analysis indicated that the school was also moving in the right direction in regards to short and long term goals. The cited weakness of the school lies in the capacity building for its financial administrators. The whole school evaluation indicated an opportunity for the school to improve its overall general performance. The whole school evaluation records indicated that regional officers who visited the school during the official opening day in January indicated that the school did not have a proper school development plan. The whole school evaluation records in school A also indicated that the school did not draw a plan for short term and long term objectives to guide the school's expenditure. The WSE (Whole School Evaluation) records indicated that in spite

of certain management challenges, the declaration of the school into a no fee school has brought about a steady improvement in the overall performance of the school

The Whole School Evaluation records from school B indicated that the school manages its finance, curriculum, human resources, time and communication systems very well. The records also indicated an improved pass rate and an efficient management and governance teams. Threats identified in the whole school evaluation records from school B indicated enrolment hikes, overcrowding and burglaries. The records of the whole school evaluation indicated that the declaration of the school into a no fee school in school B is strength and a victory for the poor households who battle with the payment of school fees. The whole school evaluation records scrutinized at school B indicated that the school had strong opportunities to reach the pass rate of 90% targeted by the region because of extra teaching and learning resources that the school had acquired over a year. The whole school evaluation records indicated that the school had an improved performance and the acquisition of educator and learner support resources. One weakness cited in the school's SWOT analysis was the lack of capacity for the financial administrators of the school in terms of accounting skills and ability of the bookkeepers to compile accurate financial reports on a monthly basis.

The Whole School Evaluation record from school C indicates that the school had an effective and efficient curriculum management team, a diligent SGB and committed educators. This was reflected in the planning of work and completion, assessment standards and the coordination of the various departments of the school. The records also indicated an improved pass rate and that the school was realizing its short term and long term objectives. The researcher also scrutinized the SWOT analysis in the whole school revaluation records. The strength indicated in the Whole School Evaluation records indicated that the school had two qualified accountants serving as co-opted SGB members who compile monthly financial reports and help the bookkeepers to prepare the financial records for auditing at the end of the school's financial year. Threats indicated in the whole school evaluation records cited the delays by the state to deposit the financial allocation of the school and the theft of school property during school holidays.

The records also included a school developmental plan which indicated plans to strengthen the school's security system in the next financial year. The remarks by the regional officials who visited the school twice in 2009 indicated that the school was functional and had improved in a number of respects

#### **4.5.6 MINUTES OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETINGS**

The records of the school management team meeting from school A indicated that the school did not have a well coordinated instructional programme for the school. It has been found that school A has some management problems between the school principal, who is accused of bureaucracy and unilateralism and the members of the school management team who indicated a will to transform management in the school. The SMT records from school A, indicated that the school had prioritized the enrichment of its curriculum through the requisitioning of extra teaching and reading material. The minutes of the SMT from school A indicated that the SMT had fully embraced the declaration of the school into a no fee school

The SMT minutes perused in school B indicated that the school management team had prioritized the school needs. The minutes indicated deliberations on the acquisitions of teaching aids, textbooks and other resources to improve the performance of all the three grades in the school. The SMT minutes indicated that the school management team operated within a healthy organizational climate. The SMT records also indicated a challenge in the realization of its curriculum goals, which had been stated as the delays by the Provincial Department of Education in the deposit of the school's financial allocation.

The SMT records in school C indicated that the school management team met regularly to discuss the school's curriculum needs and programmes. The records of minutes from school B also indicated that the school management team does not meet with the staff, the SGB and the school finance committee to discuss progress with regards to the school's instructional programme, reducing the failure rate in grade seven and the building of capacity by the school's two deputy principals on newly appointed education specialists. The SMT records indicated a well coordinated and managed instructional programme for the school with clearly spelt out short term and long term objectives, a "turn around

strategy for the improvement of performance in grade twelve and the monitoring and supervision of the various departments in the school. The minutes from school C which is a quintile three school from an urban area also indicated that the management of the school interacted on a regular basis with educators and staff members to improve the school performance. The SMT minutes also indicated that the declaration of the school into a no fee school had enhanced the morale of educators and the enthusiasm of learners to perform well in all the grades

In conclusion, the scrutiny of SMT records by the researcher in all the three selected schools indicated that the declaration of these schools as no fee schools has brought about a big improvement in the management of the school's curriculum. The injection of financial resources by the government into the school fund account of the three sampled schools has helped the school to purchase more teaching and learning material. The interactions of the various stakeholders in the schools with their management teams included that the declaration of a school into a no fee school should match with an improved educator and learner performance, manifested in the end of the year results.

#### **4.5.7 THE SCHOOLS REGISTER OF NEEDS AND PRIORITIZATION LIST**

The researcher found that school A does not have a register of the school's needs and a prioritization list. The only record of needs that the school uses is its annual budget copy which is not adhered to.

School B does have a prioritized register of school needs. The school register of needs from school B include capital projects like the acquisition of a kitchen for the school nutritional programme, renovation plans and the erection of the palisade fence around the school. The register also includes management, curriculum and administrative needs of the school.

School C which is a secondary school from an urban area has a prioritized register of the school's needs. Top on prioritized items are curriculum needs, followed by operational

needs and minor projects like the renovation of classrooms and the school's plumbing system. The researcher found out that all the three sampled schools do not have sufficient knowledge on how to develop a register of needs and how it differs from the normal annual budget copy of the school.

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

The aim of the study was to investigate the implication of being declared a no fee school for five areas of the school management , which are the professional management of the school, the management of finances, the governance of the school, the management of the school's curriculum and the management of parental involvement in the school. This was done through research questions that were answered in this chapter after the analysis of the raw data. The research concludes that the implications of being declared a no fee school are scantily clear to schools that are in rural areas and clearer to those that are in the semi-urban and urban areas. The study has identified the most challenging areas which are the capacity building of the financial administrators and managers to analyze financial statements, capture accurate data and the compilation of accurate financial reports. It is also a challenge that some school governing body members who were directly involved in the management of the school funds could not interpret financial statements and reports. There was a big challenge for schools to receive parental involvement in schools that have been declared no fee schools and to clearly make parents and learners aware about what it means to be declared a no fee school is and what the obligations of each stakeholder in the schools are.

## **5 CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will discuss the conclusions derived from the research data; I will make a number of recommendations based on the research. A few suggestions for further research will also be listed. The analysis of the data and the discussion of the findings in chapter four led me to arrive at the conclusions discussed in the next paragraph.

### **5.2 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data that has been gathered for the study and the conclusions that the researcher has made for the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. It is recommended that the Provincial Department of Education, through its districts, regions, circuit offices and schools should make access to policy documents by all stakeholders easy. The principal of a public ordinary school, the entire school governing body, the teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and learners should all have access to policy documents as well as the latest amendments to South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 so that they can study the policy, its intended audience, its scope of application and how programmes or systems are going to be rolled out in the policy implementation stage. Concessions should be made for schools in the rural areas where infrastructure like electricity and network facilities are a serious challenge. In such cases duplicates should be made in print and distributed to all the schools.
2. One serious challenge found in the study is that the financial administration managements of schools that have been declared no fee schools is ineffective, inaccurate, wrongly captured and reported. This is attributed to the fact that Provincial Departments of Education, regions, districts, circuit offices and schools do not give their financial administrators back-up training and support. It is therefore recommended that these



- structures seriously consider developing the level of capacity for school principals, school governing bodies, finance committees in schools, bookkeepers and financial clerks be developed and improved so that they may have the necessary expertise, knowledge, abilities and skills to render and efficient and effective school financial administration systems that are fully compliant with the directives of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. Workshops, seminars and information sharing sessions should be held periodically between regions or districts and schools to build the capacity of schools in financial management manuals should also be developed for schools to capacitate the school of financial management.
3. The study has concluded that some people in our societies do not even know that a policy on no fee schools is in force in our country. Some people do not have the slightest knowledge of how the policy on no fee schools came into being, the purposes of this policy and the expectations of the State towards schools, parents, educators and learners are. It is therefore recommended that information sharing sessions, opinion polls and more talk shows, public debates and symposiums be held on a regular basis so that the general public can get knowledge on policies that are addressing the plight of the poor and, strengthening our democracy.
  4. The study has also found out that some schools that have been declared no fee schools through the system of quintiles do not understand that being declared a no fee school implies that the curriculum needs of the school need to be prioritized schools should be shown that the state financial allocations are meant to address more curriculum needs of the school and less on those outside the curriculum. School management teams have to be re-trained on the management of the school's instructional programme and the coordination of the various departments by education specialists to effect an improved learner performance, not only in grade twelve but right through all the phases of the primary school as well.
  5. It has also been concluded in the study that the level of parental involvement in school activities has shown a serious decline since some schools were declared no fee schools. It is therefore recommended that schools that have been declared no fee schools, through the support and assistance of circuit offices, should develop programmes for enhancing

- parental involvement in schools. Such programmes should revive the sense of school ownership in parents and clearly spell out what the school expects from parents and what the parents should expect from the school. The strengthening of the bond between the school and the home is of vital significance in the restoration of lost morals among learners and the lost culture of teaching and learning.
6. The study has also concluded that, since some public ordinary schools were declared no fee schools, learners have embarked upon deviant behaviour which manifested itself in deliberate vandalism of school property, theft and irresponsible handling of the school property and furniture. It is therefore recommended that school governing bodies should re-develop codes of conduct for both educators and learners so that proper discipline and conduct can be instilled at school level. Such codes of conduct should also cater for the xenophobic challenges that some schools experience these days and should clearly specify the relevant sanction for unacceptable behaviour. The consequences of wrong or deviant behaviour should be properly explained though not for punitive motives but for correcting deviant behaviour. Such codes need to be duly signed by the respective stakeholders.
  7. The study has also concluded that some of the challenges that schools that have been declared into no fee schools face, include the fact that the state is not consistent and efficient in depositing the financial allocations to schools. This frustrates both the management of the school and its governance and hinders the flow of curriculum activities at the school. It is therefore recommended that the Provincial Departments of education should affect the punctual deposits of school allocations so that schools will run their operational needs professionally, effectively and efficiently.
  8. The study has also concluded that enrolments in school have increased as a result of the migration of learners from fee paying schools and immigrants seeking refuge, jobs and greener pastures in our country. It is therefore recommended that accurate poverty scales be used to cater for the needs of every learner in the school. The Government has to cater for enrolment hikes that are usually experienced by schools at the beginning of the year and not in September of the same year. The State, through the Provincial Education Departments have to verify that the information supplied by schools in the EMIS

- (education Management of Information Systems) totally with the actual figures done through a head count.
9. The study has also concluded that two schools in the same geographical area, with the same socio-economic status and the same poverty levels have been schools from communities with high poverty level scores are still fee paying schools. It is therefore recommended that the government and the Provincial Departments of Education should accelerate the pace of declaring schools within needy communities as no fee schools and should be consistent with their allocations in accordance with accurate and verified data with regards to poverty scores allocated to learners and schools
  10. The study has also concluded that principals of schools need to be supported and not criticized for the financial irregularities experienced in most schools that are both fee paying and no fee paying. It is recommended that the government should increase the management. It is also recommended that principals should be subsidized by the state so that they can enrol for qualifications in management with recognized and accredited institutions of higher learning so as to enhance their skills, knowledge, abilities and expertise in financial management. It is recommended that a comprehensive support system should be put in place to support principals from rural schools who have been hard hit by the apartheid legacy of inequalities, illiteracy and poverty.
  11. The studies also conclude that schools face a serious challenge as far as the development of a comprehensive and functional school finance policy It is recommended that the Provincial Departments of Education, through its regional or district structures should assist schools that have been declared no fee schools with the development of a comprehensive and functional school policy that embraces, uniform accounting standards, uniform financial records, uniform reporting systems, uniform contractual obligations with suppliers and uniform roles and powers of the school governing body, the school treasurer and the school's finance committees.
  12. It is also recommended that financial management and accountability be made a compulsory course or module for those studying to be educators at institutions of higher learning so that they can be prepared to take up any financial responsibility or task when they are employed as educators in schools or promoted to the rank of school principal.

13. It is also recommended that the National and Provincial spheres of government should consider coming with a criteria for eligibility into the school governing body. Such a set of criteria should take into consideration factors such as the level of literacy, knowledge of educational policies and experience serving in the SGB. It is recommended that prospective candidates of the SGB should undergo a thorough scrutiny and interview before they are fully accepted as members.
  
14. The study also recommends that the provincial Departments of Education, through their management structures like the districts and regions, should organize periodic seminars and workshops to develop the capacity of governance, management and administrative structures on how to develop a school register of needs which is different from the normal annual budgets that schools draw up in September.

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